

Good morning, my name is Wallace Truluck and I honored to be talking to you this morning. In a week and a half, I will be a graduate of A C Flora High School. I have to be honest and tell you this is my first time speaking about myself in front of a crowd or like this....to an iPad. The biggest crowd I have previously spoken in front of, was in my third-grade play when I was Davey Crocket. I had one solo line, and I knew I was going to faint, right there.

I have been attending St. Martin's my whole life. I was baptized here, hunted Easter Eggs here, helped feed the hungry here, travelled with friends from here, as well as being confirmed here a couple of years ago. St. Martin's has truly helped develop my leadership skills through acolyting and then becoming senior crucifer. I would like to thank Mrs. Barbara and Mrs. Eleanor for teaching, encouraging, & helping me develop the skills and confidence necessary to do the best I could.

I would like to thank my parents and grandparents for making the decision to expose me to Jesus at such a young age and creating habits of attending church on Sundays. Quite frankly, I don't know who I would be today without having God and church in my life. To Mitch, I

also say thank you. You have really made an impact on my life in Christ, inside and outside of church. You have shown me the real definition of a faithful and godly man, and to me it is your strong bond with God, reflecting into other people's lives. I have noticed it and it has helped me become a more faithful young man myself. Also, your sermons have really made an impact on my relationship with Jesus because of the way they speak to me. They are very relatable to my life; along with entertaining and funny... which is hard to do in church, and as I'm finding out, especially in front of a camera.

This year has obviously caused much stress and worry in our everyday lives. On top of it all, it is still my senior year. I was expecting something much different! But I feel like I have found my peace of mind about it all. I am not star struck or absolutely devastated about not having a prom or a formal graduation. In mid-March, my dad & I, and a group of older men went on a dove hunting trip to Argentina. Long story short, we ended up flying out of Argentina the very same day we had flown in. This was by no means as fun as the trip should have been, but it was fun in a different way. It was fun because of the fellowship. Once I realized the reality that we *were actually* flying back home the same day we flew in to Argentina, I relaxed and tried my best to enjoy the three or four hours in a small café, in a very small town, in

the heart of South America. The most positive outcome of this trip, was when we landed in Miami and I received my acceptance email into LSU, where I will be attending this fall. I tried to make myself think “Hey, if I was Dove hunting in Argentina right now, I wouldn’t have had the phone service to get this email!” The biggest impact to me was finding out we were one of the last flights out of Argentina. I was happy and disappointed to be on that flight, but I literally was hours away from having to read this from Buenos Aires.

This year has also taught me to not take so much for granted, because the moment we do, everything we know can turn upside down or just stop all together. I believe this year has been a wake-up call to all of us, and is reminding us that when everything feels upside down, that is the most important time to trust God. He knows what the future holds for us and we need to continue trusting in Him. I feel like this year has really shaped my faith and I have become stronger in it. We all have had more time alone or with our family, to think, to rest, to reconnect and many other things. Since we haven’t been able to physically be in church, I have felt like my closest times with God haven been in the quite outdoors, whether it be hunting, fishing or just being outside in general. I don’t know if God met me there, or.... if I met God there. But it’s been nice.

I don't think the Gospel this week could be any more perfect for these times we are in. When Jesus prayed for his disciples, he was also praying for us! We are his disciples today and it is an amazing feeling to read his words and know they are for US!.....It is so hard to be faithful when we are scared.... it truly is. In tough times, we sometimes divide ourselves and we then weaken. We get distracted, but we need to stay united as God's people and come together in His love, and place our fear in his hands, because he is here to protect us. I will pray for those that have not found peace in God. He has protected us before these times and he will protect us through, and after these times. Even though it may not seem like the straightest road right now, or make sense to us, I know He will.

This is so powerful because we can feel vulnerable when we are scared. I have always kept to myself throughout my life, being careful about who I trust and who I am vulnerable to. As this strange, different time we are in continues, I've learned it is ok to be vulnerable. Its ok to be scared. And, it's ok to be upset. It is ok because everything I've known has made a 180 degree turn around. Things are different. We must continue being strong in our faith and continue being His living example. God never moves. He is always there for us to lean on. Everything around us may change & or we may get busy, but He is

there. And He doesn't ever waste an opportunity to tap us on the shoulder every once and awhile, reminding us that He is with us.

In conclusion, I would like to say to you all, I have really enjoyed my time here at SMF. From being baptized here, confirmed here, and now giving a sermon, I want to say thank you. So many of you have touched my life along the way. I may not be a man of many words, but know that your love and support has made a life-long impact. I will continue to pray for you and I hope you will continue to pray for me. I want to especially thank Courtney & Mitch for their persistence when they asked me to give this sermon today on Youth Sunday. I flat out turned them down... more than once because I can still feel my sweaty hands and blurry vision from those stage lights back in third grade.

So, I'll leave you with my Senior quote "Faith is the only way we're going to make it. None of us are smart enough to do it on our own."

Amen