



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
VICTORIA

ST MONICA'S YEAR 12 GRADUATION VIDEO MESSAGE
Monday 11 October 2021

A warm hello to everyone at St Monica's College, especially the Graduating Class of 2021.

Although I was so looking forward to being with you in person, I am grateful that, even in these unusual times, technology enables us to still celebrate the big occasions.

And this is certainly a big occasion, as your group is about to leave your school years behind you for new horizons.

With such a transition comes great excitement! But often some anxiety too.

I think that most of us would admit that, as we embark on a major new step in our personal or professional lives, we wonder: How different will it be?

Will I be able to manage? Will I be okay? What if I mess up?

There is a book that is often presented to youngsters when leaving their primary schooling behind them. But it is remarkable just how apt this book also is to young adults such as yourselves. In fact, to us all.

You might know this book. Part of the *Dr Seuss* series, it's called *Oh, The Places You'll Go!*

It starts:

Congratulations!

Today is your day.

You're off to Great Places!

You're off and away!

It continues, telling you that you can choose your own course – even if you don't know at first what that is. It tells you that you'll have great successes. And failures. Fun times. Lonely times. Brave times and scary ones too.

Let me pick up on just a few of those themes.

First, there's the question of what you'll do next.

A rather sensible answer is right there in the book.

It reminds you that:

You have brains in your head.

You have feet in your shoes.

You can steer yourself

Any direction you choose.

And you will do just that. For some of you, the choice of direction will come to you soon. For some, later. But it will happen.

Just keep an open mind. Open to what you see, hear and learn.

And, definitely, be untroubled if you take some twists and turns to get there. Whatever study or job is open to you at first, it is no more than a start.

The next part of the book is my favourite. Although written simply, it manages to deal honestly with the complexities of life.

It tells you that *you'll be best of the best and top all the rest.*

But, it goes on to say, realistically: *Except when you won't*, forewarning you that you will encounter what it calls *Bang-ups and Hang-ups* along the way.

How important it is to recognise that! To know that you won't always succeed. To know that, for clever and creative minds, failure is a part of growing, of learning what will and won't work.

This book was first published in 1990. Before social media. Today, the understanding that life is too nuanced for total joy at all times has never been more important.

Near the end of the book, there is a verse that includes these words:

So be sure when you step.

Step with care and great tact

And remember that Life's

A Great Balancing Act.

Life is indeed a balancing act. A balance between bitter and sweet. Of ups and downs. A balance between work and family. Of time for others and time for yourself.

You are a fortunate group. You have been educated in a nurturing environment, and instilled with the best possible values that will serve you well as you leave the cocoon of your school.

Success in every aspect of your work, family, spiritual and personal lives is well within your grasp, even if it's unlikely to be for 100% of the time.

So, one final word. Please don't forget to thank your families and teachers for helping to grow you to this stage.

And, of course, best of luck to each one of you.