

A COMPASS OF FAITH

THE HONORABLE CLARENCE THOMAS

ASSOCIATE JUSTICE ON THE U.S. SUPREME COURT

I was on the BYU campus today, and it was really kind of hard to leave. I am not just talking about the mountains and the beautiful scenery; I am talking about the way the young people conduct themselves. You go to the classes and the students are respectful. They actually want to learn and want to know. There is a decency and goodness about them. There is faithfulness. And I have been on lots of campuses. This is a real jewel that you have here. It is not just about being smart; there is something else going on that others are missing. That something else is what you have here—character—whether it is a moral code, a sense of something transcendent, a sense of how you treat other people, or a sense of faithfulness to something beyond yourself. It is not just learning math or it is not just learning science. It is learning for a purpose much larger.

Going to Mass every morning orients me during the day about how to do my job the proper way—not to do it with anger, bitterness, or some scheme of changing the world—within my role of judge. I think it is important to have a sense of humility. I think it really is important to have a sense of modesty as to what my role is. I don't have the authority to do things beyond the modest role

that I have. I think that people fool themselves when they think that an important job will suddenly give new wisdom. I think we should stay within our zone, and when I go to Mass, I am encouraged to stay in that zone. I am encouraged to give content to the oath that I took to God to do this job a certain way. Faith is critical. I don't know how you walk in the wilderness without a compass. I don't know how you navigate through life without a compass of faith.

You should be proud of these students, and you should be proud of the Law School's mission. Years ago I talked with Rex E. Lee about this. Don't change the things you are doing. Your students are the fruits of your labors. Just look at them: they are magnificent! I asked Robert Stander, my BYU Law clerk this year—I hope this doesn't embarrass you, Robert—what made a difference in his life. And he said faith. That should be all the reason you need to continue to do what you are doing. See this young man here; see the young kids who have come through your system.

Thank you for an opportunity to be a part of the experience at Brigham Young University and to get to know not only you but the young people you have educated and sent to the Court. You help us make sure we continue to make this country wonderful.



These excerpts are taken from Justice Thomas's remarks at the BYU Law School Founders Day dinner on October 20, 2015, at the Grand America Hotel in Salt Lake City.



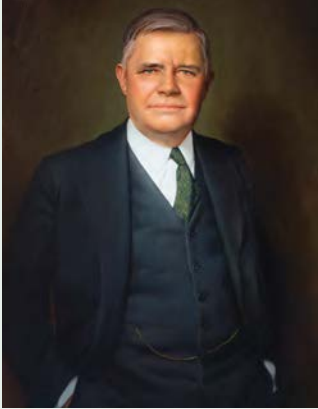
BYU MOOT COURT

This year's Rex E. Lee Moot Court student finalists had the rare opportunity to argue and then receive feedback from a panel of judges on the DC Circuit, assembled for that purpose in BYU Law's moot court room.

The judges who attended were, left to right, Patricia A. Millett, Thomas B. Griffith, and David B. Sentelle.



PORTRAITS OF J. REUBEN CLARK, REX E. LEE, MARION G. ROMNEY, AND HOWARD W. HUNTER WERE UNVEILED AT THE LAW SCHOOL LAST YEAR. THE PAINTINGS WERE DONE BY KEN CORBETT AND WERE MADE POSSIBLE BY A GENEROUS GIFT FROM CAROL SMITH.



MOST REVEREND WILLIAM EDWARD LORI

Archbishop of the Baltimore Archdiocese and head of the Ad Hoc Committee for Religious Liberty of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

Most Reverend William Edward Lori was awarded the 2015 International Religious Liberty Award from the J. Reuben Clark Law Society and the International Center for Law and Religion Studies. In his speech at the awards dinner, he quoted Abraham Lincoln, saying, "This nation, under God, [might] have a new birth of freedom." Archbishop Lori explained that this "new birth of freedom" would require us "to serve the common good with bedrock convictions about our shared human dignity, a dignity that is the basis for human solidarity."

He continued: "Indeed, religious liberty is not real if

we are unfree to proclaim and live by views that are culturally unpopular or if it is said that we are free to advocate for such views but we are fined, taxed, jailed, or otherwise marginalized when we try to act upon our convictions.

"Let me thank most sincerely the J. Reuben Clark Law Society, the International Center for Law and Religion Studies, and especially The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints for your historic and dauntless defense of religious freedom, for your thoughtful and courageous dialogues with law and culture, and for the partnership and warm friendship that I am

privileged to enjoy, particularly in my role as the bishops' point person on religious liberty issues.

"We do well to remember the words of Joseph Smith: 'I am bold to declare before Heaven that I am just as ready to die in defending the rights of a Presbyterian, a Baptist, or a good man of any other denomination; for the same principle which would trample upon the rights of the Latter-day Saints would trample upon the rights of the Roman Catholics, or of any other denomination who may be unpopular and too weak to defend themselves.'"¹



¹ Joseph Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, ed. B. H. Roberts, 2nd ed. revised (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1948 and 1985), 5:498.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

BYU LAW SCHOOL, BYU LAW ALUMNI, AND J. REUBEN CLARK LAW SOCIETY

2016

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- April 2** **General Conference Reception** | Joseph Smith Memorial Building, 10th Floor | Salt Lake City | Noon
- April 22** **BYU Law School Graduation** | BYU, de Jong Concert Hall | 5:00 p.m.
- May 28-31** **Washington Weekend** | United States Supreme Court Swearing-In
- August 15-19** **J. Reuben Clark Law Society Education Week Attorney CLE** | BYU
- August 19** **BYU Law Alumni 1L Welcome Breakfast** | BYU Law School West Patio
- August 25** **Founders Day Dinner** | Little America Hotel | Salt Lake City | 6:00 p.m.
- August 26** **Dean's Circle Meetings**
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REUNION WEEKEND

- September 16** **BYU Law Alumni and Friends Ethics CLE** | BYU
- BYU Law Alumni Class Reunion Dinners** | 1976, 1981, 1986, 1991, 1996, 2001, 2006, 2011
- September 17** **BYU Law Alumni and Friends Tailgate BBQ** | BYU Law School West Patio
- BYU vs. UCLA Football Game** | BYU
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- September 28** **J. Reuben Clark Law Society Women in Law Pre-Law Event** | BYU
- September 29** **Student and Attorney Speed Networking** | BYU | 11:00 a.m.
- September 29-30** **J. Reuben Clark Law Society Leadership Conference** | BYU and Aspen Grove
- October 1** **General Conference Reception** | Joseph Smith Memorial Building, 10th Floor | Salt Lake City | Noon
- October 7** **BYU Law Alumni and Friends Golf Tournament** | Thanksgiving Point | 8:00 a.m.
- October TBA** **BYU Law Alumni Achievement Award Lecture** | BYU Law School | 11:00 a.m.
- October TBA** **BYU Law Alumni Association Board Meeting**
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2017

- January TBA** **J. Reuben Clark Law Society Fireside** | Conference Center Little Theater | Salt Lake City | 6:00 p.m.
- February 16-18** **J. Reuben Clark Law Society Annual Conference** | Location TBA

For more information visit lawalumni.byu.edu or jrcls.org.