

Last Lecture for Class of '08

**Reverend David M. O'Leary, S.T.L., D.Phil.
University Chaplain &
Senior Lecturer in Religion & Medical Ethics**

As a member of the Religion Department, I would like to begin by reminding everyone that the word "Religion" comes from the Latin "Religare", which means to bind. Tonight, I would ask that you commit to bind yourselves to three words; RISK, BELIEVE & LOVE.

RISK- Rowing a boat. It is only when you see & acknowledge where you have come from, that you can move ahead.

RISK- Having a list of your failings, not to beat yourself up with or to be guilty. But to be able to say what you learned and how you have grown because of those failings.

RISK- Crying. Nothing grows without water and there is nothing as whole as a broken heart.

RISK – Speaking to the invisible people. Our One Source workers, the Lunch Ladies, member of our Grounds Crew, Admins and Staff folks, all are full of wisdom and deep insights. The wisest person doesn't always have the big corner office.

RISK – Being vulnerable. It is in our weaknesses that we reach out to others.

BELIEVE in Birthdays, Yours, and all those around you. Celebrate them all.

BELIEVE in Being there for others. A handshake, a hand on the shoulder, a pat on the back, a hug, always trumps the cards, the flowers or the gifts.

BELIEVE in being in AWE. Awe of nature, awe of sun rises and sun sets, awe of the mountains, ocean and lakes. Moses was in awe of a burning bush. That awe changed the world.

BELIEVE in Integrity. Be the person of your word. You are only as good as your last encounter with another. Make your words true.

BELIEVE in the Sabbath. If the Creator rested, maybe you should too. Take time to re-charge. Spend time with loved ones. For the truly Sacred is where you spend your time.

LOVE – Poetry, read it often. Memorize a few lines. One of my favorites is from Elizabeth Barrett Browning's "Auroa Leigh"
All earth's crammed with Heaven
And ev'ry common bush afire with God

But only those with eyes to see
Take off their shoes.
The rest sit 'round
And pluck blackberries.

LOVE - Love your parents. Accept them with gratitude. Acknowledge that you love them.

LOVE – Love to write; even better, love to say the words “I Love You.” Say them to that special person, say them regardless of what will be said in reply. Say the words to that person while they are still in your life, while they are still living. Some regrets can not be done over.

LOVE – LOVE- LOVE.

My last lecture for the class of '08.

I love being at Tufts, I love being a professor, I love being a priest.

Live what you believe,
Believe what you practice,
Love what you believe.

Three words to bind your self to; RISK, BELIEVE & LOVE.