To the Class of 2020:

It would be easy to say “I can only imagine what you’re going through,” but that would be a lie. I can’t.

The last few weeks of your college career, especially at a place as special as Bona’s, should be an unforgettable time in your lives.

Unfortunately, it’s unforgettable for all the wrong reasons. The global pandemic that’s consuming our attention right now is so much bigger than any one of us or any single event in our lives. But that reality doesn’t minimize the pain of sacrificing one of the significant milestones in anyone’s life: college graduation.

I promise you this, however: I will do everything in my power to celebrate graduation with you, on this campus, in a manner you deserve, sometime later this year. It is my hope that you will come back to campus and join us for this celebration, but we will understand if this isn’t possible.

Given the uncertainty the entire nation is dealing with, it would be inappropriate to choose a specific date at this moment, but the university is committed to your Commencement ceremony.

I know how much graduation means to you, and even more so to many of your families, so we will do all we can to plan a Commencement Weekend — once we get the all clear to return to normalcy — far enough in advance to give you ample opportunity to plan for a celebration of your time at Bonaventure.

In the meantime, please know how hard your professors are working to make your final weeks of academia as rewarding as possible.

Don’t hesitate to reach out to them if you have any concerns, or to contact any office on campus that might be able to assist you as you draw closer to graduation. Contact information for all key offices was included in the Notice Board we sent Sunday and is also available here.

Our intention is to mail your diplomas on the same schedule as we would normally so you can proceed with your plans for a career or graduate school.

This storm will pass and one day, when you reflect on this time, you’ll realize that the decisions made were focused on ensuring safety for our world. As we often say, “Once a Bonnie, always a Bonnie,” so your journey with us will never end.

I hope and pray that you and your families are doing well at this unsettling and unprecedented time.

Peace and all good,

Dr. Dennis DePerro
University President