

**Remarks on the occasion of Grace at the Canadian Urban Institute Awards
June 2006**

Grace is both a request, and an admission of praise, for strategies that are larger than our own, in our efforts to build a city of praise.

A city is a thing of grace, or it is not. We seek to restore a literacy of grace, as we build this town; to honour diversity while insisting on our commonality. The universal heart seeks to find its home in Toronto, and this heart desires to live with delight, in shared forums of wonder, in the joyous transactions of mutuality. Without these, the global city fails. We are dedicated to an ethic of empathy as we construct the urban. For unless we architect the space between citizens, skylines and prosperities are a mockery.

Toronto is a place we cherish in the volatile atmosphere of the global. It is especially our own, as we seek to love this city; we fiercely defend the civility she has companioned us with over many years. And we ask for the grace to understand that all citizens seek to recognize each other as a resource of sacrifice. This alone inspires the civic heart. A city without heart will crumble, however glorious its design may be.

These awards are given to those who see city building as an exercise in citizenship first; who understand that civic literacy is the prelude to the urban masterpiece. The alphabet to this literacy is compassion, trust and faith. It is in this language that we rejoice in Toronto today. It is in this language that Toronto will be a blessing to the global village. It is in this language that we give thanks.

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