Dear Mary Smith,

You didn’t expect to hear from me, but I wanted to congratulate you on your graduation and wish you well for all that lies ahead. It’s an exciting time in your life as many new doors open.

Thanks too for being a part of our Catholic community through the years you’ve spent at St Joseph’s Secondary College. To have been part of your journey has been a great gift for all of us. Education is always two-way traffic: we teach you and you teach us. This might be a moment for you to look back and to say thanks for those who have been more closely involved than I have in your journey through school – your parents or carers, your teachers and friends. You will leave school but they will always be part of you.

Education is more than schooling. It’s more than academic learning and passing exams. They’re important but they’re not enough. Education is also about coming to know what really matters in life and what makes for real happiness. Many of you have engaged in social outreach through secondary school, and that’s a key to your future. If you can continue to learn what it means to care for the oppressed, to be a voice for the voiceless, to reach out to the marginalised, then you will be the leaders of the future that Catholic education has wanted to make you. God will work through you, and that’s when life becomes what it’s meant to be.

You have been deeply loved – by your family and friends, by the school community you now leave and, above all, by Jesus Christ. Let that love flow more and more through you to others in the years ahead.

Finally, I want to offer you the accompaniment and support of the Catholic Church into the future. Your Catholic schooling may be over, but the Church will continue to walk with you and take a real interest in where and how you’re going. If you’re heading to university, we have chaplaincies on many campuses. There are also opportunities if you’re headed into the workforce through different Church agencies and local parishes. If you’re not quite sure of your plans for next year, I’m sure you’re not alone. You might want to stay connected with various Catholic events taking place around Brisbane and South-East Queensland via www.schoolleavers.org.au. Have a look at it some time.

On behalf of all the people that make up the Archdiocese of Brisbane, I wish you every blessing on all that you do in the future. You and your family will be in my prayers.

As always in the Lord,

[Signature]

Archbishop of Brisbane

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