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This is just a brief note to our beloved graduates. Somehow professors always feel they have some advice to give to their students. This is also true of Presidents of universities who, have not had the chance to teach or profess, after taking on administrative duties.

We live in a world that has shrunk terribly due to the information technology. Every event anywhere in the world is connected to us instantaneously. We are virtually bombarded by information all the time and, whether we like it or not, we have to receive the information, to relate it to others, and to interact with it. The more information we receive the more distracted we are. We become dispersed, cut to pieces and distributed carelessly amongst the others. Every new gadget adds a bit more information and nudges us outwards unto the other, the mass, the none-us.

Here is a challenge for us: How to be available for the information that is thrown into the marketplace without purpose, and yet how to control it, how to channel it, how to sift it, how to pick the useful for us, the relevant. A great Poet once wrote "let's look at the infinite stretch of things and choose that which is ours." Of all the information, let's pick what is ours, what authenticates us.

There is danger in equating between information and knowledge. Too much information dilutes our focus and confuses our objectives. We must keep in mind that each of us is unique, there is no one now and there was no one ever, who is like the individuals we are. Each of us has his own authentic being, his own roots, his own life, his own meaning. We may enrich this authenticity, we may deepen it with knowledge, facts about the world, great ideas, but we are not allowed to escape from it by taking refuge in irrelevant information, in boring data, in silly events, in other words, - in gossip.



The purpose of University education is ultimately authentication in being. We do that by reflecting rigorously on who we are, on our faith and ultimate concern, on our role in life, on the impact we will make. We also do that by selecting a profession and excelling in it as to assume responsible and leading positions in it. To excel we have to concentrate. The more we diversify our interests the more we weaken them. Excellence lies in focusing. Excelling in the work we do in life cannot be separated from the moral position, from the values we hold deeply. The proper combination of our values and our profession constitutes our ontology.

As you graduate and depart the Campus, keep in close touch with great books, follow closely the big ideas of the age, and try always not to be totally caught in the gravitational pull of the popular, the fashionable, and the transient.

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