

Haigazian University  
Baccalaureate Service  
Sunday, May 25, 2025  
Armenian Evangelical First Church, Beirut

### **President's Word**

Dear Graduating Class,

To say it plainly: this marathon is over. You have crossed a significant finish line. With determination and faith, you have completed your studies at Haigazian University. You have endured more than most university students around the world, facing not only the expected academic pressures but also economic struggles, military aggression, social instability, and the emotional weight of a country striving to stand on its feet again.

But even as this particular marathon ends, other marathons await. Life will offer many more races—some long and exhausting, others lighter and more joyful, like fun runs filled with joy and new discoveries. But whether intense or easygoing, each one will call upon your strength, your character, and your spiritual grounding.

That is why today, in this 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Baccalaureate Service, we do something special to Haigazian. We pause for thanks.

In between marathons, we must claim a sacred space—not just a break in the schedule, not merely a vacation or change in routine. A sacred pause is something deeper: it is a time to reflect, especially to give thanks, and to listen for the quiet voice of God that calls us beyond degree achievement, to deeper meaning.

This sacred space is where the heart awakens to something greater than success. It is where we discover the promise that sustains all other promises. Because yes, a diploma is a promise. A gift is a promise. A job contract, a calling, even a challenge...each is a promise. But in this sacred space, we are invited to encounter the Promise-Giver.

Today, we offer gratitude: for the perseverance that brought you here, for the ones who molded you, and for the grace that carried you through. But even more, we invite you to go deeper. Ask the question that must be asked at every true threshold: Why am I here in life? What is my purpose?

There is no higher calling, no deeper passion, than to glorify God with your life. Whether you pursue science, business, education, literature, social work or other—your vocation becomes sacred when it flows from this source. This is not simply about doing what you love; it is about becoming the God-glorifying person you were created to be.

So today, before next Friday's celebration, before the live cameras and the applause and the caps in the air—breathe deeply. Stand still. Stand with dignity. Pause, and enter this sacred space. And remember that your life's value does not rest on titles, grades, or even diplomas. It rests on the unshakable foundation of God's love and calling on your life.

May this moment of pause strengthen you for the marathons ahead. And may you run them not just with skill, but with soul...with integrity, faith, and the courage to glorify God in all you do.

God bless you.

Rev. Paul Haidostian, Ph.D.  
President