

PCC Graduation  
May 24, 2013  
Rev. Billy Kuartei

## OUTLINE

### Introduction

- 1<sup>st</sup> Do what you love
- 2<sup>nd</sup> In all that you do – do your best
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Love your family
- 4<sup>th</sup> You are never too old to stop learning
- 5<sup>th</sup> Remember where you came from – don't lose sight of your roots.
- 6<sup>th</sup> Finally/ & most importantly – you should take the life that God  
God gave you and make a difference (*alternate: --Use the life  
that God has given you and make a difference*)

## **Introduction**

Thank you Fellow Trustee Summer Saunders, and good morning Graduates! I am grateful for this opportunity to share with you and your families the satisfaction of your achievements on this special day.

Commencement addresses are usually intended to inspire and to teach—but many of you graduates are a little older, hopefully wiser—you are already juggling career and family with school, so you know too well about balancing paychecks and responsibilities. (And too)—

Because you are just minutes away from graduation, there is little left to prove. We know you are motivated, hard working and determined. So let me just send you out into the world with a bit of advice. In my career as a church minister and the few years in government service, I have learned some things that may help you.

**First – Do what you love.**

When you enjoy what you do—when you pursue your passion—neither fatigue nor failure ever seem possible—though sometimes your spirit may be weakened, it cannot be broken. In the comic strip—“Born Loser”, it is lunch time and everyone get together and open their lunch boxes. Brutus opens his and says, “I hate tuna sandwich, I hate tuna sandwich—oh how I hate tuna sandwich.” So his friend says, “why don’t you have your wife make a different sandwich?” “I can’t, I can’t, I just can’t!” “Why?” “Because I make my own sandwich!!” In the final analysis you will eat the sandwich of your own making.

**Second – In all that you do—do your best.**

This will be the characteristic that will define you to others and will set the course for your accomplishments in life and your profession. Both excellence and success are attained through—day to day dedication. You did your best yesterday—and the day before that. But next week (tomorrow) has new challenges and we have to continue to do our very best. PCC has sincerely done its best for you. *Sincere* comes from two Latin words *sine*—without and *cera*—wax.

**Third—Love your family**

Nothing will give you greater joy. Some of my (the) proudest moments came when I attended graduation of my children from college. There were no struggles that day—no heartaches. There were just smiles and so much joy to share. To achieve success in life, remember that your families and your relationships are the most important measure of your success and the most precious support for continued achievements.

**Fourth—You are never too old to stop learning.**

Today—for some of you—your formal education ends and your learning begins. Learning is a lifelong and essential pursuit. It does not end when the door of the school closes behind us or the diploma hangs on the wall. We cannot afford to think that we have all the answers or that we do not need to practice or study more. Every great opportunity and achievement begins with a desire to learn new things and take on new risks. Every moment is a learning moment if we keep our minds open, alert and ready.



**Fifth—Remember where you came from and don't lose sight of your roots.**

My older brother is visiting us this month from California. Most evenings we talk about our heritage, our beautiful culture and about the wonderful opportunities we have enjoyed in *our* beloved Belau. I remember growing up in Ngchesar *State* as a boy. There was no telephone, no television, no running hot water, no porcelain toilet. We went to the outhouse by the mangrove trees.

We all know that your environment and relationships affect your outlook on life.

When you grow up with little, you learn to be grateful for the smallest comforts. I think you also appreciate more the kindness of others. You remember those who helped you and you have greater pride in your own accomplishments.

Graduates—you have been given a great deal to reach this point. Your teachers, counselors, parents and families have sacrificed and encouraged you. DO NOT FORGET THAT! You have a degree now, but that doesn't make you *a better person, it simply means you are more educated.*

**Finally**, and most importantly, you should *use the life* that God has given you and make a difference. Saint Paul instructs his young disciple Timothy to “run the race in such a way as to win the prize.” Your life is a life worth living. Think of the alternative—how sad it is to have any life end unnoticed without making a difference, without leaving a mark to show that you were even here. It may seem self-centered to want to be remembered, but I sincerely believe that we are each given life to make a difference—to leave a set of footprints for others to follow. Our lives and the world we inherit will only be improved by our own accomplishments and those of others. So I say—Go for It!

Graduates—Thank you again for letting me share this special day with you. My grand-children will grow up in the world that you shape and lead in the years to come. So I hope you learn well these and other life lessons!

May God continue to watch over you and your families and guide your decisions and may He continue to bless Palau Community College and the Republic of Palau.