

Arrupe Leaders Celebration Legacy Prompt:

1. Why did you choose to come to Xavier? What about your upbringing or identity led you here?
2. What experience has been the most impactful during your time here at Xavier?
3. What have you learned about yourself, your values, and how have those impacted your future plans? In what ways will you continue to pursue your vocation instead of merely a career?
4. What was your biggest failure during your time here and how did you grow from it?
5. What is one thing you have learned during your time at Xavier, that you never want to forget? Maybe a perspective on how to view the world or face a problem?

Hi everyone. To start off, I wanted to thank you all for allowing me to speak today. My name is Patrick Delaney, and I am a social work major with a minor in communication studies originally from Cleveland, Ohio.

When I was looking at the prompts for this speech, I was instantly drawn to the question of what has been my most impactful experience here at Xavier. Initially, my mind went down a variety of paths. Reflecting on my past four years here, which went insanely fast, I thought of focusing on a specific leadership experience or relationship I have had. However, just focusing on one moment does not paint my Xavier experience with all its colors.

So, to answer the prompt with a bit of a twist, when I look back, I see how Xavier gave me the opportunity to serve, learning lessons that built upon one another each year.

Looking back on my first year, I remember feeling very nervous and afraid that I had somehow made the wrong decision to attend Xavier. As you all know, we started college in the thick of COVID, which personally made it hard for me to find authentic connections outside of the classroom. Within the classroom, however, I learned the value of empathy through my academics. While Dr. Irene Hodgson may not remember me since I was her virtual Zoom student, I remember her class and just how impactful it was. Titled first-year seminar: Southern Borders, this class discussed the immigration crisis from the perspective of migrants. Her class was very eye-opening, not only giving me a more worldly perspective but also teaching me how to put myself in the shoes of people I have never met. Not having yet declared my major at the time, this class made me realize that I wanted my occupation to be service-oriented in some shape or form.

So, these past three years, Xavier has given me the opportunities and tools to explore this want. During my sophomore year, I learned what it meant to lead authentically, becoming a Manresa Orientation Leader. In charge of a group of fifteen first-years trying to get their footing at Xavier when I didn't even have mine, this role really pushed me out of my comfort zone. It was truly one of the most important and transformative roles I've had at Xavier. I learned the importance

of being able to lean into discomfort and work side by side with my peers to try and give first years the best first-week experience possible.

While I didn't realize it at the time, the orientation team was the first role at Xavier where I really got to dip my toe into what it meant to be a Musketeer. Manresa gave me the community that I was so longing for my first year, showing me just how impactful "productive fun" can be if you let it. It catapulted my decision to reapply the following year as a Facilitation leader, and finally apply this past year to be on Manresa Core, which for context is a team of five students who are responsible for developing and executing the program.

Through my experience as the Training Coordinator, I gained so much confidence in not only myself but my work. It taught me my value on a team, what I was good I at, as well as what I was not so good at. I learned the value of "doing" and remaining composed during stressful situations like the time the move-in line got backed up all the way to I-71... But no matter the problem, every ounce of stress was worth it as it reminded me of why I was there and who I was doing this for. It was for the nervous first year much like myself who was unsure of whether or not they were going to make friends in college or if Xavier was even the right choice for them. It's for the parents and guardians who are dropping off their kids and giving them that last big hug until Thanksgiving break. And most importantly, it's for the students curious to find their "why" in college.

As I am standing with you as a second-semester senior, there are still many questions without answers regarding life after May 11th. *These include but are not limited to:* Where I am going to live in Cincinnati? Will I like my job? Can I even budget? Did I make the right decision? With what feels like an unending amount of questions, I find comfort in these moments of anxiety now knowing that my first-year self did make the right decision to attend Xavier. It was everything and more. From the good experiences to the not-so-great ones, Xavier helped me uncover my why. They provided me with a good foundation, a support system, as well as opportunities to fall and learn to get up on my own. Therefore, to conclude, I would like to leave you all with one of my favorite quotes from Mahatma Gandhi: The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others.