

## Speech (Ethan Fung)

Tonight, I stand here before you, looking back on four years of legacy we've all made together. However, through these past four years, we've gone through some turbulent times. From adjusting to the pandemic in our academic and personal lives to figuring out the next steps of our lives, we've persevered and continued to move forward to get where we are this evening.

We all have an uncertain, but very bright future ahead of us. On behalf of the class of 2023, I would like to express tremendous gratitude to all of the hard working teachers and staff who have helped us along the way. Whether it is carefully working with us until we fully understand concepts or setting up office hours that many of us don't even bother showing up to, our teachers have done a wonderful job contributing to our growth as students and as individuals. Can I please get a round of applause for them? \*pauses for applause\*. These teachers and so many more have contributed to Christian Brothers' inclusive community throughout these four years and the ensuing years to come. I also want to give a shout out to senior student council for their hard work and organizing numerous events for the rest of us to enjoy throughout our time here. And don't think I forgot about you lovely family members. Due to your constant support for us, we were able to thrive in our Christian Brothers community and have gotten through some very difficult times. When we were forced to quarantine with our families, you helped us remain strong and resilient for the inevitable difficulties that arose during the pandemic. Even through all of the arguments and conflicts about cell phone use or personal appearance, you always remain by our sides.

We also share gratitude for all of the friends and memories we have made during our time at CB. It doesn't matter if we've been friends with each other for one day or since day one, let's

be thankful for those around us and not take them for granted. In addition to our friends, the wide variety of clubs and teams have further increased the chances for us to strengthen our community, allowing us to be a part of something bigger than ourselves. For me, that club was Academic Decathlon, which connected me with members of the class of 2023 as well as other classes here at Christian Brothers. Over the course of these four years, I've experienced how meaningful it is to be a mentor to others after being fortunate enough to receive advice from those who came before me. Because I do not have an older sibling, when I entered CB, I did not have a guide to offer me any advice or tips about high school. Although it took me a couple of months to integrate with the juniors and seniors at the time, the December scrimmage in my freshman year strengthened my bond with them. From that point onwards, I found it enjoyable to see more friendly faces across campus. Four years later, as the only senior on the team, I leave behind a solid core that has led CB to a top four finish for the past two years and have been invited to state competition two times in three years. As I have switched roles becoming the mentor, I hope to leave a lasting impact on my teammates through my contributions and the advice given to them as they continue their journey.

Throughout my time here at CB, I've seen numerous examples of members of the class of 2023 demonstrating this leadership and mentorship, making a meaningful impact on others' lives. Whether it's serving as mentors to their younger siblings or underclassmen, our seniors have increased their confidence and communication skills, and have exposed them to new and different perspectives. In addition to providing our lower class members confidence, the mentorship of the class of 2023 serves as an example of our key motto, "Enter to learn, leave to serve". As we leave Christian Brothers and go to college and beyond, we must be reminded that

our future jobs and career choices are meant to continue this leadership and help serve others. Whether it's the medical field, education, or something else, we should be inspired to serve others and improve our community in any ways possible.

In our quest to help others, there may be uncertainties about things we are scared of and worry about their potential outcomes. However, that does not mean we should not take any risks in order to prevent mistakes. Even upon leaving Christian Brothers, I encourage you to challenge yourself in order to find out your strengths and know your mettle. Whether it's taking more rigorous courses or trying something entirely new, getting out of our comfort zones provide new opportunities we didn't even know existed. With our class' diversity in our culture, backgrounds, and opportunities, our minds remain open to new ideas and perspectives. By listening to others' opinions, you can gain a much wider base of knowledge that will be useful in the real world.

Even as we near the end of our time at Christian Brothers, I want to emphasize the determination and grit we had to make it across the stage tonight. We all have our unique talents that allow us exciting opportunities, but hard work is necessary in order to make these goals a reality. That determination is the engine that keeps us pushing towards our various definitions of success. So when we're struggling with our schoolwork, jobs, or even personal lives, remember that we have the ability to help improve the lives of others. Not only does serving better other people's lives, but ours as well. So as we leave to serve, our Lasallian community does not shrink, but rather continues to grow.

Ultimately, it's not whether we have the opportunity or not, but rather what we choose to do with it. But for now, let us enjoy this special night and make the most of our futures. Thank

you for giving me the honor of addressing you one last time, and may I wish you, the class of 2023, the best of luck in all of your future endeavors.