

**Tomorrow is mine.
Believe and do not lose heart and hope.
<St. Angela's Fifth Counsel, 39>**

My dear Wenzaorians and parents,

15 Years ago, because of SARS, there was a group of graduates unable to have their commencement when they were about to launch a new milestone in life. A few months ago, I ran into an alumna, who told me that she was one of those who graduated in the year of SARS, and expressed her regrets of missing the chance to bid a formal farewell to the school, an important event in her life. This year, due to the pandemic of Covid-19, our students from China, Hong Kong, Japan, Korea and other countries would feel the same about not being able to come back to join us on this momentous occasion, but we will keep a place for them in our hearts and in our global connections of “togetherness.”

While we were making the decision if we should have a commencement for our graduates in this particular pandemic crisis, without any hesitation, we said “yes” because we want to let you know that no matter what is happening or what will happen in the future, we need to maintain optimistic because we are all strongly united and closely bound in the big Ursuline family. I believe we, teachers and students, can conquer difficulties together. We want to give you a treasured moment in life that you can bring into your future as a token of Wenzao Ursuline support.

After today, students of the Wenzao 2020 Graduation are going to be full-grown independent beings, ready for the new stage of life. As you can see from the title, “Tomorrow is mine.” I am here to share with you my reflections, namely how we may face the future in our Ursuline belief.

As all of you witness in this year, life is filled with uncertainty. Ever since the beginning of this year, we have been living under the threat of the novel coronavirus. The rapid outbreak of the pandemic has forced many cities and even nations to be locked down, people to be isolated for quarantine, and remote social-distancing to be kept. People around the world worry whether from now on we will be seeing each other through screens? Are we no more allowed to shake hands and eat together? Are we shutting down face-to-face communication and using technological devices instead?

How long should we keep so distant from each other?

However, the pandemic has brought a blessing in disguise. The world has been miraculously healed in some areas, especially when the suspension of human activities brings a moment of relief to nature and restores to its beautiful simplicity. And as we have seen through news that some people around the world are even more creative than before in trying to use simple gestures, voice, and body movement and methods to console each other and cheer up neighbors and community residents. It shows human chains is stronger than pandemic. If we care, and are able to love, nobody will be left behind and alone.

For more than fifty years, Wenzao have been adhering to the concept of respecting the uniqueness of the individual when communicating faith, cultivating professionalism, and counseling in time of confusion. We serve with the precious wisdom and help from our predecessors. With the essence of commencement being restored, every graduating student is truly the main figure of today's ceremony and I, with other faculty together, will confer to every one of you the same responsibility in the hope that you may continue the heritage and to create the future.

Perhaps you have noticed that I use "commencement" more often than "graduation" in my speech. The word "commencement" conveys the meaning of a new beginning and a new mission, rather than an end to your studies or education as indicated in the two Chinese characters. When you move forward courageously, please remember the strengths that support you from behind. As the words of St. Angela encourages us-- **Believe and do not lose heart and hope**--you are now ready to walk out of the campus to seek career success on a firm footing. With divine blessings, you will be accompanied by the Ursuline family members around the world to serve the human.

Finally, on behalf of all faculty, I wish you a promising journey in life and shine through the trying times with your perseverance and excellence. And always remember, "now" will go into a "past," and "tomorrow" will be always near. Life goes hand in hand with hope.

Good luck to you all my dear graduates of the 2020. Thank you.