



June 4, 2020

I often think of Westmonters as ones who think for themselves but live for others. I pray that we can blend both the capacity to think carefully about our life and the values and purposes to which we give our life and then find our greatest contribution through living our life for others.

My faith is the most important thing to me, and it gives me the capacity to live civilly, to love others, and to develop a capacity to love people very different from myself. Scripture teaches us to weep with those who weep and rejoice with those who rejoice. It's an invitation to each one of us to join together in ways that can express empathy and compassion to one another. It's always been my belief that every one of us has a personal responsibility for the welfare of others, and part of the gross injustice of George Floyd's death was that those who were standing in immediate proximity lacked the courage or the wherewithal to step in and intervene in order to save his life. I know that few, if any of us, have faced similar choices. But, I hope, that in large and small ways, we will develop the capacity to interrupt injustice or wrongdoing whenever we encounter it.

I do believe that part of our educational mission is learning to live together with difference and to gain that capacity to speak into one another's life as we become more aware of the values and motives that guide our own life. Each one of us needs to accept personal responsibility and corporate leadership in doing what we can to eradicate prejudice, bias, and bigotry from our own life, from our community, and from our college.

It's my hope that we'll be able to repopulate for face-to-face instruction this fall, not only so we can benefit from the full orbit of our academic experience, but so that we can engage together in important conversations that reflect a commitment to the core values that guide Westmont and will guide our life. I believe we all have a role to play, and it's my hope that we'll accept both our role and our responsibility to play it well. At Westmont, we have a lot of work ahead of us, and I hope that we'll learn how to do it together. Let's be praying for this as we move forward.

God be with you.

Gayle D. Beebe  
President

