



# Stanford Lake College

## 2009 Valedictory Address by Nichola Gilbert

Good afternoon staff, parents, students.

Congratulations, Matrics! You have completed 870 days of school. Eight hundred and seventy days. You have survived hatchery, food fights, flash floods and many clashes of opinions.

However, our greatest achievement as a grade is not a single event in which we triumphed. It cannot be pinpointed to a single year among the 5 which we spent together. It is not something that we have done, but rather what we have become, because each of those 870 days has moulded us into a vibrant and diverse group of individuals. A group that I am proud to be a part of, saddened to say goodbye to, but unbelievably enthusiastic for our future.

The words, "We remain a young nation, but the time has come to put aside childish things" were spoken by President Barack Obama in his inauguration speech. Each Matric sitting here today, ladies and gentlemen, is an adult that I have no doubt will be part of the solution to the puzzles it is certain our generation will face. Each Matric is an individual that knows the importance of play but also knows when it is time to put aside fear and uncertainty and take on our responsibilities with courage.

After 870 days at this amazing school we are ready to go our separate ways. Each one of us will choose our own path. However, if fear and uncertainty do take hold of you, I hope you will remember this scripture from 2 Timothy 4:7

*I have fought the good fight; I have finished the race; I have kept the faith.*

Fight the good fight. Fight with passion and fire as well as direction. Do not be a blind soldier. Fight for your future, but do not let the vision of what is to come cloud the present. Fight for the ones you love because what is a victory without anybody to share it with.

Finish the race; make it your own race. A race that lingers at your favourite places more than once. One where you can take a breather when you need it and which allows for detours now and then. Take a risk and cut through a field one day. Choose to go over the mountain instead of around it,

GROWING TOGETHER FOR LIFE

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simply to experience the breathtaking view. Race barefoot and the footprint you leave behind will be unique.

Keep the faith; be a lighthouse. A lighthouse can stand metres from the grip of the mighty ocean because it is securely built. It is secure because we who created it ensured that it had the strength to survive where we placed it. Our LORD, our creator, gives us the strength to be lighthouses. Keep your faith in his craftsmanship and you too will be able to withstand the rough times.

And there will be trying times. Times when you wish you could add one more day to the 870 and come back to the safety of this school. A place where there is no need to fear.

However, once we give up our shoes today, we will all continue barefoot to complete the race we were born to finish.

Matrics of 2009:

May you fight the good fight;  
May you finish the race;  
May you keep the faith.