DEDICATION TO JUDGE GUIDO CALABRESI

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Welcome! I’m delighted that you are here tonight to join us in paying tribute to the Honorable Guido Calabresi. As I think all of you know, every year the Annual Survey of American Law, which is one of our journals at the law school, dedicates its volume to a figure of law who has made a significant contribution. Over the years, an incredible group of outstanding people has been selected for this honor. In my eleven years doing this we have had Justice Scalia, Justice Breyer, Judge Posner, Judge Walls, Professor Amsterdam, and Professor Dworkin—it’s a star-studded group, and tonight’s honoree fits right into that category. It’s a bittersweet moment for me because I’ve actually really enjoyed doing these introductions and welcoming people to these Annual Survey dedications, and it’s my last time since I’m completing my eleventh and last year as dean. I’m very pleased that I get to do this for someone who has been my professor, my mentor, and my friend over a period of more than thirty years.

My second year in law school, I took a terrific course: A Tragic—no—A Common Law for the Age of Statutes. Followed the next year by Tragic Choices. (Tragic Statutes was not a course, although maybe it should be. Maybe it would be another book.) These courses are so relevant and vibrant today. I just came from teaching a regulatory policy seminar, and we actually spent a portion of the class talking about tragic choices and talking about the kid in the well and why we are going to spend all this money getting the kid out of the well, but not a lot of money making wells safer. I have some students here who will attest that this in fact happened. These are conversations that go way back to the Spring of 1983 in Professor Calabresi’s class—Professor Calabresi, before Dean Calabresi, before Judge Calabresi.

Guido and I began having serious substantive conversations again when I was chosen to be dean of N.Y.U. Law School. I obviously knew, as an alumnus of Yale Law School that Yale had done extraordinarily well under his deanship. But I had begun doing some more research and I realized that the different pieces of Yale had done extraordinarily well, and one of them was the Yale Law School Annual Fund, which I realized before I started this job I really should care a lot about. I think it had gone up by close to a factor of ten under Guido’s deanship, which is extraordinary. So I
called his chambers and asked if I could come to New Haven and whether I could learn from him how one went about doing that. It was an extraordinary lunch. First, having lunch with Guido in New Haven is basically like meeting the monarch: everyone comes to the table to pay their respects. So that was interesting. But then Guido told me what you needed to do, and it was basically four things, four rules. He said, it’s like baseball, lots of statistics: the classes that have the most this, and the most this, and the most that. He told me that we needed to get five-year pledges, which we hadn’t done, and we sort of did this every year. There were a couple of other rules of thumb of that sort, and I can tell you that they made an enormous difference in my success as dean. To a large extent, I owe that success to things I learned from Guido. He was enormously generous with his time, energy, and great expertise.

Of course, he is now a very distinguished judge on the Second Circuit. There are people here who will talk about all of these things—I would love to tell you about every aspect myself, but that’s not my job tonight. I’ll just tell you that Guido’s career—very distinguished law professor, very distinguished dean, very distinguished judge—reminds me of another very successful figure of law, although never one who got this award. This figure is actually fictional. His name is Declan Walsh. He was a protagonist in Vicar of Christ, and he did all of these things quite well, like Guido, and the last job he took, after having been a judge was he was elected to the papacy.1 We didn’t plan it this way, but it turns out that by the time we did this dedication, that job became open as well.

So I will now let other people tell more about all of these aspects of my teacher, colleague, and friend’s career, and I’ll leave you in the hands of Ted Kelly. Ted is the Editor-in-Chief of the Annual Survey of American Law. So everything that is happening here is happening under Ted’s leadership. The Annual Survey was enormously wise in making this selection; I’m very grateful for that, and it provides for a very nice moment for me. Ted has been a star here at the law school: he was my student; he was a research assistant to Professors Richard Stewart and Barry Friedman; and hopefully he will pursue a career in an area I care a lot about, the intersection of environmental and energy policy, which is what he is

looking into. Ted will welcome us on behalf of the journal and then we'll be set for the tributes. Thanks so much!

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