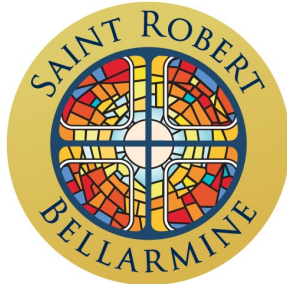


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9th Annual
A NIGHT OF HOPE



December 9, 2021

Anthony Conner

hope

If you only carry one thing throughout your entire life, let it be hope. Let it be hope that better things are always ahead. Let it be hope that you can get through even the toughest of times. Let it be hope that you are stronger than any challenge that comes your way. Let it be hope that you are exactly where you are meant to be right now, and that you are on the path to where you are meant to be... Because during these times, hope will be the very thing that carries you through.

- Nikki Banas



I am a 21 year veteran of the Omaha Police Department. I am married to my beautiful wife, Linda, and we have three great children; DiAuvion, Mia, and T.J. I was elected President of the Omaha Police Officers' Association in 2018. In my role, I am more of a politician than a Cop, which I embrace. My position as President has brought me some moments of pride and accomplishment, along with moments of fear and anger.

In November 2020, after arriving at a tentative agreement in contract negotiations, I met with a council member and others to discuss the contract. I became ill with Covid-19, and later that month, I was in a coma for three weeks and in ICU and in-patient rehab for about two months. I am here today because we serve a God whose name is bigger than Covid.

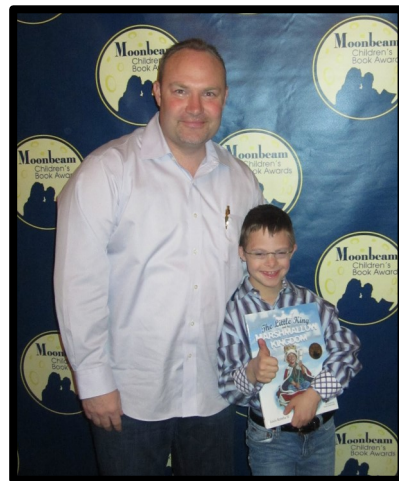
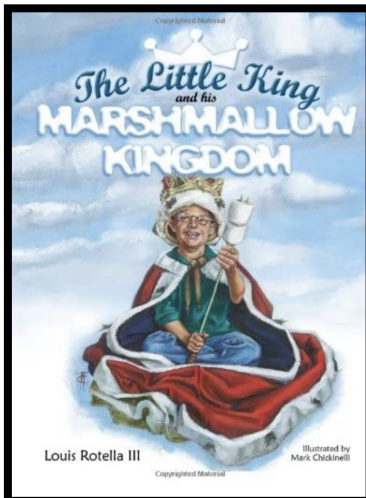


Louis Rotella, III



Our son, Louie Rotella IV was born 21 years ago with Down syndrome. That day, my wife, Jill, and I held him in our arms—all four pounds of him—and understood that life would never be the same. Like all expecting parents, we had developed dreams for this child. At that time, the doctors told us all the things Louie would never do. He would likely never surpass the grade-school level. He would never learn to drive. Or earn a college degree.

So we did what we had to do. We gathered strength. We developed new dreams. We focused on discovering all the things he *would* do. For one, he would turn out to be the funniest guy in the state of Nebraska. How's that for a blessing? Well, we all know that life isn't lived in a straight line. Louie was later diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes at 8 years old. When Jill and I got the news, once again, we knew life would never be the same. Lucky for us, we are blessed with strong family support, a dedicated team. My parents, Jill's, Aunts, Uncles, our children, and our faith have all become instrumental and part of Louie's team.



*Perseverance is impossible if
we don't permit
ourselves to hope.*

Dean Koontz

The evening of “A Night of Hope” came about through a dream. The message was to create a night of inspirations and happiness. Sometimes in life, it is easier to dwell on the sad or negative things and we forget about what blessings we have surrounding us every day.

Each of us will face tough challenges in our lives in many different ways, but you are never alone. God is always with you. The hardest things to remember when facing challenges is to keep your faith, acceptance, positive attitude, your family close, forgive, and do not forget to laugh.

Tonight you will hear stories of survivors and the challenges they faced through their personal journeys. With every challenge God gives us, we learn from it how to help others.

Teresa Kopietz

Lois Nigrin



In June of 2019, what started as a long weekend trip to Arizona, to celebrate the 30th anniversary of our first date together, turned into a month long stay at an Arizona hospital and another week long hospital stay at St. Elizabeth's Hospital in Lincoln. This picture on the left is the last picture taken of Joe and I on the mountain before the accident.

This is a story of the power of prayer, both the prayers of those who helped me survive and the power of my own prayers for God to help me understand the circumstances of my life. It is also the story of living the message I have shared with my students over the past 35 years ~ the story of believing that God is in control and that he will always take care of you. I will share with you the journey of my husband, Joe, and my children, Melissa, Jared, Caleb, and Emma, as they faced the possibility of losing their mother and wife and the faith that united us on the journey of survival.

This is a picture of my family celebrating my 55th birthday (while I was still in a coma in the hospital in



Debbie Bremer



In this world, we have so many things that are happening around us. And yet for all of that activity, the world can still be a lonely place at times ... or a time where the pressures of life can all get to be too much. That's what my son Chris experienced shortly before he passed away this past July.

Through our daily interactions, we encounter people. Each of them is thinking, experiencing, or enduring something. We just don't know what that something is. However, the one thing we know is that each of us have the power to make a positive impact on someone else.



www.chrisbremerfoundation.org

