

## PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS TO THE AU GRADUATES

Dear Graduates,

In assembly, are members of the University Council, Vice Presidents, deans, chairs, faculty and distinguished guests. All are here to honor and to congratulate you on reaching this significant milestone in your lives.

This Commencement is coming to an end. In this case, 'commencement' means an awarding of degree ceremony. 'Commencement', however, also means a start or beginning, so before we end this ceremony and you start your new lives as Assumption University Alumni, I would like to use my prerogative and this forum to share with you some of my thoughts as they relate to you.

At the dawn of the third millennium, university rectors and presidents from all over the world gathered in Rome on September 8, 2000 to search for "The University for a New Humanism". It was considered appropriate, with the advent of the new century, for higher educational institutions to take stock of their roles, functions, visions and missions, and, in the light of the passage of time, meet future challenges in social, economic and environmental conditions. Educators believe, despite the uncertainty of the future, that the fundamental function of a university is to embrace a humanistic education.

### WHAT IS HUMANISM?

Humanism is an attitude of mind which attaches prime importance to human beings and human values. These have been a central theme of civilization since the 14<sup>th</sup> century.

In this perspective, it is my humble conviction that we at Assumption University have already spelled out our new humanism with the pronouncement of our "VISION 2000" a few years ago, as valid and as highly plausible today as when it was enunciated near the end of 1999. I will repeat and explain the characteristics which we wholeheartedly attempt to instill and implant in our students while they pursue their studies on our campuses.

Accordingly, we envision our Graduates to be:

1. Healthy and open-minded, characterized by personal integrity, an independent mind and positive thinking;

- By **PERSONAL INTEGRITY** we mean credibility, honesty, trustworthiness and reliability. If our graduates possess integrity, people can believe what they say because they are sincere and truthful, and therefore they can be trusted. If our graduates are honest in their dealings with others, they are trustworthy and reliable. And, therefore, they are a credit to our institution.

- By **INDEPENDENT MIND** we mean that our graduates ought to be themselves and not easily influenced by others. They have to be independent in their thinking by acquiring the habit of reflection and personal reading. They can achieve this character through the exercise of personal freedom.

- By **POSITIVE THINKING** we mean that our graduates should have the ability to think and act positively, with a propensity for inventiveness and creativity as well as to take a realistic and optimistic view of life and its condition. Life is a fight: the purpose of life is to struggle and to live worthily, befitting the dignity of manhood.

2. We also expect our graduates to be professionally competent because they are scholars. In the knowledge-society of today, a scholar is a knowledge-person, i.e., someone who is dedicated to learning all of the time. But more importantly, a knowledge-person must be willing to exercise responsible leadership for economic progress in a just society.

3. Finally, in the spirit of a new humanism, our graduates must be able to communicate effectively with people from other nations, and to participate in the construction of a knowledge-based society through cybertechnology and the globalization process.

In closing, let me take this opportunity to once again say “Welcome to the ranks of the AU alumni”. Go on with your life fast forward – fast forward, but with a brake pedal and an on-off switch. We believe that you possess the skills, knowledge, will, and, above all, the character needed to succeed in the most adverse of situations. Live up to our expectations and set the example for those who are to follow. You are the salt of the earth...you are the light of the world...! **LABOR OMNIA VINCIT!**

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President  
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