

Baccalaureate Mass and Graduation Ceremony Homily- St. Ignatius Parish School
Fr. Tom Lucas, S.J.
Friday, May 22, 2026

My friends, on this day of rejoicing, there's no need for a lot of words. We'll have more words when we get to the graduation part of the ceremony after Mass. I'd just like to remind you of a couple of things.

Today, in the second reading from the Letter to the Philippians, St. Paul writes:

Beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious, hold on to those things. Keep doing what you have learned and received and heard.

Over the last several years—for some of you, up to twelve years—you have experienced learning. All of our graduating students have been here for at least the last few years, and some of you, I heard yesterday, have been here since you could barely see over tables. You have been taught, led, encouraged, and formed.

There are five pillars of our educational system here, as you, I'm sure, have had drummed into you a 1,000 times. One last time:

The student of St. Ignatius School, we hope, will be religious-open to the experience of God and attentive to the voice of God in their life. So live with your ears open.

The student of St. Ignatius School will be intellectually competent—a lifelong learner who remains curious. For that to work, you have to live with your eyes open.

The student of St. Ignatius School will be open to growth, possessing an expansive mindset and a generous heart. So live with your mind open.

The student of St. Ignatius School will be committed to justice. You will be generous and think beyond yourself to the needs of our world and our communities. Live with your hands open.

Finally, and most important of all: love one another as I have loved you. Jesus tells us, "This is my commandment."

Beloved, live with your ears open. Live with your eyes open. Live with your mind open. Live with your hands open. Live with your heart open.

A great American poet named Mary Oliver wrote a very simple three-line poem called *Instructions for Living a Life*:

Pay attention.
Be astonished.
Tell about it.

Live with your eyes open. Live with your ears open. Live with your minds open. Live with your hands open. Live with your hearts open. If you do, we will have succeeded in starting you on a wonderful, astonishing journey.

We love you all. We thank your parents. We pray God's blessing upon each of you.

And so now, let us pray in the name of Christ, who commands us.