

Dear family and friends,

If you received this you or someone close to you has made a difference in my life. THANK YOU!

On May 6th, the CYO is honoring me with the St. John Bosco award. Why me? I haven't done anything extraordinary. I have done what I thought was expected of me as a son, a parent, a Catholic, a member of the community. Let me indulge you for a few minutes and share my story.

I was raised by a loving **Mother** and eight older siblings. My parents divorced when I was young, so I have few childhood memories of my Father. I remember **Mom** working three jobs, cooking, cleaning, smiling, and disciplining. According to my siblings, never disciplining me enough. We lived very modestly near Sacred Heart Catholic Church. I mostly hung out in our neighborhood, at "the lot." There friends would meet to play basketball, baseball, kickball, football, ride bikes, and even hockey in the winter. Mom showed me how hard work pays off.

One of **Mom's** three jobs was being a cafeteria lady at Roncalli High School. I couldn't wait to get to Roncalli and see mom everyday. Unfortunately, she took an office job in my mid school years. However, Roncalli hosted Tuesday night BINGO. **Mom** worked that each Tuesday night, because it paid a little money. With ten mouths to feed every dime was important. I started helping at BINGO, on the food service line, when I was in 7th grade. It was a chance to be at Roncalli, be with my mom, and hang out with older, cute high school girls that worked as servers. I will risk leaving someone off, but here goes: **Mrs. Mullen, Mrs. Schubach, Mrs. Tully, Mrs. Agresta, Mrs. Rike, Mrs. Brown, Mrs. Eagan** and of course, my Mom, **Mrs. Battiato**. The ladies that worked that food line showed me how to work hard, work together, and have fun.

All four of my older brothers were in Boy Scouts, so I couldn't wait to join when I got out of 5th grade. I read up on the requirements and was more prepared then anyone in the world to start my boy scout career. That first summer I spent a week at Camp Ransburg. Me, three of my brothers and a few others from the neighborhood. As a member of Eli Lilly Troop 40, I learned how to cook, how to handle a knife, gun, and bow and arrow, tie knots, canoe, sail, save lives, and hundreds of other useful skills in the years that ensued. Our troop leadership was a few dads: **Omer Townsend, Bob Burchfield, Ron Huser**, and a young single man, **Tom Sturm**. Tom and I remained friends as I became a young adult, he was a groomsman in my wedding, and later married my mother-in-law. **Tom** was a BIG influence in my life. These men were part of that male role model that became the dad I didn't have growing up.

When I turned 16, **Bob Tully** encouraged me to official for CYO. This was the beginning of my passion for kickball. It is high-paced fun for girls of all abilities. It was unique to Catholics and nearly exclusive to Indianapolis. Score is kept, but don't display on a scoreboard, a coin flip determines kick or field first, the rules are the same as softball / baseball, except for the additional 16 pages, and you could only buy the Catholic kickball at Arena Sporting Goods. My **mom** was proud to tell me she played kickball when she was in grade school. I umpired many games over the years, to many to count. **Bob Tully** would ask me how I did umpiring. I was also introduced to the CYO's Executive Director, **Bill Kuntz**. These men were great examples of how Catholic men lived and worked.

Kickball continues to be a part of my life. My daughter, **Laura**, signed up to play; of course I wanted to coach. Her and I enjoyed many seasons as coach and player. She was an awesome kickball pitcher, best I ever coached. Along the way, St. Barnabas asked me to become the kickball coordinator. Why not? It is the greatest game in the world, if you are not sure, just ask me. As **Laura** entered high school, her and I still

enjoyed kickball, but now as coach and assistant coach. This was the beginning of our love of coaching together. I remembered back to **Bob Tully** encouraging me to umpire at such a young age. He gave me a chance to earn a little money knowing that it would build my self confidence and sense of responsibility. I wanted the same for Laura.

Laura is a mature young lady. Coaching became *our* time together. We coached many seasons of kickball and volleyball, mostly at St. Barnabas. We have had the privilege of coaching a volleyball season at Lumen Christi High School, but perhaps the most special season was the Fall of 2014, when the Padua Academy was looking to start a kickball program. **Laura** (then 19 years old) and I were honored to be asked to lead this program. It was the most stressful start-up to a season. Eventually thirteen girls signed up! **Laura** hand painted Padua Academy on all the shirts. We got the kickball field painted through the help of volunteers from Immaculate Heart of Mary. The principal was kind enough to give a key to the building for shelter and safety. Other teams agreed to play at our field so we could make sure enough girls made the games on time. It was a community effort. The simplicity of t-shirts and a couple of kickballs took me back to the days when life was less complicated. **Laura** is a positive role model to the young ladies we coach, she is the reason I continue to coach.

CYO sports are about more than winning and losing. We emphasize to our players that they should improve in their skills, learn more about their teammates, and do what they are asked to do. Each season we ask our players and their family's to attend Mass together and perform a service project together. A frequent service project is playing BINGO with the residents at St. Paul's Hermitage. It is amazing how different the girls are around the residents. We see patience, kindness, and laughter.

Through my high school years, **Bernie Dever**, was the principal at Roncalli. He and my **Mom** were good friends. Money was always in short supply, but **Mr. Dever** made sure **Mom** had enough time to catch-up on tuition. **Mr. Dever** fell victim to cancer my senior year. He made it to our Senior Mass, then passed a week after graduation. He was a good man and quiet example to the Roncalli community. His gentle way with my family will always be remembered.

As I graduated high school and later turned 18, I decided to continue involvement in the Boy Scouts as an Assistant Scoutmaster for Troop 40. Scouting has taken me all over the state of Indiana, many other states in the US and Canada a few times. It has provided me with opportunities to teach and learn from other adults as well as many boys (young men). The memories will last a lifetime. Why scouting? It provides boys of all abilities the opportunity to achieve at scouting's highest level. The yardstick in scouting is doing your best. Certainly we want each boy to tie the knots correctly and how to raise a flag properly, but a boy that has learned and practiced a skill is a success when he has done his best.

I have had the privilege of serving in various pack, troop, district, and council roles. While an Assistant Scoutmaster of St. Barnabas Troop 564, with thanks to many adult leaders, both of my sons, **Alex** and **Danny**, attained the Eagle Scout Award. I especially enjoyed my time as a leader while my sons were in scouts. One of my favorite roles is that of Cubmaster. I am now in my third year as Cubmaster serving Our Lady of the Greenwood Pack 265. It has been a treat. My dream job is to work scout camp in the summer. Maybe some year soon, I will have that opportunity.

My commitment to youth in our community has been fueled by those mentioned in these previous paragraphs. There are many more that have had a positive impact on my life:

My brothers **Joe and Nick Battiato**

Mr. Tracey, the kind faithful man that told everyone how much he appreciated me putting his Spotlight newspaper in his door each week. It was 18 steps up and 18 steps down but I didn't mind doing it
Dave Strack, Jim Dugan, Micah Briner, and Mark Briner....those fellow scouts that I share so many of my boy scout memories with

Awesome scouters like: **Tony Lang, Debbie Zimmerman, Jim Parton, Daunte Reynolds, Linda Grube, Gary Kubanscek, Tom Williams, and Tom Jackson**

Aunt Margaret and Uncle George Strack a wonderful example of a family that treated me like their son as I was growing up including days and weeks at their house and vacations with my cousins

Tom Dale a successful business man, exemplary father to six children, and a humble, giving community servant

Chuck Weisenbach and **Joe Hollowell** as tremendous, God filled leaders of the best high school in the world

Mr. Ratliff, my favorite high school teacher

Mr. Anderson, the best theater director any high school could have

My children, **Alex, Danny and Laura Battiato** for sharing me with others in our community

My loving wife **Lisa Battiato**, the volunteers widow

With all of these wonderful, giving people around me, how could I not give just a little time and energy back to my community; it has done so much for me.

Humbled by this award,
Steve Battiato