

All The Earth
Genesis 1:1-2-4; Matthew 28: 16-20
June 4, 2023
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This is the season for Graduations. I bet many of you know someone who is graduating soon or has just graduated. Speeches will be heard around the country and the world encouraging students to Go Out into the world with gusto - ready to make a difference.

Reading through “the best graduation speeches of all time” was very interesting and inspirational. I really liked the words of George Saunders at Syracuse University in 2013: “Do those things that incline you toward the big questions, and avoid the things that would reduce you and make you trivial. That luminous part of you that exists beyond personality- your soul, if you will- is as bright and shining as any that has ever been. Bright as Shakespeare’s, bright as Gandhi’s, bright as Mother Teresa’s. Clear away everything that keeps you separate from this secret luminous place. Believe it exists, come to know it better, nurture it, share its fruit tirelessly.”

Other speeches talked of being selfless or of having a plan for your life. Most had a theme of truly living and finding a purpose. Mr. Rogers shared at Dartmouth University in 2002 that tuition room and board in the 40s added up to \$1100, a teacher who looked for and found what was best in each person, “the Seattle special olympics 9 took off at the sound of the gun- one boy stumbled and fell and began to cry, the other 8 slowed down and turned around and ran back to him. The little boy got up and together the 9 linked arms and finished the race at the same time. Everyone cheered for a long, long time. Deep down we know what matters in this life is more than just winning for ourselves, it

means making sure others win too.” You might want to look it up online and hear the whole speech.

Another interesting thing about graduation is the songs that are sung promising devotion to the school as the Alma Mater or Nourishing Mother in Latin. My daughter will be graduating on Tuesday from high school, and the words for her school are “High upon a hill so noble, challenging the eye, stands a school above all others, stands the West Linn High, West Linn High to thee we shall be ever loyal and bold, striving always to do service for the Green and Gold.”

Well in our Gospel lesson today, the 11 special students of Jesus graduated on the mountaintop after Jesus’ resurrection in a sense. Jesus spoke to them saying, “All Authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

This graduation encouraged the students to “Go and make students of all nations, initiating them with the waters of baptism in the name of the Father- the Creator of the whole universe, of the Son- God made flesh who dwelt among us, and the Holy Spirit -who sustains all humanity reminding us of everything Jesus taught and helping us to pray. Remember you students whom I taught, you do not go alone, I am with you always to the end of the age.”

The school of Jesus is still going on today. We are students of Jesus, learning and growing in faith. Living our lives built on the foundation of all Jesus taught, and abiding in the Holy Spirit and being taught lessons in ways we can hear them.

Even the earliest disciples when they were in the presence of the Risen Jesus Himself doubted and were not turned away. You won't be turned away when you bring all your thoughts and ponderings to God. You are so loved and welcomed into the embrace of the Trinity.

Continue to grow and learn and to love others in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.