

*Your Excellency Bishop Doran, Distinguished guests, Parents, Families, and Classmates,*

Good Evening. Thank you for coming to share this special day with my classmates and me.

When I look back over the past few years and think about this class, one quality sticks out in my mind, and that is our determination. Most of you have probably heard the saying "It's not the size of the dog in the fight, but the size of the fight in the dog." Not only does this quote suit Aquin pretty well, because we are not exactly known for our size, and we are the bulldogs after all, but most importantly, this saying portrays a good description of our class.

The man who said these words was Archie Griffin. For those of you who do not know who he is, allow me to share his story with you. Growing up, Griffin was shorter and slightly overweight. Needless to say, as a freshman football player, he was placed on the line. He wanted to be a fullback, but obviously his coach did not see him in that position. One game, the starting fullback happened to be absent, and Griffin stepped in. That game's performance, paired with numerous hours of off-season training, enabled that fullback spot to become Griffin's full-time position for the next three years. He thrived as a fullback, even though everyone doubted him at first. Griffin's high school success continued in college at Ohio State University, where he won not one, but two Heisman trophies, and he eventually played in the National Football League for the Cincinnati Bengals.

To me, this is a person with true determination. He possesses the "fight" of a dog to which his quote refers. There are numerous examples of this willpower in the class of 2010. Every boy in the class has been a member of the football team at one time or another, and on any given Friday night or Saturday afternoon you would find every girl in the stands cheering for them, and vice versa when it was the girls turn to take the court. However, this does not only apply to football. Our class is also a

little competitive... but this quality allowed us to collect thousands of cans for FACC, paint the best homecoming sheet three years in a row, build the best float twice, and win the overall homecoming spirit award twice.. (But hey, who's counting).

Sometimes our determination seemed to be stubbornness. For instance, when we decided we wanted a Star Wars prom. We pursued it as a theme, fought for what we wanted, and it proved to be a great success.

However, the words "fight of a dog" represent more than just sheer determination. They also suggest integrity, courage, passion, and good will. Our integrity and passion came out most in our moments of weakness. Over the years, we have lost our fair share of ball games, contests, and even loved ones. But it was in these moments of sadness, that the bond of the class was the strongest. We were there to support and pray for each other, to provide a shoulder to cry on, or to make each other laugh.

Our passion was also radiant in those happy moments: winning a conference championship in football with an overtime victory, a regional championship in girl's basketball, a triple overtime victory over our favorite opponent, Dakota, in boy's basketball, and a conference championship in boy's baseball. Other moments include producing show-stopping musicals, going to the prom and other dances, dressing up and participating in homecoming games, or forming the infamous 80+ pound paper ball. From the past, we remember the day when Neal took the barcode off his planner, the day Eric stuck a paperclip in an outlet, shutting off the electricity in the entire upstairs, or the day Danny stapled his own finger.

There are many more moments like these, and we hope that in fighting for what we believe in, we spread a little bit of our passion and good will to others. Over the years, we have been active members of service groups, and served as chairpersons of many projects. At Aquin, we learned how important it is to live our

faith. We attended Masses and prayer services together, and learned how to treat one another with the upmost levels of respect.

At our senior retreat, one classmate read a letter from Mrs. Runte to the rest of us. In it she said, "I want to especially commend you for your positive attitude and manner this year, and it will be easy for us to remind the students next year, 'Remember how the class of 2010 did it!' You will also be known for your willingness to help others, for your leadership, and for your commitment to each other". She also mentioned that we were the best senior class ever, but that's no surprise. Except this time, I think she really meant it.

I would like to close by mentioning that this "fight of the dog" quality of our class did not come from us alone. It was nurtured by the hard work of many people.

To our wonderful tuition-paying parents - you should take great pride in knowing that you were the ones who raised us. You taught us to believe in ourselves and to always give 110%. You were the first to instill in us those core values of passion, courage, and integrity.

To our teachers and mentors along the way - you helped us grow in our faith, taught us to be good to one another, and pushed us to be the best individuals we could be. You did your best to prepare us for our futures, and we will soon be on our own to test those lessons.

Finally, to my classmates - I firmly believe that the bonds we have created... through the happy moments, and the sad, through the victories and the losses... have helped shape the people we are today and the people we will become. The dedication, integrity, courage, passion, and good will that are present in each of us will be helpful qualities for our futures. Always remember, as you grew from an Aquin puppy to a strong bulldog, it was (and will continue to be) the size of the fight in that dog that matters most.

Thank you. Please welcome my classmate, Kelsey Curry.