

Undergraduate Commencement 2013

- June 16, 2013

- Stephen V. Sundborg, S.J.

Welcome to the Seattle University undergraduate commencement of 2013. Welcome graduating students to this milestone of your education and your life. Welcome parents, grandparents, family, and friends of the graduates. Welcome professors, directors, deans, advisors, administrators, coaches, and mentors to this commencement in which you celebrate the accomplishments of the students you have served.

On this occasion there are so many things that could be said. Especially this comes home to me because this is the last time I get to speak as president to you as students! But on this occasion we leave the important things that could be said to your commencement speaker, Eric Larson, and to the graduating senior, Elizabeth Ochoa, who will speak to you. They will say the important things. Listen to them.

Let me simply try to express on your behalf the thanks you are feeling on this day.

Perhaps first of all you are thankful for successfully completing your Seattle U. education. Maybe that was in doubt at some point in these past years. I am confident you are thankful for those who have helped to educate you inside or outside of the classroom, and especially thankful for a few who made your education special. Your thankfulness extends particularly to classmates and fellow students who have gone the distance with you, who have become friends, not just for these years but beyond. Perhaps your deepest thanks goes to your parents and families who have supported you, believed in you, taken pride in you, sacrificed for you, and love you.

That's so much to be thankful for all at one time on one day! May I suggest however just two more? First of all I hope you experience thanks this day to God who created you, gave you special gifts, blessed you with life, with health, with nature, with all else for which you are thankful. Finally, I hope you are thankful toward yourself, for all you have done not only so that you have expanded opportunities this day of graduation but also that you are today expanded persons capable of deeper, fuller, more true, and more influential lives.

As I said, there are very important things to hear from the special speakers at your commencement. That comes next. But I thought the most important person for you to listen to was yourself and more than anything else to know and feel—and to find your way of expressing in deed, word, or prayer—the thanks which fills you this day which overflows. Live all you have received with thankful hearts and know our thanks for you.