Graduation 2016
Archbishop’s Speech

Archbishop Julian Porteous
Archbishop of Hobart

“Be fruitful, fill the earth”

As we gather this evening for the Graduation Ceremony of 2016 we are aware of two significant matters.

The first is that tomorrow we celebrate the centenary of the birth of Archbishop Guilford Young after whom this College is named.

Guilford Clyde Young was born in Brisbane and ordained a priest in 1939. He obtained a doctorate in theology with the reputation as a brilliant scholar. In 1948 he became the youngest Catholic bishop in the world. He was appointed Tasmania’s Archbishop in 1955.

He was articulate and outspoken. He inspired the Catholic people of Tasmania with a sense of their dignity as Catholics. He was an ardent advocate of the teachings of the Second Vatican Council and Tasmania was at the forefront of liturgical reform, ecumenism and lay involvement in the life of the Church.

He was a strong advocate for State Aid to Catholic Schools and played a key national role in achieving government financial support for Catholic schools.

Tomorrow evening Archbishop Young, along with Archbishops Tweedy and D’Arcy will be interred in the newly completed crypt in the Cathedral Centre, adjacent to St Mary’s Cathedral.

The other matter of significance is that at the end of this academic year Mrs Bobby Court will conclude her term as Principal of the College. Since its inception 20 years ago the College has been blessed by good and stable leadership. There have been just two Principals during this time.

Mrs Court, who has served Guilford Young College for the past 13 years is a gifted educationalist and over the period of her tenure has made a great contribution to the growth and development of Guilford Young College. The College is indebted to Mrs Court. She leaves the College in a sound position. Tonight we pay fitting tribute to her for her extraordinary service to the College.
Tonight, though, is about the graduating students for 2016. And I wish to address you on this significant occasion.

It marks the transition that is occurring in your life. Your years of primary and secondary schooling are coming to an end – only the exams to be faced.

While studies are still a focus for you, I am sure you have already been surveying the future. The question that has occupied you and certainly has occupied your curious parents is: *what will you do next year?* Suddenly your life opens up before you. The normality of daily schooling and the safe patterns of life are now falling away.

The future is exciting yet daunting, and possibly not a little confusing. Perhaps you are not so sure about what you will be doing next year. They say that many young people today will end up working in a job that has not yet even been thought of. So the future holds many uncertainties as well as so many possibilities.

This time of transition and the decisions you have made or are about to make is a time when you set your goals.

Tonight I would like to pose the question: *what do you see as your life goals?*

Perhaps at present finding a satisfying career is uppermost in your mind. This is understandable. Another goal is that you would want to secure financial independence. A third goal, which is probably in your mind, is the desire to travel, to see the world. Though I like to say to all young Tasmanians leaving the island – come back.

These are natural goals and probably uppermost in your mind.

I would like to propose another goal; a goal which is one of the most important goals for your life. It is a goal which is appropriately called a vocation, a calling. It is a goal which will set up your future. And it is a goal which offers a path to some of the highest moments of human happiness.

It is a goal which will radically shape your personality and bring forth new aspects to your character. It is a goal which has at its base a radical self-giving which will stretch you and call forth the best in you.

That life goal is marriage and family.

While tonight it may seem a distant goal and one that you cannot quite get your mind around, it is a goal that I recommend you embrace as your future – unless you are called to be a priest or a nun.

Marriage and family is the natural setting for human life. It is what the wise Creator has destined for men and women. It is the way in which human beings bring forth and nurture the next generation.

God said to Adam and Eve: “be fruitful, fill the earth”. There will be no greater thing that you do with your life than be the procreator of a new human being. Nothing will give you greater joy that holding your newly born child in arms.

At the end of your life it will not be your successes and achievements, your travels and experiences, that will count most – but the love you have given and received in your family.

Tonight you rightly celebrate your years at school, especially those at Guildford Young College. Your future opens before you.
May I offer one more thought for you.

In his message to youth at the WYD in Krakow the Pope encouraged young people to have confidence that God is with them in our lives. He said to the young people, “God expects something from you. God wants something from you. God hopes in you. God comes to break down all our fences. He comes to open the doors of our lives, our dreams, our ways of seeing things. God comes to break open everything that keeps you closed in.”

My dear Graduands, go forward into your future.

Know that you do not walk life’s journey alone. There is One who is with you and will never leave you. He is One who will call forth your best self. He is the One who will remind you of the most important of life goals. He is the One who will show you a path to fullness of life. He is One who will never abandon you, and waits for you to turn to Him.

That One is Jesus Christ.

Walk your journey into life with Him. Invite him tonight to accompany you as you set out to find and achieve your life goals.

Derwent Entertainment Centre
Tuesday 8 November 2016