

The Chinese University of Hong Kong
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Our Leaders of Tomorrow

First of all, on behalf of all staff and students of the Chinese University, let me send my warmest congratulations to all the graduates today. You have reaped from your hard work. Let me also thank all the family members and parents of the graduates who are present here and who are unable to attend the ceremony today. Thank you for the trust you have given to the University and the support you have given to the graduates. The day which you have longed for has finally come.

In the past few weeks, Hong Kong has gone through some very difficult and uncertain time in our history. A social uproar is sounding loud and clear and university students are standing very much in the forefront. While we are still not sure how this movement will evolve, we are fully cognizant that young and educated persons, university graduates like your good selves, are the future of our families, our society and our country.

At this auspicious moment, may I share with you the example of an eminent leader that the world looks up to. In 2013, Pope Francis was named one of the most influential leaders in the world by the *Time* magazine. When Vatican picked its new helm in 2013, it was going through one of its most difficult periods. Pope Francis wasted no time in handling sex scandals that had haunted the Church for years, building bridges among Catholics, Muslims, Judaism, different faiths and races, engaging the issues of poverty, gender discrimination and ethnic conflicts. He took the world by storm with his unparalleled style and bold comments.

What can we learn from a great leader?

First, be humble. Humility empowers leaders like no other leadership quality. Pope Francis said, "If we can develop a truly humble attitude, we can change the world." Humility means that you live a simple life and are not to be ruled by the materialistic world. Humility means that you see yourself being equal and not above the crowd that you are leading. Humility means that you are willing to listen and accept opinions that are different from yours, not seeing yourself as the wisest and the flawless. Humility means that you are serving instead of slaving people, helping instead of exploiting them, especially the poor, the weak and the under-privileged groups. And how the Pope lives his daily life is a demonstration of his humility.

Second, be knowledgeable and visionary. In order that you can lead a team, an organization, or even just a family, effectively and sensibly, you have to be

knowledgeable with a broad vision. You have to keep yourself abreast with the advancement in your own field, and at the same time be aware of the tide of the world is turning. Sometimes we are too focused on our tree and lose the forest. Other times we are too distracted by the dazzling world and lose our vision and direction. Therefore, even though you are a university graduate today, or being awarded a postgraduate degree of a professional or research nature, never stop learning, never stop enquiring, never stop improving yourself, never stop looking ahead for opportunities and, in the words of Pope Francis, “reform, renew and reinvent yourself”. With vision, courage and determination, the Pope studies the problems of the world and speaks of his visions and missions.

Third, be inclusive. Facing various social and political issues, Pope Francis declared that the Church should not be a “small chapel focus on doctrine, orthodoxy, a limited agenda of moral teaching”. His goal is a lofty one: Leave No One Behind, not someone with a different sexual orientation, not someone with a different religious background, not someone with an opposing political stance. If you want to be a great leader, you will listen to people who may not be seeing things as you are. You wouldn't mind to be surrounded by people who are not afraid to tell you the truth and offer you advices that you may not like. In his visits to the Arab countries and to the people with different sexual preferences and in his prayer for the sick and the poor, he tries to “Leave No One Behind”.

Leadership is the ability to articulate a vision, and captivate your crowd to move them forward. If you are humble as a servant, if you are knowledgeable and visionary, and if you engage your stakeholders and leave no one behind, you will lead your team, your organization, your country to the next level of prosperity and harmony.

In closing, let me finish by quoting a famous prayer that bears the name of St. Francis of Assisi.

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace;
where there is hatred, let me sow love;
where there is injury, pardon;
where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, light;
and where there is sadness, joy.

O Divine Master,
grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console;
to be understood, as to understand;
to be loved, as to love;
for it is in giving that we receive,
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
and it is in dying that we are born to Eternal Life.

You may not be a religious person, but we need you to sow the seeds of faith, optimism, love, understanding, pardon, hope and peace. We need you to

understand that it is through peaceful, rational, mutual understanding and constructive participation that we can rebuild this city's future.

May I wish all graduates a bright future, and solidarity and prosperity for Hong Kong.