

Popular Catholic commentator urges JST Class of 2016 to be thoughtful and reflective “trail guides”

BERKELEY, Calif., May 25, 2016 - In a secular and changing world, ordained and lay ministers should view themselves as “trail guides” who need to listen, “do no harm,” and trust their instincts even in uncertainty.

Those were some of the messages imparted by Rev. Donald Cozzens to the graduating class of Santa Clara University’s Jesuit School of Theology.

Cozzens, a Catholic diocesan priest and author of the renowned book *The Changing Face of the Priesthood*, and a sought-out speaker on numerous religious and cultural issues, addressed the 2016 class of more than 60 graduating students and their families and friends, at a ceremony on May 21 at the chapel of Pacific School of Religion, Berkeley, California.

Cozzens told this year’s group of theology graduates, “Pope Francis has noted, ‘We are not living in an era of change, but a in a changing era, time of real, uncharted change.’” He said graduates will be challenged to “elicit the implicit, often unspoken questions that trouble people’s souls” and “then and only then, let your truth speak to these questions.”

As guides to those in need of ministry, he said, “If we don’t know the map by heart, if we don’t know the silence of prayer, if we don’t listen, we can betray the trust of the pilgrims on the journey.”

He added that with changes in the Church and world that can be both exciting and unsettling, “many of the old trails are no longer trustworthy, some of the new trails are yet to be proven sound and safe. But Pope Francis urges us to move ahead and not be afraid to make mistakes.”

Cozzens received a bachelor of sacred theology degree (S.T.B) from Catholic University of America in 1965, the same year he was ordained a priest, and went on to receive an M.A. from University of Notre Dame and a Ph.D. from Kent State University. During the commencement event at JST-SCU, Cozzens received an honorary Doctor of Divinity degree.

A video of Rev. Cozzens’ address can be found [here](#).

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