

Class of 2009 Valedictorian speech of Memories

Looking back on the nine years we have spent at St. Pius, I realize how much we have learned from our parents, teachers, staff, and other students. Each person at this school has made an impact on our lives and I know we would not be who we are today without them. I would now like to take the time to thank those who have led us to this bitter (but more sweet) day of graduation.

I can still remember standing so small on the playground at St. Pius looking around with fear at all of the "big kids." They were so cool and seemed so old, and now I look around this room and realize, we *are* the big kids, and we have a lot of smaller kids looking up to us. It is a strange realization and a great feeling to have reached this point, but we will all soon be entering a new school again and feeling the same uneasiness. In order to enter high school, we need to keep in mind the lessons we have learned at St. Pius and to be thankful to those who led us to this point and have helped us to maintain the strength, courage, and faith in God needed to conquer the next phase of our lives.

From Mrs. Juerling and her aide, Miss Maria, in Kindergarten who taught us our numbers and letters, to Mrs. Russell in the eighth grade pushing us to write better, to speak better, and to better ourselves, the journey at St. Pius X would not have been the same without all of our teachers through the years. Each year would become more challenging and each teacher would build our skills to give the courage to face the challenges ahead.

Mrs. Ivary, our first grade teacher, gave us a great transition from kindergarten tables to "desk" life and laid the foundation for growing faith in God, while Mrs. Dohman, in the second grade, prepared us for receiving the sacrament of First Holy Communion. They both prepared us for the nightly homework and more complicated skills we would need to have in the third and fourth grades with Mrs. Lujan and Mrs. Patacsil. Mrs. Lujan, who does a great job of running Student Council, and Mrs. Patacsil who runs the school's "zoo" with all the animals in her class, were both terrific teachers who were always looking for new and fun ways for us to learn.

In fifth grade, everything seemed to be changing more rapidly. We were becoming older and maturing. This was also the first year we had two teachers, Ms. Randol and Mrs. Ramos. Mrs. Ramos took us on some memorable field trips, such as the boat ride to the Lynx, and taught us some really fun stuff, while Ms. Randol was always a cool teacher who could be found dancing and signing around the classroom to teach us about different language subjects. I know each and every one of us could sing those songs in our sleep. Not only was Ms. Randol an amusing singer and dancer, she also ran the computer lab for the whole school and really played a major role in the growing of our knowledge of computers as technology has also grown. The changes continued into sixth grade as the very funny teacher, Mrs. Vecchitto, brought some Spanish speaking into the classroom. Mrs. Vecchitto was a lot of fun and I will

always remember what a great time we had at sixth grade camp as we began the process of the metamorphosis from elementary school to "middle school."

Seventh and Eighth grade ended our classroom experiences at St. Pius with the wonderful Mrs. Montgomery and Mrs. Russell. I respect them, because even though we were still at the same school we had been at since Kindergarten, they didn't treat us as though we were still little kids. They made an excellent team in teaching and controlling us. Mrs. Montgomery, having many kids of her own, was nice to have as a teacher because she was very calm and understanding of our sometimes "wild and crazy" personalities; there was never a worry in her class. Mrs. Russell was always fun because she was always full of energy and kept us on our toes, as she would say toesies where they goesies." There was ALWAYS work to be done in Mrs. Russell's class. However she could make us laugh everyday with the funny saying she said.

Our teachers over the years were all great, and although some have gone on into retirement and they cannot be replaced, their shoes are being well-filled by newer teachers such as Miss Graf and her aide, Ms Ermelinda, who are now teaching kindergarteners, and Miss Florance who helps out in second grade. We also cannot forget the substitute teachers we have had throughout the years, especially Ms. Burke, who filled in for Mrs. Ivary for a while during her illness. The class of 2009 would like to take this opportunity to thank each and every one of our teachers for all their guidance through our journey.

Along with our teachers, our love and appreciation of art and music was also built upon at St. Pius by our music instructors. Dr. LeMieux would sing songs with us; Miss Goff and Mrs. Rodriguez taught us about music notes and how to identify them, and Ms. Abrigo taught us the history of music. Our art program taught by Mrs. Patacsil, who had the most creative ideas, and Mr. Skinner taught art history. Both programs helped us to become more well-rounded people.

The staff has also been very important in our time here at St. Pius, and we would like to take the time to thank Mr. G and Mr. Dario, who are our P.E. coaches. Mr. Dario is always out playing sports with us because it is pretty easy to beat 8th graders at softball when you are 21. The daycare staff is also great when our parents want a couple *more* hours away from us. Mrs. Holly, Mrs. Florance, Miss Ruby, Mr. Steven, Miss Erme and Miss Ann are great leaders and are always there to talk to and to oversee our activities.

The class of 2009 would also like to take this opportunity to thank the office staff who included Mrs. McGrath, our caring nurse, who was always there with a band-aid for our scrapes and bruises, Mrs. Espinoza, our secretary, who always had a smile on her face and was willing to help, Mrs. Vitha and Miss Connie who were always there to assist, and Mrs. Wood and Miss Cleme, the bookkeepers. We would also like to thank Mr. Bert, who was always there to fix anything broken, Miss Teresa, who always had a story to tell or a song to sing, and Mr. Salvador, who also helped to keep our school beautiful.

The sports programs at school were always really fun and competitive and that would not have been made possible without the coaches we had over the years: Coach Janice, Coach Maria Escanti, Mr. Andreoli, Mr. G., Coach Mike Centrullo, Coach Amelia, Coach Claudia, Coach Ruiz, Coach Alfonso, and Coach Rodriguez. Without our coaches, our teams would not have been able to function and we are all very grateful for the time and effort.

Other programs which have surely helped us in basic life skills were the Second Step Program, founded by Mrs. Martino, which helped us to better control our emotions. It is now maintained by Miss Cindy. The P.R.I.D.E. program taught in eighth grade introduced us to the risks and dangers of using drugs and alcohol and taught us how to be smart in different life situations. This program was taught by Agent Faddis and Agent Woodford. We would like to thank them for preparing us for the challenges we may face as we move on into high school.

All of our teachers and staff are amazing, but how could our school survive without our beloved principal, Mrs. Hanson, and our wonderful parish staff? Mrs. Hanson has been there every step of the way. Whatever conflict or concern we had, Mrs. Hanson always made time for us and made each of us feel special and valued regardless of the amount of work she had piled to do. Mrs. Hanson also worked very closely with the parish staff that had a large impact on our Catholic education. They have helped install faith, hope, and love in each of us, and I would like to thank each of them. Fr. Luke, Fr. Edwin, and Fr. Kulleck, along with the past priests and staff including: Fr. Patrick, Fr. Joe, Fr. Jim, Deacon Danny and Deacon Glenn who have been with us during our journey. I would especially like to thank Deacon Glenn for all the time and effort he put into helping us grow in faith and closeness to God each year, especially for the eighth graders during the eighth grade retreat.

That is why on behalf of the Class of 2009, I would like to thank all of the teachers, staff, and parents for everything you have done for us. Without you, we would definitely not be who we are today. We have obviously been prepared well for high school and there's no way we could have done it without everyone. Good luck to everyone and look out! We will all soon be freshmen in high school. Thank you again and may God continue to bless you each day.

Class of 2009 Salutatorian Speech for the Future

Welcome, Today we, the Class of 2009 graduate from St. Pius X School. In a speech given by Les Brown, a motivational speaker, he said "Shoot for the moon. Even if you miss, you'll land among the stars." As this quote says we should all try to do our best. No matter what happens in life, we will always turn out better than if we had not tried. In each of us there is a bright shining star waiting to be found. Our high schools, colleges, and life will lead us on a journey. Our faith in God and the values we have been taught at St. Pius X School will guide us successfully to a bright future.

I would like to thank our teachers, parents, and friends for coming here today and for helping us to become stars. We will continue in our journey today to "shoot for the moon."