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UNIVERSITY OF
SAINT JOSEPH

**USJ Congregation 2021
Address by the Rector, Rev. Prof. Stephen Morgan**

3 July 2021

Triumph in the face of adversity

I began my speech here last year's by telling those about to graduate how impressed we all were at how they had coped with the challenges of finishing their degrees under the restrictions imposed by the pandemic. I don't think a single person there then thought that there was a chance that twelve months later we would be in much the same position. And yet here we are: a year and a half since Covid-19 struck, you are graduating. Those of you taking Bachelor degrees today have spent one third of your course - and arguably the most important third - studying against the background of social distancing in classes, online teaching, restrictions on travel, vaccinations, separation from families and everything else. For those taking Master degrees, for many of you it is fully three-quarters of your time at USJ that has been overshadowed by these things. If last year's graduates were heroes, you are the full Marvel Comic Superheroes. You deserve our admiration. As we say in my language, "Llongyfarchiadau i chi gyd!" Congratulations to you all.

Adversity you have face in abundance, but it isn't the presence of adversity that marks out superheroes: it is the way they cope with that adversity. It would have been easy for you to have buckled under the pressures, to have given up, to have settled for second best. Nobody would have blamed you. Everybody would have understood. But that wasn't what you chose to do. When we look at the grades you earned, at how you have worked over these last months, at your responses to student surveys, what we see is that you doubled down. You adapted to new methods of teaching and learning, you grasped the opportunities to take responsibility for your studies and, rather than studying less and relying more upon what your professors gave you, you studied more, you read more, you did more research and you worked harder. In short, USJ class of 2021, you demonstrated that you were men and women of character. You are a credit to yourselves, to your families, to this University.

We read in the Analects that, "The *junzi*, the exemplary person does not accept being known for petty talents but accepts receiving great burdens. The petty person does not accept receiving great burdens, but settles for being known for their petty talents." (Confucius, *Analects*, 15.34) Your response to the particular challenges, to the great burdens of this year marks each one of you out as *Junzi*, as an exemplary



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individual. Indeed, it really is the kind of testing in the face of adversity that shows the character of a person. When things are easy, when everything is going our way, we are able to sit well within our personal comfort-zones. In those times we don't need to push ourselves, we don't need to draw on our reserves, our strength of character. It is in times of difficulty, in the struggle against strong head winds, that our virtues are forged and tested, developed and perfected. In such circumstances it is easy to become resentful and yet you have remained - mostly - in good spirits. You have accepted the challenge that the Apostle St James set before the early Christian community, in the face of the challenges of marginalisation and persecution that they faced, the challenge to "Count it all a joy, my brothers and sisters, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing." (Jas. 1: 2-4)

Indeed, that is your Rector's prayer, my deepest desire for you today, that the testing you have undergone, the challenges you have met will make you steadfast in the face of adversity, so that you may become ever more perfect, ever more complete, lacking in nothing, becoming your very, very best selves. On the evidence before us today, on the evidence of your performance in your degrees, I have every confidence that that is exactly what will happen.

We are very proud of those who graduate from our programmes. We know that despite being a small university, those who pass through USJ receive an absolutely first-class education, and what is more the employers of Macao know it too. Every week, once or twice a week, I meet employers who tell me that USJ graduates are different from other graduates in Macao. They are more creative and innovative; they are adaptable and collaborative; they are problem solvers, and they are almost always ready to engage positively with constructive criticism and become better employees. These qualities lie behind the raw data that tells us that our graduates have amongst the highest graduate employability in Macao, and this should give you all huge confidence in yourselves.

Of course, this doesn't need only your input. It is the result of a team effort involving you, your friends, your families - many of whom have made great sacrifices to get you this day. And it required the effort of the team at USJ. I want to talk a little bit about that team now.

When I became Rector, just over a year ago, I knew I was being asked to lead a very capable group of academic, administrative and support staff. I had no real idea though, at least not beyond the confines of my own faculty, just what an impressive and committed group of people makes up the staff of USJ. I know now. I know now that the diverse team of researchers, teachers, administrators and support staff that goes to make up USJ is of rare quality. They too have had to cope with the challenges of the pandemic, many of them separated from their families, learning and adapting to new ways of working, new ways of living.



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To recognise this, this year I instituted a system of Rector's Commendations to recognise exceptional commitment and performance in the departments and faculties of the University. Last month, I gave a lunch for the twelve winners of those commendations and today, at the end of the ceremony, I will be awarding two of those individuals - one from the administration and support staff and one from the academic staff - the Rector's Award. They don't know who they are yet, but I want you to know that they are only two out of over 150 people in the USJ team that strives day in day out to ensure that those who, like you, chose to come to this University receive quite simply the best education available.

I have spoken perhaps too long, and we really should get on with the main business of the morning - granting you your well-earned degrees. I do, however, want to say one very last thing to you. Just as the depth of character of an individual is proved and shown in steadfastness, fortitude and forbearance in the face of adversity, so the quality of that character and its capacity to transform the world in the lives of those with which it comes into contact is demonstrated in other virtues - in personal integrity and kindness, in gentleness and mercy, in faithfulness and patience, in gratitude and thankfulness: in short, the quality of your character is shown in love. You have received much love to get you here today. As your Rector, I lay upon you this one last obligation on behalf of USJ: to return love for love, to return love for indifference, to return love for hatred, to return love in all that you do. May our great patron St Joseph, the foster-father of the Lord, intercede for you all with his Divine Son, that you may be people who transform society with the skills and virtues you have developed, learned and perfected at USJ but above all else to transform it with love.

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2021 年度畢業典禮 -- 校長麥侍文教授致辭

2021 年 7 月 3 日

逆境中的勝利

在去年的講辭中，我告訴即將畢業的學生，他們在疫情限制的挑戰下依然順利完成學位讓我留下深刻的印象。我猜當時沒有人會想到，十二個月後我們仍處於同樣的境況。然而，在新型冠狀病毒爆發一年半後，今天你們畢業了。攻讀學士學位的同學們，你們有三分之一的課程是在課堂上保持社交距離、線上教學、外遊限制、疫苗接種、與家人分離以及其他限制的環境下進行學習的。攻讀碩士學位的同學們，你們在聖大有整整四分之三的時間都受這些防疫措施所限制。如果說去年的畢業生是英雄，那麼，你們就是漫畫裡的超級英雄。你們值得我們敬佩。以我家鄉話說“Llongyfarchiadau i chi gyd!” 恭喜你們！

你們經常面對逆境，但標誌着超級英雄的並不是逆境的**存在**；而是你們**應對**逆境的方式。在壓力下，很容易會令人屈服、放棄、退而求其次；沒有人會責怪你，大家都會理解。但你並沒有選擇這樣做。當我們看到你們的成績、看到你們在過去幾個月的努力、看到你們對學生問卷調查的回應，我們看到的是你們加倍努力。你們適應了新的教學方法，抓住了對自己學習負責的機會，而不是減少學習或更依賴教授給你們的材料，相反，你們學習和閱讀更多，做更多的研究，更加努力。簡而言之，在 2021 年聖大畢業班，你們證明了你們是有品格的人，你們是自己、家人和這所大學的榮譽。

我們在《論語》中讀到：「君子不可小知，而可大受也；小人不可大受，而可小知也。」（釋義：君子不可做小事，而可接受重大使命；小人不可接受重大使命，而祇能做小事。）（孔子，《論語》，15.34）你們面對今年這挑戰、這重擔的反應，證明了你們每個人都是君子，是一個模範個人。事實上，面對逆境的考驗確實能體現出一個人的品格。當事情很簡單，當一切都按照我們的方式進行時，我們可以在自己的舒適圈內安然無恙。在那些時候，我們不需要推動自己，不需



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要動用我們的儲備、我們的品格力量。正是在困難時期，在與強勁逆風的鬥爭中，我們的美德才得以培養、磨鍊、發展和完善。在這種情況下，很容易產生怨恨，但你們仍然——大部分人——保持着良好的精神狀態。你們已經接受了宗徒聖雅各伯在面對早期教會團體所面臨的邊緣化和迫害的挑戰，即「我的弟兄們，幾時你們落在各種試探裡，要認為是大喜樂，因為你們應知道：你們的信德受過考驗，才能生出堅忍。但這堅忍又必須有完美的實行，好使你們既成全而又完備，毫無缺欠。」（雅 1: 2-4）

這是你們校長的祈禱，也是我今天對你們最深切的期望，希望你們所經歷的考驗，你們所遇到的挑戰，能使你們在逆境中堅定不移，使你們變得更加完美，更加完整，無所不能，成為非常好的自己。從今天我們能看見的證據、你們在攻讀學位上的表現，我完全相信，你們必定能如願以償。我們為完成聖大課程畢業的學生們感到非常自豪。我們知道，儘管聖大是一所小型大學，但在聖大就讀的人得到的絕對是一流的教育，更重要的是，澳門的許多僱主也知道這一點。每個星期，我都會遇到一些僱主，他們告訴我聖大的畢業生與澳門其他大學的畢業生不同。他們更有創造力和創新精神；他們適應能力強，善於合作；他們樂於解決問題，而且總是準備好積極面對建設性的批評，成為更好的員工。這些品質背後的原始數據告訴我們，聖大的畢業生在澳門畢業生就業能力中名列前茅，這應該讓你們對自己充滿信心。

當然，這不僅僅需要你們的參與，是由你們、你們的朋友和家人共同努力的成果——他們當中有許多人為了成就今天的你們而作出了巨大的犧牲。這也需要聖大團隊的努力。現在我們就來說說團隊合作。

當我一年多前成為校長時，我知道我要領導一支由學術、行政和支援人員組成的非常有能力的團隊。但我並不真正了解，至少在我自己的院系範圍之外，聖大的員工是一個多麼令人印象深刻和忠誠的群體。我現在知道了，組成聖大的多元化研究人員、教師、行政人員和支援人員團隊均具有罕見的特質。他們也不得不應對疫情的挑戰，其中許多人與家人分離，需要學習和適應新的工作模式、新的生活方式。意識到這一點，今年我建立了一個校長嘉許制度，以表彰大學各部門和學院的傑出貢獻和表現。上個月，我為這兩項表彰的十二名遴選者舉行了午餐聚會，而在今天儀



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式結束時，我將向其中兩人——一名來自行政和支援人員、一名來自學術人員——頒發校長嘉許獎。大家還不知道獲獎者是誰，但我想讓你們知道，他們只是聖大團隊 150 多人中的兩位，他們日復日地努力，只為確保你們選擇來到這所大學就讀能得到最佳的教育。

我也許說得太多了，我們應該繼續今天的主要工作——授予你們應得的學位。然而，我確實想對你們說最後一件事。正如一個人品格的深度往往體現於其面對逆境時的堅定、剛毅和忍耐，這種品格的特質及其在與之接觸的人的生活中改變世界的能力也表現在其他美德上——一個人的正直和善良、溫柔和憐憫、忠誠和耐心、感激和感恩：簡而言之，你的品格特質體現在愛中。你們今天來到這裏，已經得到了很多愛。作為你們的校長，我代表聖大向你們提出最後一項義務：以愛回報愛，以愛回報冷漠，以愛回報仇恨，以愛回報你們所做的一切。願我們偉大的主保聖若瑟，主的養父，與他的聖子一起為你們代禱，願你們成為會運用在聖大所培養、學會和完善的技能和美德去改變這社會的人，但最重要的是用愛來改造它。

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