Tania Tetlow Inauguration

Looking around this room, I see so many people who have tremendous meaning for me and for Loyola. Too many to name, not if we have any hope of getting out of here before tomorrow.

So it is my honor to greet *all of you* as my friends, my family, my colleagues, my students. I am overjoyed that we have come together today to celebrate this new chapter for Loyola.

Archbishop Aymond, I am honored to work in partnership with you to carry on the Catholic mission of this university.

A special welcome to the many university presidents here, from other Jesuit schools and my colleagues here in Louisiana.

To all of you who spoke today – thank you for the kind and encouraging words – as they say, my mom is very proud and my dad believed every word. My father, whom we lost last year, is listening from heaven telling everyone "I told you so."

Cokie, you shared your mother with me and with so many of us, and I cannot thank you enough for coming here to represent her. Lindy Boggs is quite literally the reason I'm standing here. She taught me how to live my faith while stepping up to the plate to engage with the world. She taught me that you can get anything done as long as you are happy to have others take the

credit. She taught me that every single person you meet is worth knowing.

Lindy was the St. Ignatius of Congress.

I want to tell you a story, of three generations of Jesuit education in my family.

In 1928, my grandfather Joseph Tetlow decided to try to be the first in his family to go to college. He came from a long line of laborers, coal miners and tool makers – the most useful people in the world, but whose lives were very hard. His mother died when he was young, and he had to interrupt his schooling to mine coal and support the family.

By the time he was able to finish high school in Baton Rouge, he was almost 20. He was also strong and very, very fast -- speed that would earn him a way to afford college. For some reason, he turned down LSU and chose far away Loyola New Orleans.

Here was the miracle of his choice. Loyola saw in him more than the speed that would land him in our Hall of Fame for football and track. They found, and nurtured, a man of great intelligence and integrity, a kind man, who always told the truth.

Next door at Dominican College, now home to our Broadway campus, Joseph Tetlow met my grandmother, Mercedes Mullen. She was training to become a teacher and considering

the convent. But then she watched Joe Tetlow play football – perhaps even that game his freshman year when he helped Loyola beat Ole Miss.

They married and had five children. To my grandmother's delight, two of them became Jesuit priests. My remarkable Uncle Joe, who preached the homily yesterday, and my father, Mulry, who would remain a Jesuit for 17 years before leaving to have a family.

For my father, joining the seminary right out of Jesuit High School was a leap of faith in more ways than one. It meant believing that he might have the intelligence and discipline necessary to make his way through years of training – the degrees in philosophy and theology, the oral exams in Latin.

Like many, my father's path wasn't immediately clear. Growing up, he was quite a handful. Of all of her children, my grandmother used to say, "I'm going straight to heaven for raising you Mulry." And we're quite certain she did.

But the Jesuits saw talent in my father, as they had in my grandfather. They inspired in him military discipline and hard work. They instilled in him a love of learning which would never waiver. He discovered, to his surprise, that he was smart -- and could revel in language and math, that he could earn a PhD and become a clinical psychologist. He also learned to his delight that he was creative, that he could play Bach on the

piano, write poetry and direct Shakespeare plays at the Jesuit high schools where he taught.

The Jesuit Order, after all, was founded during the Renaissance, and believes in the glory of learning – of finding God in all things. The Jesuits infected my father with a joyful curiosity that would last his whole life.

He rejoiced in the beauty of God's creation – on every walk together he would point to the magnificence of the smallest creatures. He would quote his favorite poet, the Jesuit Gerard Manley Hopkins: "Glory be to God for dappled things."

My sisters and I grew up without much material privilege, but awash in education. Our mother is a theologian and from her, we learned the intertwined nature of faith and reason. She did not believe in relying on translations of the Bible -- so full of filters and assumptions -- and so she learned Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Arabic and Aramaic so she could read the Bible herself.

Our father sung us to sleep with Gregorian chant. He tried and failed to make us delight in calculus. He succeeded in giving us an endless curiosity about the world. For the rest of his life, he would call to let us know when the moon was particularly beautiful so we wouldn't miss it.

Our own Jesuit education meant knowing that the talent God gave us didn't make us better than anyone else, but it came

with responsibility. We had to work hard, greedily gobble up knowledge, hone our skills to make the world a better place.

And so while my one act of rebellion was to resist the family tradition to come to Loyola as either a student (like my Aunt Beth and her husband and their children), or faculty (like my parents), or dean (like my Uncle Joe) – I promise now to make up for that fact.

I am finally home.

And what a home it is.

For more than a hundred years, Loyola has made all the difference for so many people in this room. It has provided the kind of opportunity that brought my own family from coal mining to university president in two generations. It invests in our talent and makes us flourish.

Education was never supposed to be the point when Ignatius founded the Jesuit Order, with six of his friends from the University of Paris. He wanted them to be missionaries spreading the gospel around the world, not tied down to the administration of schools. But Ignatius decided that first, he would need to train others to multiply their numbers. Loaves and fishes.

He had an unusual idea – to open schools not just to educate priests, but also lay people. And he had an even more radical

idea. He wanted to create schools so excellent that they would attract the children of the elite, but also be affordable to all. At the beginning, he banned the charging of tuition, though (if you heard the collective groan of the university presidents in the room) that was hard to sustain.

As we continue to struggle with how to make excellence truly affordable to every talented student, regardless of income, just know that the Jesuits have fought for that balance for almost 500 years. Indeed, when some of the kings of Europe later suppressed the Jesuit order and plundered their great universities, they expected to find piles of gold. Instead they found piles of debt. This is not work for the faint of heart.

Starting in 1550, Jesuit colleges spread throughout Europe, Asia and the Americas. The Jesuits were explorers and cartographers, they learned languages – and more importantly – culture wherever they went. They spread ideas to *and from* every region of the world.

During centuries when the relationship between faith and reason was sometimes fraught, the Jesuits took a stand for both. They proclaimed the gospel of finding God in all things, especially in human reason. They believed that education doesn't dilute our faith, it fuels it. They believed that God intended us to understand his creation through science and math and art.

And better yet, education fuels *action* rooted in faith – because the point of God's gift of free will is that *all of us* must fight for justice, design better governments, serve the poor and welcome the stranger.

Within the Catholic faith, there have always been many models of service, including goodness rooted in purity, in monastic seclusion from the wicked world. The Jesuits chose another, riskier path. They chose to engage, to question assumptions, to push to make the world a better place.

It often got them in a great deal of trouble, sometimes because of missteps, more often because the world preferred not to be pushed to live up to the gospels. As my father used to say, "they'd rather think Jesus was just kidding." The Jesuits raised the ire of kings and colonizers, and for their efforts would suffer exile and martyrdom.

But that is the point of the gospels. As Ignatius wrote, "In God's eyes, our words have only the value of our actions." Jesuit education has never been satisfied with teaching doctrine. We educate the whole person, "cura personalis," because the point of education is to transform the world. We do not just teach, we do not even just create opportunity -- we forge character, we change lives.

I see that mission made manifest every day at Loyola. We do not motivate our students with grades and status, we tell them

that they need to hone every talent God gave them so that they can set the world on fire.

As the chair of our English Department told me, "our students come here and they want to *change the world with words*." And the other chairs would add – with music and numbers and design.

Our wildly talented faculty embody this mission. I have never seen academics so in love with teaching -- not just the brightest of their students, but every single one of them.

Here, a business school professor teaching management doesn't just use powerpoint presentations about strategy, she brings students to the food bank to restructure its delivery systems.

When our law students represent refugees seeking asylum, they never forget the responsibility of lawyers to work for justice. And they never forget how much procedure matters.

Moments like this transform our students, both because they learn so much more by doing, but also because they see the world and its possibilities differently.

Does it matter? Do our graduates change the world?

There are many moments in our history that test that assumption – moments that measure our ability to discern the

moral answer and our courage to do the right thing at enormous cost. When I look at just one of those moments, in 1960 – it was lawyers like the Loyola-educated Jack Nelson who argued that the segregation of the New Orleans schools was unjust and unconstitutional. The judge who agreed was Loyola-educated Skelly Wright, who had crosses burned on his lawn. The Louisiana legislature responded with repeated new segregation bills, and there were only two men who risked death threats to vote no. I am not surprised that those two were both Loyola men, Herbert Christenberry and Moon Landrieu.

And in so many ways, in the quiet, every day moral choices, I watch our graduates make the world a better place. Men like my grandfather, who lived with such integrity, raised his children to be good people and owned the same pair of dress shoes for 40 years.

The mission of Jesuit education has never mattered more. This is a moment in our world's history when the pace of technology is outstripping the careful consideration of ethics; a moment when we are cleaving into tribes; when the voices of conspiracy and polemic have drowned out the search for truth.

If you were to design an antidote to the ways the world seems to be falling apart it would be a place that draws together students from all over the country -- and the world -- from every creed and color, every race and religion, from backgrounds rural and urban, rich and poor. It would be a

place that knits that glorious diversity together into a community, where students listen to each other with open hearts. It would be a place that teaches students the wisdom and perspectives of many disciplines so that they can solve the toughest of problems. It would be a place that demands that every student go out and change the world. It would be a place full of joy, and full of magic.

It would be Loyola.

And not just Loyola, but Loyola New Orleans. Because we also embody the spirit of this 300-year old, lovely, lyrical city. One that frustrates us and satisfies our souls like no other.

New Orleans infects Loyola with joyful *creativity*.

A few years ago, I listened to a group of famous local musicians try to answer the question, "why New Orleans?" What drew them here, or kept them here, when it is so much easier for them to make a good living somewhere else. Here was their answer.

As a young person, older New Orleans musicians take you in, they train you and teach you. They want you to express your own voice, to figure out what you have to say to the world. And they also want you to say it well – to work harder, hours every day. To be *you* AND to be excellent.

That sums up Loyola. We flourish in the most authentic city in the country, a place that pushes you to find who you are – your unique contribution to the world, not anyone else's idea of who you should be. A city that asks you to think outside the box, or, as I like to say, to tear the box apart, use some duct tape and make an elaborate costume. And then maybe put together a group of other people in box costumes and start a krewe.

If New Orleans asks only that you be yourself, Loyola demands that you be the very best version of yourself. To practice, over and over. To learn – more knowledge, more context, more tools. As the Jesuits say in Latin, *magis.*

For a century, Loyola has had moments of glory – from the leather helmet football days of my grandfather to creating the first radio station in the South, and the premiere CBS television affiliate in the nation – WWL, which stands for, World Wide Loyola.

And Loyola also has overcome enormous hardship. We made it through severe drops in enrollment during two World Wars, and housed a flood of returning veterans in tents thereafter. We have been through fire and flood and fierce winds. (And strangely, I keep finding locusts and small frogs in Marquette.)

We have demonstrated the resilience and character of a Jesuit institution, never wavering in our faith.

These last few years have been another test of the university. I need to speak for a moment to all of the faculty and staff here today.

You are the reason we have gotten through. Your hard work, your ideas and your passion have brought us back to where we need to be. Because you never lost faith in what Loyola means and why it matters.

For the rest of us here, just know that we have countless heroes at Loyola -- every employee who has worked harder than you can imagine, who conquered cynicism, and whose loyalty has sustained us. Let's start by thanking them now.

For all of us who serve as presidents of Jesuit universities, we share the ultimate inspiration in St. Ignatius. Not only was he a theologian, a philosopher and a saint, he was, after all, a university administrator. In his hundreds of letters, he answered the pettiest of questions and made the most bureaucratic of decisions. Through his principle of discernment, he found the moral answers to practical problems, and the constant opportunities to express wisdom and love. [Pause]

I will try every day to find the necessary wisdom, the courage, and the joy to do this job well.

What gives me strength is the training I've gotten from Lindy Boggs and my beloved Uncle Joe, from my irrepressible father

and my brilliant mother. And from so many people in this room who have loved me and encouraged me.

My big extended family, especially my Aunt Beth Gaudin. My mentors through all my winding careers, so many of whom are here, and my friends who have acted like family.

All of the Jesuits, who pray for me every day. I've grown up thinking of all of you as extended family who had a perfect right to correct me, even before I took this job. I'm counting on that.

My sisters Sonia and Sarah – we've been in this together our whole lives, and I would not be the same person without their love and support, and now that of my sister-in-law Connie.

My husband Gordon Stewart, who moved here from Scotland because we fell in love. You are my best friend, my biggest advocate and supporter. No matter how tired I am at night, you always make me laugh.

For my stepson Noah, who is 13 and watching this online from Scotland. When you came into my life at age 2, you are the one who taught me how to love with my whole heart.

And the smallest and most important person in the room today, my daughter Lucy. She just started first grade and believes strongly that what Loyola needs is more chocolate and perhaps a spirit day. Both of which are actually good ideas. She is

fiercely independent and wants me to let you know that she will never let any of this go to my head.

This is an adventure for our whole family, a calling for us all. There are no words for how much I love you and how grateful I am for the sacrifices you are making for Loyola too.

I was reading a history book of Loyola the other day at home. Lucy leaned over my shoulder to turn the pages and ask a startling question, “Mommy, where is your chapter?”

We are all here to write that next chapter together -- as we teach and serve our students, as you support and invest in the university as alumni, as you govern as trustees.

We are all here as temporary caretakers of this crucial institution, pushing it ever forward. That is a great responsibility and an enormous opportunity.

We are ready for the future. Because of the precious community we have created and the hardship we have endured, we are ready. We have become entrepreneurial. We seek out opportunity. We work for the good of the whole.

This is our moment.

This is the moment to build on our strengths and flourish.

To be true to our mission. To be ambitious.

And this is the moment when the world needs Loyola most. As a driving engine of opportunity. As a force of innovation and change. As the place where justice and creativity come together to make the world a better place.

This is our moment.