

Academic Convocation, September 6, 2018

Address by Dr. Jeanne Brady, Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs

Good morning. Please be seated. My name is Dr. Jeanne Brady, and as the Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs, it is my privilege to welcome our University community to the start of a new academic year.

An especially warm welcome to members of the class of 2022; your education here on Hawk Hill will be foundational for your future and we are committed to helping you imagine and achieve ever greater goals. As your senior classmates will tell you, the academic rigor of your Jesuit education will prepare you to address head-on the challenges we face here in Philadelphia and throughout the world.

We also welcome today representatives of many of the organizations – including Catholic Relief Services, Cristo Rey High School, Gesu School, Samuel Gompers Elementary School, Olivet Baptist Church and POWER – Philadelphians Organized to Witness, Empower and Rebuild – with whom we are so privileged to partner. We are all charged to serve with and for others; and we are called to innovate and to lead. Doing so requires empathy, commitment, creativity and ambition on all of our parts.

Last year, we celebrated the 50th anniversary of Dr. Martin Luther King’s address “On the Future of Integration,” which he delivered on Saint Joseph’s campus; and our academic theme focused on how “Our Destinies are Tied Together.” Courses, programming and lectures provided opportunities for faculty, students and staff to think about – and act in service to – fostering community in a world divided by difference and to find a common ground in the dignity of the human person.

In the coming academic year, we will carry that conversation forward within our intellectual framework, with focused social analysis and critical thought around Community Engagement. Focused on the Local and Global Engagement of Our Mission, academic programming will call us to critically analyze and reflect on our institutional commitment to work with partner

organizations and to actively fashion more just communities at local, national, and international levels.

Saint Joseph's relationship with the United Nations, through its PRME (PRIME) initiative, speaks to our commitment to the global good and to the innovative work of our faculty and students. Mutually engaged in the fulfillment of the U.N.'s 17 Sustainable Development Goals, we are making real progress on the measurement of global quality of life and environmental stewardship.

Next week, we will host a lecture by Father Greg Boyle, a Jesuit who founded Homeboy Industries, the largest and most successful gang intervention, rehab and reentry program in the world. Later in the semester, a faculty panel on Community Engaged Scholarship will highlight faculty research partnerships with local and global non-profits, including our local neighbors, the Samuel Gompers Elementary School and the Wynnefield Overbrook Revitalization Corporation, as well as Fe y Alegria in Bolivia. Please look for details on these and other opportunities to engage and advance our collective commitment to Community Engagement, and its centrality to our collective academic mission and our intellectual endeavors.

It is now my pleasure to introduce to you Saint Joseph's University's 28th President, Dr. Mark C. Reed.