**15531, Victoria Sadowski**

Good Evening Ladies and Gentlemen,

I want to welcome all of the family, friends, faculty, and staff who are here to share this momentous occasion with us tonight. We have all worked hard to make it to this point in our education and career, and I am honored to be the valedictorian for the class of 2016.

Over the course of our studies, we have all completed many rigorous hours of clinical time, lots of hands-on training in the hospital. I would like all of us to take time to reflect upon all those experiences and everything that we have accomplished. We spent two years of hard work to reach this milestone and we should be proud of not only surviving, but thriving.

Elizabeth Kenny said, “Panic plays no part in the training of a nurse.” I can guarantee you that any panic was trained out of us with all the rigorous work we did, all the hands on training we experienced and all the drills we accomplished. You can be certain that when anyone from this class of nurses starts a new job, none of us will react with panic in an emergency. Our training has been tough, but it has been thorough and complete. Each one of us can go out into our career knowing that we can handle the requirements of the job and more.

Fellow graduates, we have completed a season in our lives. We are at the dawning of a new season. We will take everything we have learned in school and carry it through our lives. This training uniquely prepares us to continue our journey to Registered Nurses, then later as we further our education, choose specialties and build careers in our desired fields. Because of our training and accomplishments in this degree program we are all prepared to take our NCLEX, aka our boards, and pass them with flying colors. Then we will be fully licensed registered nurses.

Florence Nightingale is the author and creator of modern nursing. She said, “Nursing is an art, and if it is to be made an art, it requires an exclusive devotion as hard a preparation, as any painter’s or sculptor’s work. For what is the having to do with dead canvas or dead marble, compared with having to do with the living body, the temple of God’s spirit? It is one of the Fine Arts: I had almost said, the finest of Fine Arts.”

Being a nurse is a calling, not just a job. We have each answered that call and put our all into learning all that we could learn so that we can go forth and fulfill that call. Being a nurse takes a special person, one who is serious about reaching out to help others. We could not do what this job requires if we only see it as a job. Therefore I want to encourage each of my classmates to be proud of what you have accomplished and the future you have before you.

Congratulations and Good Luck to us all!