

Remarks  
Aarti Carolina Lamberg, Class of 2024

Good morning, and thank you all for being here.

My name is Aarti, and I'm honored to be graduating with the rest of my class today.

I come to you with an ask.

I want you all to reflect on how you will be an advocate throughout your life.

I am a human rights major, so I am and will continue to advocate for basic human rights for all.

Now, I don't want anyone to zone out because you heard that I'll be making a change maker kind of speech because I'm talking to each and every one of you.

I have a simple message and a simple request, which is to spread love and kindness and to take charge of your own decisions, your humanity, and your role in the world.

Let's take a moment to reflect on who we were when we set foot here in August of 2020.

Personally, I was masked, sweaty, equally self-conscious, excited, and terrified, completely unsure of what was going to unfold in those next few days or over the next four years.

Many of us were in the COVID class with no high school graduation. Some of us feel cheated from certain experiences, and I want to acknowledge that we, like everyone else on the planet, have been through a lot.

I am in awe of our perseverance.

Now, I'd like you to think of who you are today, sitting here, moments before crossing the stage and entering the "real world."

Our world today, and the technology in it, is rapidly evolving. It's so easy to get swirled into this constant evolution and to lose sight of our core beliefs.

So, I ask you all to slow down.

I ask that you allow yourselves a few moments every day to breathe and to make sure you're doing what you can to spread love and positivity.

What I want you all to understand is that we hold much more power than we think.

I certainly feel helpless when every day on the news I hear about genocide, our dying planet, and people's basic human rights being taken away. Arguably, we can't all do something momentous in an instant, but we can choose to return to our inner humanity, to look up from our devices, and to see one another as fellow people.

Now, I know I might sound like a boomer, but I really mean it.

One thing I learned at Trinity that I will carry with me forever is we're all a lot more similar than we think. We're quick to write others off as so different from ourselves that there's no point in trying to connect. To me, this thought is a very small form of a larger division that causes hate, war, crime, and interpersonal violence.

If you think your future career and destiny is in no way related to any form of advocacy, I ask that you open your eyes and reflect on your position in the world.

How are you privileged? How are you underrepresented?

What can you do to help other people?

What can you do to challenge your preconceived notions and to make a friend vastly different from you?

Can you say hi or start a conversation with someone you barely know?

How can you change one tiny aspect of the world? And I mean tiny.

We are told repeatedly that our generation is going to save the world. This is a lot of pressure.

A lot of us will try, are trying, and must try to save the world because we don't have the privilege to neglect the oppressions we face.

If you don't experience daily oppression, how are you going to get involved in making small changes?

Can you find a connection between yourself and people who are struggling?

Will that make you care to use the power you hold to make this world a better place?

Technology is leading us to think we cannot function without it. It is robbing us of our ability to make decisions. We have become so dependent on technology that when the Wi-Fi goes out, we panic and our lives seem to crumble!

I'm certainly not exempt from this reliance, however, last summer, at a human rights study-abroad program, I learned in more depth about how we're losing our power to technology. This is a terrifying notion to me, but one thing we have that technology doesn't are emotions, and emotions are deeply powerful.

For four years, we have been told to be bold, independent thinkers.

Let us continue accomplishing great feats with patience and with awareness of the power we hold and the ability to spread kindness, wherever we are in the world, whatever we're doing.

I ask this of the future economists, computer scientists, dancers, politicians, engineers, physicians, and historians:

How will you use your Trinity education and future career to be a change maker in this life?

Thank you.