

WORDS OF REMEMBRANCE

for

BROTHER PAUL WILCOX, FSC

Given by

Rina Salerno, Business Manager

Brothers of the Christian Schools, Ontario

Mass of Christian Burial

Presentation Manor Senior Living

Toronto, Ontario July 11, 2024

Paul was a proud product of De La Salle College, an institution that shaped his early years and kindled his lifelong passion for teaching and coaching. His dedication to education led him to impactful roles at Saint Dominic School in Montreal, St. John's in Uxbridge, St. Clare's Elementary, and notably, De La Salle High School where he not only imparted knowledge but also coached hockey and football. His love for coaching was profound. It was through sports that he expressed his leadership and cultivated a nurturing environment for his students to grow, not just athletically, but personally.

Beyond the school fields and gyms, Paul embraced life with zest. An avid rollerblader, he was a familiar sight in the downtown streets of Toronto, showcasing his vitality and love for life well into his sixties. His enthusiasm extended to the Woodbine Race Track where he enjoyed the thrill of the races, and to his art, where he skillfully carved faces into driftwood, turning each piece into a narrative of its own.

Despite the challenges he faced, including a battle with alcoholism, Paul's greatest triumph was his courageous decision to seek help and to join Alcoholics Anonymous. Over fifty years of committed membership, he not only reclaimed his life but also became a beacon of hope for others, earning pins and medals that were not just accolades but symbols of his bravery and dedication to recovery.

Paul's life was not without its trials; a stroke in 1979 significantly altered his capacity to communicate. Yet, even in silence, his spirit and resolve spoke volumes. He spent his later years in places that nurtured his spirit and body: La Salle Manor, Loretto Abbey, and finally, Presentation Manor where he lived surrounded by care and respect.

As we remember Paul, we reflect on a life that, though fraught with personal battles, was lived with immense love and a deep commitment to helping others. Predeceased by his parents, Elmer and Margaret, and survived by his siblings and numerous nieces and nephews, Paul's legacy is not merely in the successes on the sports fields or the beauty of his carvings, but profoundly in the lives he touched, the spirits he lifted, and the hearts he healed.

To Willy, the teacher, coach, artist, mentor, and friend, your journey continues to inspire us all. May you rest in peace, knowing that your life was a profound testament to the power of the human spirit and compassion.

