'Great challenges face us today, both from within and without'

This is the prepared text of the speech by The Reverend Scotty McLennan, dean for religious life, at the inauguration of John L. Hennessy on Friday, Oct. 20, 2000.

Spirit of Life, Eternal Spirit of Beauty and Truth, be with us and remain among us as we inaugurate the 10th president of Stanford University today. Breeze through these long corridors with their stately pillars, these circles of waving palm, in the words of Stanford's first president. Flame in the sunset fire, where the rolling foothills rise up toward mountains higher. Move us, as our Founders were moved, to look beyond personal success now to love of humanity and to a desire to render the greatest possible service to humankind.

May our new president be blessed and imbued with that pioneering spirit of the West, which has marked this university from the beginning. May he be bold, creative and free. Amidst his great responsibilities, may he also be enthusiastic and joyful, encouraging the rest of us to be so too. For there is a community aspect to the pioneering spirit at its best ú represented by mutual encouragement, shared passion and a common vision of a better world to be. May our 10th president inspire us to care enough about each other in this community of scholars that we in turn may be
supported and empowered to reach out from here to fulfill our primary mission of serving the public at large.

We give thanks for the foresight and dedication of all those who have labored over more than century to make Stanford the great university it is today. We know, however, that we cannot rest on their laurels and be complacent. Great challenges face us today, both from within and from without. May we together find the spiritual and moral strength, along with the intellectual and physical fortitude, to deepen our character and our commitment, both individually and institutionally. Only then can we, can Stanford, continue to play a leading role in moving this nation and the world toward an era of liberty, peace and justice for all.