

*Speech to the Class of 2011  
Valedictory Dinner  
Immanuel Lutheran College*

*A teacher wrote in my Annual School Report, "Lazy, talkative and notable". I thought "notable" did not sound too bad until I realized it was "not able". They were the days before parent rage stalked school halls and teachers would give their unrestrained opinions. Today, they give students like me a more subtly insulting "You must be very proud of him".*

*Some people say that teachers do not have a sense of humour. I do not know where they would get that impression. In fact, all teachers and school staff have a wonderful sense of humour, they just can't let us students and parents in on it. For instance, you cannot find the books you look for in the library, the librarians have convinced you that it is your fault as you do not understand the Dewey Decimal system. In fact, there is no Dewey Decimal system. The Head Librarian, Mr Smith comes in every night and moves the books around. He thinks it is funny.*

*To be a student with a passion for practical jokes may feel pretty good but to be Head of Senior School with a passion for practical jokes is out of sight. Now there is something to aim for.*

*Never, never, never lose your sense of humour. Your parents and teachers will tell you that there are many days in life when you will need it. There is one coming up very soon. The day your final examination results arrive. Before your parents launch into their usual tirade, having for your entire life brushed over their own school academic record, as I have done. Remind them that many of our greatest Australians did not get a good final exam result either. For instance, Ned Kelly, Mr Squiggle, Dorothy the Dinosaur. In fact, watching question time in our Parliament, it is clear that the country is being run by C students. This may seem wrong to you students but believe me it will give your parents great comfort and is the only thing keeping some of your teachers going, it gives them hope.*

*Some people say that parents do not have a sense of humour. I do not know where they would get that idea from. In fact, we parents have a wonderful sense of humour but often cannot let on. For instance, who gave you those weird middle names?*

*In a moment, I am going to ask all to stand as I wish to propose a toast to the teachers and staff of this the greatest school on the Sunshine Coast and I am not just saying that because you lot are leaving. The toast shall be in the words of Tina Turner "simply the best".*

*Paul Brennan  
Sunshine Coast, Queensland  
18 November, 2011*

*"To present to your peers is stressful but to present to your teenage daughter's peers is up there with death and moving house"*