

Invocation

Rev. Walter J. Smith, S.J.
Member, Ithaca College Board of Trustees
The Inauguration of Thomas R. Rochon
April 17, 2009

Creator and sustainer of all that is or will ever be, revealing light and source of wisdom, companion spirit to searchers and dreamers—all gracious and compassionate God:

On this inauguration day for Ithaca College's visionary and distinguished eighth president, we celebrate a bold academic venture that began 117 years ago in four rented rooms on Seneca Street in downtown Ithaca, and which has brought us together again—in awe and gratitude—at Cayuga's shore.

We pray for our educator, scholar, and president—Thomas R. Rochon—who today humbly accepts the symbolic chain and medallion of his office, and the mace, which represents the academic authority entrusted to him and to the faculty in their collaborative commitment to promote, protect, and nurture the vigorous search to learn and to know.

God of our common understanding: embolden and sustain our president in his planning, choices, and actions as he courageously leads Ithaca College forward, guided by its collective success and achievement, driven by shared purpose, and ever-faithful to its mission, core values, and traditions. We pledge to support him in a mutual commitment to intellectual inquiry and uncompromised excellence. We confidently look forward to the inspired leadership of a president who already is shepherding us with energy, dedication, and contagious optimism as the next chapters of Ithaca College's storied history are being crafted and composed.

Loving God: We seek your blessing on this assembled community of scholars and students; administrators, staff, and trustees; alumni, civic leaders, and benevolent friends of Ithaca College.

We are thankful for this festival day; for the giftedness of Tom Rochon; and for his readiness to accept the mantle of leadership and responsibility for the illustrious legacy of Ithaca College, which is bequeathed to his care this day.

We honor that place in each member of this assembled community wherein the entire universe resides. We honor the place in every person where light, love, truth, and beauty are to be discovered.

Under the prophetic leadership of our new president, may Ithaca College continue to be a place where, in the words of its alma mater, "all (its) sons and daughters (may) dare to live their dreams."

Amen.