Principal Dr. Wai, members of the School Committee, teachers and staff, parents and students. Good Morning!

It is of great pleasure to be invited as a guest of honor for the Graduation and Prize Giving Ceremony.

I am always fond of coming back to St. Stephen’s, as I have a lot of good memories when I was a student here. I still remember when attending the very first speech day as a student, I was so impressed by the speech delivered by the guest of honor and I was hoping that someday, I can come back as a guest of honor myself.

So thanks to Principal Dr. Wai, today is a dream come true for me. Yet today is not about me, it is about you, the graduating students and the prize winners. So what should I talk about to inspire you as you prepare for further studies? What does it mean now that you have completed 6 years of education at St. Stephen’s College Preparatory school?

When I was preparing my speech, I remember that the school’s mission is to prepare students to be leaders of tomorrow’s changing world. I am not a fictional person that comes from tomorrow, but I do experience a lot about the changing world, and I want to talk about change today.

People always say that ‘the only constant in life is change’. This is a statement that I could not agree more. Let me take a few moments and fast forward your next 20 years, and look at what changes you are likely to go through.

After this summer, you will be entering into secondary school with a different environment. Mentally, you will be exposed to even more knowledge and opportunities to grow. Physically, your body will experience a lot of changes as you grow. Boys in
particular, your voice will change. As you graduate from secondary school, you will face another drastic change, as the learning and social environment at university is very different. Some may even go overseas to study, being exposed to a different culture.

At some point, you will start to work. On a personal side, you will fall in love with the prince charming or princess of your dreams. Very soon, you will get married and have children of your own, and by that time, you will appreciate the love from your parents, and the sacrifices that they have gone through while raising you.

All these changes are very exciting, aren’t they?

What is even more challenging to students nowadays is that change, is happening faster than ever.

Let me give you an example, by looking at how long it took for different media to reach 50 million users. It took telephone 75 years to reach 50 million users, 38 years for radio to reach 50 million users, for TV - 13 years, Facebook - 3.5 years, and any guess on how long it took for the Angry Birds game to reach 50 million users?? 35 days!

Technological advancements have brought so many changes these days. I purposely bring along a tablet instead of a piece of paper today in giving my speech to signify how times have changed. So what can we do, as we are facing change happening in such a rapid pace? I have 3 tips to share:

First. Embrace Change, understand that it is a fact of life and do not be afraid of change. In fact, look at change as an opportunity. That applied to me when I left a very stable job in a bank, to join Yahoo! at a time when the internet industry was still very young, that was the time even before you were born! I knew that if my transition to a new industry worked, then I would have learnt a lot of new knowledge and continue to work
on something new and exciting. If I fail in my transition, I can always switch back to work in a bank, but still gained a lot of new knowledge.

Secondly. Anticipate Change. Now that you have embraced change, the next step is to anticipate change. Be alert to the current events that are shaping tomorrow’s world, and ask yourself what that means. Stay hungry for new knowledge and continue to learn through experience.

Lastly. Do not afraid of failures and keep on trying. Understand that there are a lot of uncertainties during times of change, and it is very common, that you cannot get it right the first time. Do not lose faith but learn from your mistakes and keep on trying.

I am an optimist who believes change is good, and that tomorrow will be better than today. Being graduates of St. Stephen’s College Preparatory School means that you are prepared to deal with the changing world. Over the past 6 years, the teachers have equipped you with the necessary skills and knowledge to deal with change. Having boarding experience at such a young age allows you to become more independent and enhance your social skills, a key quality to be successful in today’s society.

Today, as you graduate, be thankful to the school, the principal, the teachers, and also your fellow classmates in providing a very special learning environment for you to grow. These relationships are very special. So remember to stay connected with them by joining the alumni association when you leave the St. Stephen’s family.

Congratulations again to the graduates and to the prize winners.

Be confident and a bright future awaits you. Thank You.