



ACADEMY OF THE
HOLY NAMES

135th Commencement Exercises Closing Address – Meredith Brown '24

Good morning, Bishop, Scharfenberger, Dr. Kilbridge, Mrs. Taranto, Ms.

Witherspoon, members of the Board of Trustees, Sisters of the Holy Names, faculty, family, friends, and my fellow graduates. Thank you all for coming.

It has taken me a long time to figure out what I wanted to say to all of you. As I mulled it over, I went back and watched some of my vlogs from over the years. My favorite one easily being from the last day of freshman year. I got emotional as I watched and saw almost every single one of your faces. I listened to the voice over that my 15-year-old self so eloquently spoke and one part stood out to me. And I quote: “I love school, and I love all my best friends, and I hate the work, but you know what, I wouldn't trade it for anything in the world, I would be in school forever if it meant I got to be with these people for an eternity.” I certainly did not know everything then, but what I did, and continue to know to be true, is just how special of a place Holy Names is, where the people here leave an indelible mark on us. I know we laugh and say “that’s so Holy Names” when a funny moment occurs or something just so utterly unbelievable happens that it could only have happened here, but to me “Holy Names” is the place I will compare everything to for the rest of my life.



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To this day, I am not quite sure what it is, and do not think I ever will, but this school - this building - it has built roots within all of us. I hope that whatever it is, that the kindness, wisdom, resilience, creativity, and passion that came along with it, that you bring it with you throughout the rest of your life. I hope that these qualities help you to grow, embrace change, persevere, and overcome. Our roots all somehow come together and have formed our class, a group of funny, talented, witty young women who I know will always have each other's backs. Nobody knows how dearly I will miss being able to shoot someone a long way across a room and have my mind be read. But that is what I love about our class, the class of 2024, that no matter what, at the end of the day, we will always come together. Whether it be for a song contest, a game in gym, or to fight to move back a quiz or test, we did it together. The relationships and trust I have built and grown with each one of you over the past 7 years mean the world to me. It has been an absolute privilege to grow up with each of you - to have chatted, learned, laughed, collaborated, and most importantly, to have achieved what we have together. It is truly a sisterhood like none other and it's scary to think I may never experience something quite like this again. But that is what is just so special about Holy Names - there is nothing like it. We may be closing a chapter of our lives, but we will be able to look back on it and see our time in middle and high school filled with love



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and laughter. So please, take that love and laughter to your next chapter. Bring it to school and show all your new friends and professors who a Holy Names girl is. I wish all of you the best of luck and always remember that near or far, a Holy Names girl is cheering you on. Congratulations class of 2024, I love you all.