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Dear Graduates,

Years ago, on a pleasant spring afternoon, my young daughters went to the park to feed the ducks. With breadcrumbs in hand, they approached the edge of the pond where the ducks were peacefully floating about. When the ducks became aware of the girls and their bags of breadcrumbs, the ducks charged from the pond. In surprise and fear, my daughters turned and fled the onslaught of webbed feet and clapping beaks. They reached their mother, and while surrounded by greedy ducks, they quickly unloaded their breadcrumbs and retreated to the protection of the car. When safe in the car, one of my daughters exclaimed in great indignation, “THE DUCKS ARE SUPPOSED TO STAY IN THE WATER!”

We are supposed to be holding a graduation ceremony in your behalf at this time. Things have not turned out as we expected, perhaps like getting ambushed by ducks—and it’s disappointing, disheartening, discouraging, and deflating. And I am sorry. Nevertheless, your singular achievement of completing the requirements to graduate from Brigham Young University is commendable, and I offer my congratulations! The time, effort, and energy over the last several years of your life will be a blessing and benefit to you and those you serve. The unique ending of your undergraduate experience in no way changes your potential as you embark on a new beginning. There is a need and a place for all of us in the world. Keep your eyes and your hearts open.

Long ago, in the face of a challenge, Captain Moroni issued the call “to be up and doing.” I commend these words to you at this time and encourage you to look forward with hope and with a knowledge that the enabling power of Jesus Christ’s atonement is sufficient for all of us as we continue on this adventure that is our lives.

Sincerely,

Allen C. Parcell
Professor and Chair