

2024 Law School Graduation

Monday, June 4, 2024

10 a.m.

New Jersey Performing Arts Center

Thank you.

Greetings, and welcome to the Seton Hall Law Class of 2024 and our honored guests! You have my heartfelt congratulations on a job well done.

Thank you, Dean Cornwell, and your outstanding faculty, administrators and staff, for hosting this celebration of achievement.

I will begin today not with a master of law, but a master of English: The Bard himself — William Shakespeare.

One of the most memorable lines in *Henry the Sixth* comes from the character of Dick the Butcher.

He famously says in Act 4:

“The first thing we do: Let’s kill all the lawyers.”

Maybe you’ve heard that line before. Maybe even as a law student.

That line has become popular with people who are dissatisfied with your profession.

However, as Shakespeare tells us, Dick the Butcher is a villain — a large, threatening murderer.

He and his group are aggressively anti-intellectual. They kill anyone who can read, and burn all the books and documents they find.

They seek to overthrow King Henry. And they know the government cannot be overthrown without first ridding the kingdom of lawyers.

They realize the legal profession is a bulwark for law and order. Because they understand that lawyers are protectors of the rights and privileges of the people.

Such was then... and is still today... the highest calling of your profession.

As graduates from Seton Hall Law, you have distinguished yourself. Not only as exemplary students, but as future lawyers who embody the best of what your profession can offer humanity.

I know your professors and mentors have stressed the importance of giving back. Not just to your family and alma mater, but to your community, your country and — most importantly — to society.

And make no mistake: Society needs you more than ever.

It needs lawyers who are trained to passionately represent the people and fight for them.

- Lawyers who pursue the freedom of a client charged with a crime he did not commit.
- Lawyers who seek justice for a woman who was harassed in the workplace.
- Lawyers who advocate for a young couple who have been cheated by their landlord.
- Lawyers who are a voice for the voiceless and champion for people who cannot champion themselves.

When you pursue these tasks, the knowledge, work ethic and mental clarity you honed at Seton Hall will not fail you. Because you understand that compassion and sacrifice for our fellow humans lie at the heart of our concept of justice.

I know you will pass on these lessons to those with whom you serve and work.

Class of 2024, today you don the mantle of your chosen profession.

I charge you with using your skills to heal the world through acts both great and small. I hope all of you will join a cause that means something important to you and to humanity.

Good luck. Travel safely. And come back home when you can.

May God bless you throughout your lives and in everything you do.

Thank you.