

Good evening Father Collins and Reverend Fathers, Mrs. Mara, Mr. DuPont, Mr. Cooper, Mr. Wallace, faculty, parents, family, friends, and the honored Class of 2024. Welcome to this night of celebration that we have been looking forward to for so long now. I'd like to first extend a warm welcome to every individual in attendance that has played such a pivotal role in molding us into the people we are today. It is because of you, families and friends, that we had the opportunity to grow together at St. Paul Catholic High School. To our faculty and staff, thank you for supporting us as we grew both intellectually and spiritually. Now, tonight is our moment to reminisce and reflect on the time that we spent together as a class. I am extremely grateful to speak tonight as the Salutatorian of this class, as I am able to share the accomplishments and the memories that we have made together during this chapter of our lives.

Reflecting on the past four years, is thought provoking to say the least. We began our journeys as mere eighth graders who didn't get a graduation. This start of our lives as high schoolers may have been an unnerving way to begin, but we overcame it anyway- because that is who we are as a class, one who prevails over challenges. We were able to build friendships despite standing six feet apart. This distance never separated us, but rather united us. There is indeed something for each one of us to be proud of within the fact that we made it to this day. Our hard work, determination, and perseverance is evident through our many achievements and feats. Our class has successfully achieved a girls basketball state championship, prospered on the stage, and we even produced a Mr. SPCHS pageant. Our varied mix of countless talents and passions, makes our class incredibly unique. It is easy to remember and recall these events that attain such immense value to us. However, we forget those small

memories that contributed to our experiences and our growth without us even realizing it. Vincent Van Gogh said, “Great things are done by a series of small things brought together.” Singing the Irish blessing together in the chapel, eating lunch with your friends, or the bus ride back from a game. These “small” acts are what have brought us together as a community the past four years. Community- which is a core value of St. Paul, along with faith, character, excellence, and service, serve as the cornerstones of our high school experience. It is by these values that we have been able to direct our accomplishments. We have grown in our faith, partaking in many prayer services and attending masses. We have grown in service, creating new student-lead clubs and aiding our community in times of need. Our class created new organizations unlike any other group, such as environmental club, debate, Assistant campus ministry, and I even got to start Model UN with two of my best friends.

These ideas came to life because of our class' desire to chase after our goals and create new opportunities for ourselves. We have matured in our character, acting as leaders and ultimately, we have magnificently grown in excellence throughout each one of these aspects of our core values. It is remarkable, and I am so proud of each one of us for those reasons.

However, it would be misleading to say that every experience the past four years has been flawless. Of course, there are lessons to be taken away from all of our achievements, but I believe some of the most important lessons are also learned from our faults. From the times that we didn't make the right choice. Proverbs chapter 1 verse five says, "Let the wise listen and add to their learning, and let the discerning get guidance." It is impossible to learn without experiencing failure. Now, at this point in our still quite young lives, we have a wide future ahead of us. Let us not be afraid to make mistakes, and continue to

learn and grow from them. Everyday brings new challenges, but our trust in our faith along with our other core values, and the knowledge we gained the past four years has the ability to surmount those difficult times. We have been provided the tools to prosper in a world where things may not always go how we expect them to. I am so excited to discover what the world has to offer for our graduating class. Thank you.