

Before I begin permit me to extend to you all my sincere felicitations on this day of your graduation. Some of you have successfully concluded your undergraduate studies, some your graduate studies, and some your one-year curriculum in the Department of Nursing. These good wishes of mine go out also to your parents, guarantors, and all others concerned. I am sure you have all been awaiting this day with joy, and also by reflecting back with mixed feelings at the study or research you pursued while at Sophia University. My guess is you are currently experiencing deep feelings of fulfilment at having attained the goals you set out to achieve on entering Sophia, as well as a robust stimulus to take on on-coming trials, challenges linked to the many novel issues you encountered in the course of your study and research.

The life you led amidst the pandemic was indeed a life teeming with constraints. Nevertheless, I am sure you received the crucial financial and emotional care you needed from your families, as well as from senior Sophians and groups like the Sophia University Parents Association. Hence, on this festive day of your graduation, I feel sure you are all undergoing deep feelings of appreciation, for the love you received in the past from so many people. The Bible says, “there is more happiness in giving than in receiving.” It is my earnest hope that in the world wherein you will live and work, you will communicate this love to all around you.

We have yet to witness the end of the pandemic, and the world as we see is now ravaged by the hostility of war. We are faced with a grim reality wherein the victims of such disasters, are those classed among the most helpless on earth. The hopeful “narrative” that the world would thrive if humans pursued economic interests based on rational and scientific principles, has faded. Today, as an upshot of globalization, food, water, and energy resources vital for human survival, have been taken “hostage” by increasing violence. The world you are about to enter is in need of a fresh “narrative,” to replace the old rosy one. This new “narrative” should be one that draws us towards what is ever more “good.” It should impel us to continue zealously the pursuit of the “good,” and not yield to the brutal trends of today’s world. In the fields of economics and business management as well, where the peak value is accorded to the rational pursuit of earning, the method of having a sustaining narrative is gaining added notice. This “narrative” backs the idea that economic and business management activities are driven by causes and goals, that aim to create values appropriate for human beings.

Let me now present a little tale by an Indian Catholic. There was a monk who entered a forest seeking direction, and he found lying before him a fox having no legs. As the helpless fox was unable to move, a tiger brought him food. The monk thereupon praised God in Heaven for having given food to the poor, but he heard a voice from

Heaven saying, “You were impressed by the wrong part.”

The monk then left the forest and returned to town, where he found a homeless girl sitting at the roadside, hungry and shivering in the cold. On seeing her the monk said, “God in Heaven, what have you done to help this girl?” A voice from Heaven then answered, “I created you.”

This brief tale assumes a lengthier narrative, namely that the world moves in pursuit of what is increasingly “good,” and that humans are born to be loved and to lead joyful lives. This story however enables us realize why each of us was created. In other words, since we have received the gift of living, it tells us what should be our mission in life. We each have a personal mission in life, and that is, to live “For Others, With Others.”

I am hopeful that all of you graduating today will pursue life in your individual settings, guided by the Sophian spirit of “For Others, With Others.” It is via your efforts that the world will be transformed, into a place worthy of human habitation.

To conclude, I end my address with a prayer that all of you become sources of the world’s blessings, and that all of you communicate happiness and love into the hearts of all mankind. I convey once more my heartfelt congratulations to all of you on this Graduation Day.

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