

## Allison Rettke's Salutatory Address

Thank you, Mr. Haddox. It is an honor to welcome Dr. Reinberg, Dr. Oliveri, Mr. Wingbermuehle, Dr. Heger, Mrs. Kandlbinder, Mr. Haddox, members of the school board, faculty, staff, family, friends, and, especially, my fellow classmates to the 28<sup>th</sup> annual St. Francis Borgia Regional High School commencement ceremony!

It seems unbelievable that we gather here tonight to celebrate our high school graduation. Throughout these past four years, we, as the class of 2010, have been through a lot together. If you look at it this way, many of us have spent roughly 700 days out of the last four years together – that's just incredible! Think about how much we have grown. Remember back to freshman year at Luke 18 and Freshman Orientation, we arrived at Borgia wondering how we would ever make it through to this day. And, as we gather here tonight, I wonder, as I'm sure many of you do, where did the last four years go? As I began to look back on our high school careers, I realized just how much was crammed into this all-important time of our lives. Now, I know I cannot possibly talk about everything we have been through since we first walked through those doors, but, from year to year, we have continued to grow as a class. Whether it was through retreats, homecomings, or our ever-memorable Dino Prom, we have succeeded in making one special name for ourselves. So instead of focusing on individual events, no matter how memorable they may have been, I asked myself – have we, as the class of 2010, made a difference?

The answer to that question is a resounding yes! Over the course of these last four years, I believe that all of us have shared our gifts and talents with each other. Each and every single one of us have been involved in something that allowed us to make, and leave, our mark on the entire Borgia community. Whether that was through academics, sports, theatre, the arts, or on an individual level, we have all succeeded in making a difference.

Furthermore, I believe we have set a good example and have been good role models for the underclassmen. I believe that our class is the type that other classes strive to imitate. If you ask me, and I'm sure if you ask any of the faculty or staff, they will tell you that our class is full of well-rounded individuals. Over the course of our years at Borgia, we have united as a class and created for ourselves a second family. And, as a family, we have made a difference.

The ultimate test as to whether we have made a difference is to simply ask the question – will we, as the class of 2010, be missed? As I mentioned earlier, we have all left our mark. That, I think, is key. We have set new records, brought home new state titles, and, all in all, have thrived in our years here at Borgia. As many of the teachers expressed Tuesday night at Baccalaureate, our class has brought so much to the Borgia family over these past four years that we are already missed. Congratulations, guys; we have made a difference!

So everyone – teachers, parents, family, and friends – look around you. Realize that all of our accomplishments as a class would not have been possible without all of you. Go ahead, pat yourselves on the back, because, today, all of you have made a difference!

Realizing that none of us would be where we are today without the love and support of the people around us, I would like to extend a few quick, but well-deserved thank yous. First of all, I would like to thank the person who has helped and inspired me the most throughout these last four years – my twin sister, Abby. From the beginning, we've been in this together, literally! If it wasn't for her, I would not be here today. To tell you the truth, I am only thanking her because she told me the only way she'd forgive me for beating her for this spot is if I mentioned her in my speech. So, there you go Ab, please forgive me. Also, Mom, Dad, and Austin, you guys are the best. Thank you for always believing in me. Mom, I would like to say that your proofreading days are over, but we still have college to get through. Unfortunately for you, I know your e-mail address. And, I would be remiss if I did not mention all of my friends. Thank you for always keeping me laughing through the stresses of these last four years. Also, on behalf of the entire class of 2010, I want to express our gratitude to all the teachers, staff, and administrators who have touched our lives throughout our high school careers, and for the sacrifices you have made to provide a quality Catholic education and a solid moral foundation for our class. Again, you have made a difference.

Most importantly, I would like to extend a huge thank you to the entire class of 2010! I am truly honored to be a part of this wonderful graduating class. Thank you for just being there, being who you are, and helping each other become the people we are today. Through all of our experiences together, I hope we have all come to realize that there is something special inside each and every one of our fellow classmates. Whether you are aware of it or not, you have all made a difference to me.

When reflecting on our time in high school, I realized these past four years have been full of ends: The ends of quarters, the ends of semesters, the ends of sports seasons, the ends of school years. But, up until now, nothing was really final. There was always another semester or another school year after an all-too-brief summer. Now, however, it's different. Today's graduation ceremony marks the conclusion of our careers as students of St. Francis Borgia Regional High School. As Edward Tiller once said, "When you come to the end of all the light you know, and it's time to step into the darkness of the unknown, faith is knowing that one of two things shall happen: Either you will be given something solid to stand on or you will be taught to fly." Therefore, I wish all of you the best of luck with your futures. Remember to smile always, laugh often, and never stop making a difference!

On behalf of the entire SFRHS class of 2010, it is my pleasure and honor to welcome all of you to our commencement ceremony tonight. Enjoy, everyone...and thank you for sharing this special moment with us.