



## ARCHDIOCESE OF PHILADELPHIA

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222 North Seventeenth Street · Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19103-1299  
Telephone (215) 587-0506 · Fax (215) 587-4545

OFFICE of the ARCHBISHOP

June 2022

Dear Graduates of the Class of 2022,

Blessings and congratulations as you reach this milestone on your educational journey!

I write to convey prayerful congratulations to each of you on this special day. Completing elementary school is an achievement that should make you and your families very proud. It's a big step toward becoming a young adult, and I am confident that your education has prepared you well to move on to your high school career. I ask you to take a moment to thank the many people who have helped you achieve this goal.

Your families made many sacrifices to give you the gift of a Catholic education rich in academics and infused with Jesus' example of love and service. They also modeled the qualities of Christian maturity that have supplemented your formational journey at school.

Your teachers and principals provided you with a learning experience rooted in faith to help you live a life of a missionary disciple and to encounter the world for Christ. Their support and daily guidance has helped you accomplish so much in the classroom and beyond. In the years ahead you will come to appreciate just how precious your experience with them was.

Finally, it's important for you to give thanks to our God. He has blessed you with a unique personality, a beautiful mind, a giving heart, and skills all your own that are needed to make your world a better place. Your progression through the grades was supported by loving parents, dedicated teachers, administrators, priests, and consecrated religious who worked to help you learn your potential and to understand how to use it for good.

As you go forward, do so with confidence knowing that you are ready to embrace the rigors of high school classes and face difficult moments. The gifts of faith and knowledge of Our Lord's way are powerful ones. I encourage you to remain close to Jesus through prayer and the sacraments. Know that the grace of the Holy Spirit will guide you if you keep your heart and mind open to receiving it.

Eighth grade graduation is a time of mixed emotion. Thoughts of the friends and the teachers you knew for so long bring joy that is tempered anxiety about starting a new chapter. Embrace this opportunity. Be kind to the new friends you will meet. I am confident that you are prepared for this next step in your life. Cherish your memories and embrace the challenges coming your way. You have the power to make our world a better place.

May your high school years provide you with many opportunities to grow in faith and as a missionary disciple. Go out and do great things in the name of Jesus. You will be in my prayers. Congratulations and enjoy your summer break!

Sincerely yours in Christ

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nelson J. Pérez".

Most Reverend Nelson J. Pérez, D. D.  
Archbishop of Philadelphia