

50th Anniversary Remarks
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St. Andrew's is 50 years old. What shall we say?

We are gathered here this evening in a family party. It is appropriate that we should revel in the past and express to one another our pride in being partners in a great undertaking, proud of what we have done and what we are doing now to make St. Andrew's a great school.

Since I left St. Andrew's five years ago, I have been the Director of the Council for Religion in Independent Schools. In that capacity I have visited 83 schools in many parts of this country, all kinds of schools, and I have participated in 26 educational conferences. It is from this perspective that I address you this evening.

St. Andrew's is 50 years old. What shall we say? It has been a characteristic of this School from the very beginning to be unconcerned about its image, about making the front page; but rather,

to concentrate on its integrity as a school and on the quality of life among its members.

The same attitude has characterized the School's attitude toward its buildings and equipment. To be sure St. Andrew's has remarkable facilities, but in and of themselves they do not make a great school – they only provide the scenery for the all important play that takes place each year.

St. Andrew's is well-known for its endowment and its scholarship aid which in fact support every student who ever went to this School and who is a member of the School today. But, you can't buy a good school with money; there is no price tag on a great school. A great school takes dedication, imagination, collaboration, compassion and contrition.

I first saw St. Andrew's 22 years ago. Over the years I came to see its distinguishing characteristics, marks planted in the School long before I came along and marks which endure today.

One of them is the mix of people who have been drawn to this place. They are not prep school people. St. Andrew's has always stood apart from the prep school world.

St. Andreans do not fit that description, for diversity and individualism have always characterized this place.

A multitude of people have come here to study and to teach. And while at first they may have been uncertain just where Delaware is, they found a school fiercely egalitarian, determined to conduct its affairs large and small openly without fear or favor, and to give voice to all members of the community.

Another mark has been the School's sense of order. You know, St. Andrew's has no traditions. Unlike that of many schools its senior class and faculty have few privileges, just a lot more work to do. And yet, it

does not take sheer power to manage this School, for an innate sense of order, good discipline, has been built into this place. It is this underlying good order, founded on mutual confidence and respect, which in turn feeds the remarkable display of creative energies that burst forth here every year.

I speak of a paradox in education: by keeping order in the house a school assures its members the greatest freedom to be their best and to achieve the most.

And, third, St. Andrew's has always been outspoken about the essential link between education and religion. While striving for academic excellence, it has witnessed to the truth that "all the wisdom of the world is puny compared to the foolishness of God," that learning detached from humility and moral obligation is a dangerous thing, that only the resources of faith enable human beings to meet failure without being discouraged, and success without being corrupted.

It is in a religious context that the curriculum, the job system, athletics, activities and dorm life have their place – it is this context that is a special mark of St. Andrew's and holds the School together.

But you know, while I was here, I had a feeling of another mark. It is an intangible one, and yet I think it is a very real one. The real greatness of St. Andrew's lies in its uneasiness about itself. Now that sounds strange, the real greatness of this School lies in its uneasiness about what it is and why it is. Uneasiness because so much is provided here for so few people. Uneasiness because so much is expected of those to whom so much is given. Uneasiness that checks complacency and every kind of shoddiness. And it is uneasiness that spurs this School into making itself an exceptional place.

St. Andrew's is made for these times, times when we seem to hover between being bored to death and blown to bits. Made for these times? After all, as you have heard, St. Andrew's was founded in the dark days of depression and nurtured in the desperate days of war.

The way ahead of us is murky. Many guideposts that were here when this School was founded have been painted over, the peoples' leaders stumble and falter. It is a fierce and frightening world outside these thick walls. The nations are disoriented, groping in the dark. Disaster is never far away.

For us, the St. Andrew's family, the lesson is clear. The future has always belonged to those who trusted the best in the worst of times. St. Andrew's must not fail the future. And you must not fail St. Andrew's.