

Ms. Issa Cuevas-Santos Inspirational Message to the Graduates

June 16, 2022

Good afternoon, everyone or in PRO-FRIENDS, great morning.

May I ask our parents to please give a warm round of applause to our Grade 10 Edwardians. But also, if I may ask one small thing. If I could also ask you to applaud for our teachers and faculties and staff of St. Edward for mounting this beautiful face to face graduation. *Alam po ninyo* or maybe many of you don't know, but our faculty and staff had to hurdle many challenges for ousting you a face to face graduation so let's really thank them for all their efforts and we're super happy to see all of you here again

And to all Edwardians, Hello.

Hello everyone. So as you cross this very special milestone, we thought we leave you with 3 important things. For the people who work with me, they know I can't remember more than 3 items. And I wanted to share with you on this very special day, some things that I wish or we wish as your parents that some people would've told us when we were in grade 10 although *noong panahon natin wala pang* Grade 10 *eh no? Parang hanggang* 4th year High School *lang tayo*.

So what are these 3 things?

The first is how many of you feel like you're kind of different from everyone else? Raise your hand. If you feel a little different from the person on your right.

The first thing that I want to share with you was God did not make a mistake in making who you are. So, I know that a lot of times in the age of social media there's a tendency to compare. *Diba po?* If you catch your kids looking at their phones, looking at Instagram or Facebook, and I really wanted to share with you there's no point in trying to be the next person. Because when God created you, he was very mindful. He knew why your eyes are like that. He knew why your body type is like that. He knew why your character is like that. So, I want you to repeat after me, if possible, the first thing is there is only one of me and I will make the most of it. Can I hear you repeat it? There is only one of me and I will make the most of it

So, as you cross over to a new section of your life, I want you to remember that please don't try to be someone that you're not because god created you for a very special purpose that no one else can do. *Noong ginawa ka Niya*, the way that you think, no one else is going to think like that. So, if you begin to conform to what society wants, then the full potential of what God needs you to do, *hindi natin magagawa*.

When I was much younger, I always felt very different. Even up to today, actually. I might enter a room and say "Oh, you're kind of like that person." And I'm really glad that I didn't. Because when I look back at all my experiences, I know that if God created me any other way, I would not be where I am today. So please make the most of who you are. Try to be authentically you and God will do wonders to you. So that's the first one.

The second is, choose the people in your corner wisely. Choose them well. Because sometimes we think people there are in our corner but they're not really there to support us. They're not really there to move forward. This is especially important because for some of you, you may be moving forward from St.

Edward. Please remember the values that we taught you here. Please carry with you the values that your parents have painstakingly tried to instill in your hearts. *Pag pumasok na po tayo kung saan man tayo mag-aaral*, there would be many influences not all of them, good. So please choose carefully who will these people are. What are some things I could give you in choosing the people in your corner? The first one is make sure they are kind and make sure they're kind, not just kind to you but to everybody without fail. *Ako po lagi kong metric kung kind ba sa* bodyguards, kung kind *ba sa* janitors. Because for me, if you cannot be kind to people who cannot do anything for you, then that is not kindness. How else would you choose the people in your corner? Make sure that they are honest. Make sure that they're not going to try to bring you to places where you should not be. Make sure your friends are supportive in the right ways. And what do I mean by that, *ilan po sa kaibigan natin na pag napapariwara na tayo*, your friend will tap you and say, I don't think that's the way to go. So, if you find yourself in the situation where you're tempted, and all your friends are just telling you, *sige gawin mo pa yan*, check the people in your corner. And lastly, when you find these people, make sure they share the same values that you have. The same values that were taught to you in St. Edward – Faith, Integrity, Stewardship, and Hardwork.

Lastly, and this is the, what I would like to really leave you with: there will be many definitions of success throughout your life. Even today, for many of us, I'm probably the same age as your parents. There are many ways that the world measure success. And even in our age, it gets very tempting. It gets very tempting to measure success by the number of positions you hold, *sa totoo lang* that doesn't matter. It will be very tempting to measure success by what you have, the number of properties you owned, the number of cars that you own. In the end, that matters very little. It will be easy to measure success by what you see on social media. Be very wary of that. It's very easy to take a photo. But what is true success? True success is going home at night knowing that you've made a difference in someone else's life. There are many labels attached to where I am today. But I can tell you, when I face the mirror, the only thing that makes me happy is doing that. That my life made a difference not just for me or my family, but that my life made a difference in the lives of other.

As you turn a new chapter, I hope that you do not forget. That whatever we have today, you were so incredibly blessed. You graduated from, and you will hear it later from DepEd, you graduated from one of the best performing schools in our province. *Palakpakan naman po natin ang* St. Edward. You have parents who were here, who would do anything for you. Are we not willing to do everything for our children? Yes of course, Many children do not have parents like the ones you have. We are imperfect but we love you like crazy and we are willing to do everything for you. So please remember, how utterly blessed you are. And that 99% of our population, probably cannot say the same. So, you graduate today leaving an impact. You stand on the shoulders of giants. So, when you make it in the world when you measure success, measure success as being authentically you and living out the authentic purpose that God created you for. That is the only thing that you need to have. And so today, we hope that's what you will carry on your heart – a burning passion to really discover who you are what God created you for and we are so excited our dear Edwardians to see all the great things that this country will see through you.

And as a last tribute, I want to ask our dear students. Okay lang po ba that we give a standing ovation to our deserving parents. *Palakpakan naman po natin ang ating mga magulang*. To our dear parents, thank you so much. Thank you for being such for being such a great example to our Edwardians and for being fantastic partners in raising this batch of Edwardians. *Maraming maraming salamat po sa tiwala ninyo sa ating lumalaking institusyon* and St. Edward is only here today because of your trust, because of your

support and because of the love that you have for our Edwardians but also for our school. Maraming salamat po and equal congratulations to all of you.

Have a blessed day.