

William Dormin

Eulogy

Good Afternoon - I am John Dormin, the oldest of Dad's five children, and our Mother asked me to say a few words to honor my Dad on this sad occasion.

I want to express our family's thanks to Father James and St. Paul of the Cross for their kindness and forbearance in allowing me these moments. They too have suffered a loss of perhaps their oldest and most devoted parishioner. This sacred place was his home as much as any house. We all grew up here, received the sacraments here, generation after generation. He loved when Father James celebrated the Mass.

On behalf of my family I also thank all of you for joining us today in this Mass of Christian burial. It means the world to us that you are here. We particularly want to thank Dad's caregivers Frances, Miriam and Reza and the staff at Avantara Nursing Home and JourneyCare hospice for all they did for Dad.

And I want to take this moment to publicly thank my brothers and sisters for how well they cared for Dad over the years while I was living in New York, how much they sacrificed for him - particularly these last couple of years as he became more frail. I am eternally grateful to each of you.

I left home when I was 18 to go to college out East and made my home out there. I would see Dad on holidays and special occasions. He would be in the background of my FaceTime calls with Mom, just a voice saying hello, and the distant sounds of rinsing dishes or clattering silverware.

I am 68 and so my memories of Dad are a bit like looking into a kaleidoscope, one of those kids toys that you squint into and turn and shards of color sparkle but don't quite take shape.

I remember the first place we lived in on North Knight Avenue here in Park Ridge, a two-story frame building that was divided into rental apartments. We were on the top floor and Tom and I would be bouncing around and we would suddenly be scared by the pounding of the woman downstairs using a broomstick to bang her ceiling to try to quiet us down. I remember my Dad quietly going down to reassure her he would try to keep us quiet.

Dad served his country joining the Army as a young man during the Korean conflict but was stationed in New Jersey for much of his two years of service. He always told us he just kept the trucks and jeeps running for his outfit. He came home to marry the girl who had asked him to a school dance a couple years before, a dance his Mom, my Grandma, convinced that shy teenager to go to, and he never looked back.

Dad was a salesman - he sold paper to book publishers, magazine publishers and other such outlets. He was a reserved man, not the hale fellow well met, pound you

on the back and tell a story kind of guy. I remember how handsome he was. He had a shy smile, would look you in the eye and give you his full attention. It was what made him a great salesman, I suspect...

When I turn the kaleidoscope again I see some of the family trips we took, bundling all seven of us in the Ford station wagon with the wood trim on the side and setting out to see America. I remember that seat way in the back that flipped up facing backward and us kids taking turns staring back where we had been. Just as we do here today.

I remember our home on Stanley Avenue in Park Ridge — walking distance to here - five kids in a little house, bunk beds, but with a backyard and big stone steps to the front porch.

I remember helping Dad shovel that famous Chicago snow that was over our heads.

I remember Dad taking us boys over to Resurrection hospital after the birth of my sister Kathleen so we could wave up to Mom and the new baby at the hospital window.

When I turn the kaleidoscope, I see all of us sitting around the dinner table at our second home on North Knight Avenue, (yes the second house they bought was right back on the same street where they first rented) —the dinner table was sort of an Amish style table with benches instead of chairs on each side, us kids in our regular places, and Dad leading us in the saying of grace before each meal.

Dad was a great father, reserved, a great Dad in the old way — the better way— always there, working hard, coming home from the office and sharing our nightly dinner, showing us steady, reliable, steadfast love. Love you never questioned.

My memory of Dad is as the quintessential quiet man - except for one thing - and that one thing shook the windowpanes knocked over bric-a-brac and scared small animals - His sneeze - Wow that man knew how to sneeze. As the house stopped shaking and slowly settled back to earth you would hear five young voices yelling "D - A - D".

Our Dad was not a man for accolades or honors - he didn't seek the limelight, did not strive to be famous. He loved God, he Loved our Mom and his children, he loved his grandchildren and he was blessed to live a long life so he could show his love to his great-grandchildren Nora and Emmett.

As I got older and went to an office and had children of my own, I came to appreciate what a monumental task our Dad took on out of love and duty for his family. I and I'm sure the vast majority of you get the same paycheck every two weeks whether we were great at our job or not so much.

But not a salesman like my Dad. Each week, month after month year after year, no pay came in unless he earned a sales commission. Nothing was guaranteed at the end of the pay period.

I remember him each Sunday evening at the kitchen table - carbon copies of the weeks invoices spread out, number two pencil in hand, accordion folders stuffed

full of them and Dad making notations, no doubt hoping that last week's sales would feed and clothe and school five children, keep the lights on and the mortgage paid. Five count 'em five children. I was exhausted with the two!

Sadly, we don't give medals for that kind of courage and determination and sacrificial love. But Dad knew that his reward was not in this life, but in the next and it was that faith he kept alive in all our lives.

I think if Dad was speaking here instead of me I imagine He would say in words what he only modeled during life by his actions.

He would say Love God. You are not the creator, He is - go to church and get on your knees and pray.

Dad would say "don't sweat the small stuff" — "take your vitamins" — Have dinner as a family around a table.

He would say to the fathers and the potential fathers gathered here - to Matt, and Kyle, to Martin, Han and Jimmy - you are not your children's creator. You cannot mold them or bend them into engineers or doctors. They are a gift from God and they will be what God intended. Be a Father like I was.

Be a shepherd. — Feed your sheep.

Stand tall and strong and quiet over your flock. Guard them against the wolves and the snakes. Move them into verdant pastures and enjoy the show. When they

stumble into the ditch, climb down and help them back to grass. When one gets lost - go after them and find them and bring them home.

Dad would say cherish your daughters as I did. They are precious and rare gifts, be the man in their life if and when they need one. Fix the toilet, change the oil, go with them to the car showroom and help them not get cheated.

Love your children's Mother as I did, so they will know what that love looks like.

Dad would say - Be strong in front of your sons. Teach them to shake hands, look someone in the eye and keep their word. Bring them to Church so they can see you kneel before the King of the universe and know their place in the heavens.

He would say teach your children golf! Not because it is fun - it is NOT. It is the most frustrating and fruitless and maddening of all the sports.

But it is the one sport in which honesty and integrity counts as much as skill. A sport where you call out your own mistakes, report them, and mark them down in writing. It is a sport that makes all men and women start as equals. The poor player and the great player give each other a fair shake at winning. Dad would say: Live your life like that.

And when you fail - and you will fail over and over and over again, you will know that it is solely your responsibility and you need to do better. And there is always another fairway waiting just up ahead.

Today Dad would say take care of your mother - take care of your grandmother. I loved her as long as I could and I leave her to you.

I did not need a lot of visits and calls to know you loved me - but she does need them. Visit her, call her out of the blue, bring her a meal, take her out to gatherings of as many of you as you can. Tell her stories of your life - ask her opinion. Because she will give it anyway - better to ask.

And most importantly Dad would say let Mom fuss over you. I know, I know - but it is her love language. It is how she lets you know she loves you. I was loved by her for more than 70 years - take over for me and smile.

Finally, I like to think that Dad would then quote Saint Paul:

“As for me, I am already being poured out as a libation, and the time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.

From now on there is reserved for me the crown of justice, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing.” (2 Timothy 4: 6 -8)

Amen