

# Cabrini College Matriculation Ceremony

President Marie Angelella George

Thursday, Aug. 23, 2012

## Not Just A Place

Class of 2016, college can be just a place with beautiful buildings and well-manicured grounds. It can be just an institution that teaches and gives tests and grades and degrees. College can be just something you need to do for four years in order to get a decent-paying job. Yes, College can be just those things if that's all you want it to be.

Some believe that learning happens in just one place—the classroom. And yes, classes are at the heart of a college education. The classroom is where the exchange of ideas and information enlightens the mind and transforms the heart. And yes, rigorous academics are at the core of Cabrini's education of the heart, so rest assured that your experience in the classroom will challenge you to learn at the highest levels.

However, class of 2016, learning happens in more than one place. Opportunities for learning surround you at all times. This is true of life generally, but of college especially.

Learning opportunities abound for you at Cabrini College, because we are a community of learners who seek to learn from all things and at all times in order to live life to the fullest, because we believe—as a community of learners—that a life lived best is a life lived fully.

You signed our charter of core values that guides the actions and direction of this college. One of those core values is community. This core value of community mandates that we “create union while nurturing individual gifts and talents.”

We do this well at Cabrini, a school where you don't have to wait in line or take a number, where faculty and staff know your name and know your dreams, a school that wants your college experience to be tailored for you—and by you—and shared with everyone you see around you today.

This community of learners not only believes in living a full life, but promises that it will provide ample opportunity for you to do exactly that. You will be provided numerous opportunities to make your college more than just a place, but a place where you embrace the beautiful richness of life, where curiosity and discovery happens every day, and every activity is a chance to learn and grow.

Learning happens while writing an article for our student newspaper—*The Loquitur*—or hanging out late at night with friends in the residence halls. Learning happens during a grueling athletic practice, or when visiting the Center for Teaching and Learning, or when studying abroad in a distant land. Learning happens while staging a theatre production or when volunteering to work with the homeless. Learning happens everywhere, but only if you are open to it. A fulfilling, rewarding life awaits you, if you are willing to seize it.

If you do, I assure you that college will not be just a place, but an intricate and unique tapestry of nourishing and enriching experiences that will provide memories you will cherish forever. Because, Class of 2016, a life lived best is a life lived fully.

To the parents, family, and friends here today, as your student gets involved on campus and becomes woven into the fabric of Cabrini College, your involvement is important. You are part of the experience.

Now, we certainly do not want our students going home every weekend, nor do we want parents driving here to visit every day, but we also don't want parents just being bookends to the college experience, coming only to Matriculation in the beginning and Commencement at the end. We want you to feel welcomed here to come and celebrate student success, cheer them on, and look with pride at all they accomplish.

A message for parents, family, and friends: As you know, we are in the midst of a dynamic technological era. Technology is an important asset in teaching and learning, and is certainly embraced at Cabrini.

Even as technology opens doors to the world, we often read in the press that technology has changed today's young people into isolationists. What we hear is that they are not interested in spending time together or participating in activities around campus. Young people, the media tells us, prefer to talk by text message and interact through a screen on social-media sites. We have been told that this generation of students is more interested in checking out friends on Facebook than hanging out with friends in person.

Well, we shouldn't be surprised at hearing such false doom and gloom about young people. 70 years ago, when television first became a staple in every American home, pundits were then too predicting the end of all social interactions. But relationships still blossomed. People still spent time with one another. TV did not bring an end to the vital human element that leads to a fulfilled life.

And today is no different. Despite what the media might say, students *do* want to get involved with their peers. They want to feel connected to their peers, not to an outlet. They want to share moments with someone, not something. They want to laugh with one another, not just write "LOL."

Like all generations before them, your students are longing for those interpersonal relationships that give meaning to life, and I can promise you that we will provide the opportunities to build relationships and have many meaningful experiences.

Class of 2016, I know that you will seize those opportunities because I believe in you. I believe that if you apply yourself, you will succeed in class and find fulfillment outside of class. I believe that your Cabrini experience can be whatever you want it to be, and I believe you will make it something extraordinary.

This is what I heard from our most recent graduates, the class of 2012. They said their college years went by very quickly.

For the class of 2016, I wish that your time at Cabrini goes by quickly. Now, I know that might not sound like an appropriate wish for you. Maybe it is more accurate to say that time is fleeting when life is fulfilling, when every day you awaken to learn something new, to do something interesting, to overcome a challenge, to laugh with new friends, to engage with faculty and staff, to experience something you've never experienced and discover how amazing life can be. Because times flies when you are living your best life, and a life lived best is a life lived fully.

In closing, this is not just a place. We are a community of learners. As a community, let's live the best life, a blessed life, here, together at Cabrini College.

Thank you.