



**MAYOR ROBERT BRIA**

**Remarks at Year 7 Graduation – Tuesday, 12 December 2017**

Good evening everyone.

I am delighted to be here to share this special occasion with you.

I would like to thank St Joseph's Memorial School for the very kind invitation to be a part of this graduation ceremony.

I want to start by congratulating all of the Year 7 students graduating this evening.

I also want to extend my congratulations to all of the parents here this evening for the outstanding job you have done in raising your beautiful daughters and sons to prepare them for the next exciting and challenging chapter in their lives.

Congratulations to Amy Parker, Robyn Coulter (Year 7 teachers in 2017), Principal Brady Stallard and all of the teachers and staff, past and present, who have been part of your school life at St Joseph's Memorial School.

Your role in touching the hearts and shaping the minds of these young people has been significant.

I am sure that your memories of the children you have taught or come into contact with over the years will be matched by their memories of you.

To the Year 7 graduands, I hope tonight is a special one; a night of happiness and memories that you will cherish forever.

To quote David Brooks, “You are in a beautiful spot in your lives.”<sup>1</sup>

Your childhood is almost over and the adventure of your teenage years is about to begin.

Over the summer, I am sure you feel a mixture of nerves and anticipation as the time nears for you to be the ‘new kids on the block’ when you begin secondary school.

For some of you, this change will feel like getting off the Carousel and getting on the Gravitron at the Royal Show!

Your life will speed up.

It will get more exciting.

And there will be more people who will be in the same position sharing this unpredictable ride with you.

But in making this change, you should not be in a hurry to forget the wonderful times you experienced during your childhood; the years that shaped and defined you.

You should remember the many special occasions you enjoyed at St Joseph’s Memorial School.

You should remember Carnevale and St Joseph’s Day.

You should remember the special lunch orders.

You should remember Sports Day.

You should remember the excursions.

And, remember showing your parents and grandparents the fantastic projects you did as part of your Learning Journey.

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<sup>1</sup> David Brooks, ‘Commencement Address,’ Dartmouth College, (2015)  
<http://www.graduationwisdom.com/speeches/0185-David-Brooks-Commencement-Speech.htm>

But also remember that your Learning Journey is not over.

In fact, your Learning Journey will continue for the rest of your life.

For the next few years, it will continue in the classroom.

But in the years ahead, it will be in the work place and out in the community.

If during your journey you find yourself lost, you may be tempted to look for an easy option and find a path that has created by others to follow.

But, I hope that you have enough belief in yourself and have the courage to create a new path so that others might follow you; a path for you to lead rather than follow.

Creating this new path may be hard.

The road may seem too long, the mountain too high and the valley too deep, but always have faith in your own ability.

I also hope that you remember that great things do not come to those who wait and hope, but to those who dare to dream.

Fifty-four years ago, the Civil Rights leader Dr Martin Luther King Jr told the world about his dream.

Dr King's dream was a dream of equality and respect between all people, regardless of their skin colour, their religion or where they came from.

Tonight, I want to share my dream for you, the 2017 graduands of St Joseph's Memorial School.

I have a dream that wherever you are your presence will always be felt and appreciated.<sup>2</sup>

I have a dream that on your journey from childhood to adulthood you will grow to be strong, confident and happy.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.thoughtco.com/prayer-for-the-graduate-712487>

I have a dream that you will make lifelong friends, and that you will develop your plan for life through your experiences.<sup>3</sup>

I have a dream that you will bring smiles to those living in sadness, hope to those living in despair and safety to those living in fear.<sup>4</sup>

But the truth is that my dreams are not as important as your dreams, because there is no dream as beautiful as a child's dream.

To borrow a phrase from Willy Wonka, you are the music makers. You are the dreamers of dreams.<sup>5</sup>

And as you go to sleep tonight for the last time as students of St Joseph's Memorial School, remember that after the darkness always comes light; the time for you to shine and a chance to turn your dreams into reality.

May God give you love to fulfil you, hope to sustain you, and wisdom to guide you during the next chapter in your journey through life.

Merry Christmas and best wishes for the future.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.thoughtco.com/prayer-for-the-graduate-712487>

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<sup>5</sup> Adapted from the quote from Gene Wilder in the film 'Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory,' (1971) Wolper Pictures Ltd.