

HIGH SCHOOL BACCALAUREATE
for the
CLAY CENTRAL/EVERLY CLASS OF 1999

PRELUDE

Seating the Class of 1999

(please stand)

CALL TO WORSHIP

When Abram of the ancient Chaldeans was living in the land of Ur, God called him to leave his country and kinsman and follow where God directed him. And when Abram, later named Abraham, followed in faith, he was led to a new unseen land filled with opportunities and became the father of a great nation.

When Joseph, the favored son of Jacob, was sold into slavery by his brothers, he was taken to a new land called Egypt. Yet trusting in God's assurance, he used his skills to become second only to the mighty Pharaoh and saved nations from starvation.

When Ruth, the Moabite, lost her husband and was encouraged to go back to her family by her mother-in-law she answered, "Where you go, I will go;...your people shall be my people, and your God my God." She trusted God and became mother to the line of the kings of Israel.

Life is filled with opportunities for growth and learning. There is always more to learn and to understand in life and faith. There will be new and different challenges to face as we live. As we gather to praise our LORD this evening and to honor this class' approaching graduation, let us all rededicate ourselves to the high calling of God.

We come together in thankfulness for all the LORD provides and the opportunities we have in life as we live and learn upon this earth.

HYMN *"Lead on, O King Eternal"*

LITANY

Let us give thanks to the LORD who guides us to face the challenges and opportunities of life.

We thank you, LORD, for your leading, your encouragement, your gifts of educators and teachers, of friends and neighbors who have helped and continually encouraged us in the opportunities of life.

LORD, your ways are beyond understanding. Yet you have breathed your spirit into our lives, making us curious; you have given us minds, which seek to uncover the mysteries of the universe and powers of discovery and creativity not unlike your own.

We give you humble thanks, O LORD.

Preserve and enlarge, O LORD, the opportunities for persons everywhere to develop their talent and their insight. Endow those who teach with the zeal to impart knowledge coupled with wisdom, that those who learn may come to understand that they share creativity with you.

Lift our souls to give you thanks, O LORD.

Let us give thanks to the LORD for the families and homes into which these graduating seniors were born and have been nurtured.

We are grateful, LORD, for our children and our parents, our homes and families where we learn to grow and experience all the wonders of this life.

LORD, this is a time of joy for us as we watch these graduating seniors gather before us to celebrate the completion of this phase of their education and move out from here in new directions for their lives. We ask that you would be with them as they go and strengthen them as they take on new responsibilities in this world. Give them, and us, faith and encouragement as we try to be your servants who live in joy and thankfulness for all we have received.

We praise you, LORD, for all your gifts, and for the opportunity to come together as people from many faith backgrounds to celebrate this day with these graduating seniors.

PRAYER

Gracious Heavenly Father, you create life from the earth on which we dwell and breathe into it life and meaning. Graciously you empower us with knowledge and skills to aid one another as we live out our life on this earth. Bless our gathering this night as we recall your grace and kindness to these young lives and celebrate the endings and beginnings of the opportunities you provide. Empower us all to live lives worthy of the callings you offer, that we may strengthen one another and your creation as we walk together through this life. In Christ Jesus' name we pray.

Amen.

SCRIPTURE Isaiah 42:5-9
 Psalm 1:1-6
 John 10:1-11

MESSAGE Father Anthony P.

SPECIAL MUSIC CC/E HS Chamber Choir

RECOGNITION OF GRADUATES

LEADER: This evening we have assembled as a body to recognize those who will be receiving their diplomas that recognize their academic achievements. They have grown among us through the years, worshiped with us and joined us as young members of the communities where we live. We congratulate them on their accomplishment, and more importantly, recognize them as young adults taking their place among us in the world.

ADULTS: We have seen you grow and develop into young men and women with skills and abilities that we have proudly watched you acquire. We rejoice that you have been a part of us and are with us now as we recognize you this day.

LEADER: Some of you, as parents and teachers, have been instrumental in their growing, some in teaching and sharing with them your beliefs and knowledge, moments that encouraged them to grow and experience the responsibilities of life.

TEACHERS & PARENTS: We have shared with them what God has shared with us, the hope for life, the blessing and knowledge we have in this world where we live. We have tried to share with them the love and concern for life the Almighty gives.

LEADER: You, our graduates, have learned and grown. Soon you will celebrate your accomplishments as a class of young men and women. We pray that you will remember our witness and sharing, that you will develop your skills for the betterment of this world, that you will witness with us what you have received from the LORD.

GRADUATES: We have learned, yet we know there is more of life to be discovered. We have grown and we will continue to grow until our life comes to its end. We can never forget the witness your have given. We thank you for all you have shared.

TEACHERS & PARENTS: We ask neither for thanks for what we have done well, nor your forgiveness for what we have done poorly. The past is past. We ask, instead, your help in the transition to a new relationship. Our habit to see you as children who need parental oversight. Your growth has been rapid. Be patient with us as we attempt to relate to you in a new way, as adult to adult.

GRADUATES: We struggled these last years for new identities. Now we join you in the struggle for new relationships.

CLERGY & CHURCH MEMBERS: The church also recognizes your new status. In years past, when you were younger, many people attempted to offer you the building blocks for the construction of your religious commitment. The faith we offered you was described in lofty words, but demonstrated by us in often faulty ways. Now we ask you to search with us for ways to make our lives more relevant to the ideals we have described, and our churches more effective in their sacred work.

GRADUATES: We will grow; we will develop; and with God's wisdom and Spirit, we pray as we can use our abilities to serve in the care of our communities and for all humankind.

LEADER: There is a promise God has given, that He will be with us "to the close of the age," that He will be our God and we His people, that nothing, except our rejection of Him, can keep us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

ALL: It is a promise we have been given, a promise we pray that we will honor and remember always, as we grow and develop the skills given by the God who gives us life.

GRADUATES: We dedicate ourselves to the joys, the privileges, and the duties of adulthood. We pledge to you and to each other support and respect as we attempt to realize the full personhood and mature relationships to which God is calling us.

LEADER: May the LORD be with you as we walk together through this life.

HYMN "Go, My Children, with My Blessing"

BENEDICTION

Teach us, good LORD, to serve as you deserve; to give and not to count the cost; to fight and not to heed the wounds, to toil and not to seek for rest; to labor and not to ask for any reward, save that of knowing that we do your will.

Amen. *(Ignatius of Loyola)*

1997 CC/E GRADUATES

Listing of all graduates' names

CLASS MOTTO

"The greatest pleasure in life is doing what people say you cannot do."

Junior Class Escorts: (named here)