



**Hello from
Mr. Landgraf**

ST. BONIFACE SCHOOL

March 5, 2010

"Your talent is God's gift to you. What you do with it is your gift back to God." ~ Leo Buscaglia

Dear Parents,

I have shared a few things about myself and my family throughout the year. I wanted to take this week as another opportunity to provide some insight into what has helped shape me into the person I am today.

Everyday I'm thankful for the opportunities provided to me in my life and the values that have been fostered in me. The greatest teachers I've had in my life are my parents and my family. From my very first memories I always remember feeling comfortable and supported. I was taught to be honest, accepting, committed, kind, passionate, a team player, and to always look at life with a sense of humor and have fun. Along with my immediate family my values have been developed through interactions with a wide range of individuals. My connection to religion and church from a very young age has been significant to me. In reflecting on my life it becomes clear that all the people and events have created my values.

I am blessed to have such wonderful parents and brothers. My parents have been married for close to 50 years, and I learned from their tremendous commitment to one another. The lessons help me in my personal life but also in how I approach my relationships with my wife, son, brothers, friends, colleagues and other individuals. I have talked about my appreciation and respect for my parents, but I wanted to share with you some lessons I have learned from other family members.

I have been fortunate to have many other family members that have influenced my life. Some of my values were challenged, but eventually strengthened through adversity involving certain relatives. While I was in 8th grade I witnessed my grandfather, grandmother and uncle pass away. These first meaningful experiences with death caused me to recognize the fragility of life at an early age. I took from my deceased relatives the importance of laughter, looking at the good qualities of others, hard work, and subconsciously the idea that you get one chance on earth to make a difference.

My uncle was the funniest person I have had the privilege of being around. His presence ensured that you would be crying with joy and hurting from the excessive laughter he initiated. Watching him stay positive while he was dying of lung cancer, in his early 50's, inspired me in the midst of my tremendous sadness. Therefore, I have always valued the importance of having fun and laughing on a daily basis. His death affected my family and me very profoundly. His loss was deeply felt. The support our family gave each other following his death was a lifelong example of the importance of teamwork. Our commitment to one another helped us all in our time of grief. My uncle taught me to look at the positive in people and situations. I appreciate that I had "Unc" in my life for the time I did. To this day we often speak of "Unc" with unbelievable respect and admiration, mostly as it relates to his amazing sense of humor and kind heart. I believe that successful individuals see the importance of integrating an enjoyment and positive tone to their daily life.

With the many challenges that inevitably come our way in life it is important to always keep things in perspective. There are a lot of times when it is hard to determine if we should laugh or cry. Both are essential emotions, but I would say that our world needs a bit more laughter. It is important for us to reflect on the many people that have influenced us throughout our lives. It is in these encounters and relationships that we are constantly molded into the people we are and evolve into throughout our lives.

I look forward to sharing some laughs with people this weekend at the auction.

God Bless,
Mike