

Life After Alpha

Paul McTighe

I attended Divine Providence from 1954 through 1962. I would like to thank my parents for sending me to a great school. Thank you also to the Sisters of Divine Providence for giving me a solid foundation based on the Catholic Faith, Persistence, and Humility.

I grew up in the Divine Providence neighborhood. In 1951, my parents bought a farm house at 9671 Babcock Blvd. My childhood was like "Leave it to Beaver." Most of our mothers were home to watch us; we had all of North Park as a playground and no fears. My neighborhood had no fears because we were between two Air Force bases, complete with radar and armed missiles. Now the radar site is a grade school and the missile base is the Police Academy.

I visited Alpha School several summers ago and visited with Eileen Hughes. Eileen gave me some of the current school literature and a tour of the building. The school curriculum is very different today than in the 1950s. Back then there were 8 grades in only 4 classrooms. Grades 1 and 2 were taught by one nun. Grades three and four, etc. were the same. Our class work was basic: reading, writing, math and religion. There were no extracurricular activities like clubs or sports and there were no foreign languages.

When I attended, the school was primarily known as Divine Providence or Providence Heights Alpha School. I remember a number of individuals from those days, particularly Sister Marion, the principal. Sister Marion was also the 5th and 6th grade teacher. Sister Marion was tough, but fair. I also remember Father Must, the resident priest and Dale Kearns, the school bus driver. Some of my classmates were **William Weir, Kathy Eichner, Carol Chotta, Michael McCabe, Clarence Custer, Judy Vantresca, John O'Shea, and Paul Grosick**. Paul was later killed in a plane crash while in the service during the Vietnam War. I have seen his name on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C.

After grade school I attended North Allegheny from 1962 to 1966; the University of Pittsburgh from 1966 to 1970 (BA) and the University of Tulsa, College of Law from 1970 to 1972 (Juris Doctorate). After law school I made Tulsa my home. In 1973 I borrowed \$1,500.00 and opened a law office without any clients. My early ambition was to be an oil and gas attorney. That field never worked out for me. About 30 years ago I received a Social Security Disability case from the Lawyer Referral Service. I did not know anything about that field of law. Fortunately, the persistence of my parents and Sister Marion kicked in and I succeeded in that field. Since that first case I have handled over 4,500 Social Security Disability cases. I represent clients who are claiming disability against the Social Security Administration. While my practice is not like Perry Mason or Matlock it is gratifying in that I am able to assist those who cannot help themselves while also making a living for my family and myself.

My wife, Nancy is an MSW (Masters in Social Work). Nancy worked for the State of Oklahoma Department of Human Services for fifteen years. After our son died in 1990 and then our daughter died in 1992, Nancy decided to leave government service to work in my office. Nancy retired in 2007. In 1995 Nancy and I adopted a 6 year-old son from a Russian orphanage. Artem is now 21 years old, he graduated from Jenks, Ok high school two years ago and he is a Steeler fan. He loves to visit Pittsburgh. My family and I live in Tulsa, Ok and Maricopa, Az. We built a second home in Arizona seven years ago. We have travelled to 42 states, Mexico, Puerto Rico, Ireland, Croatia, and the Dominican Republic.

As far as my family home is concerned my father lived in it for 58 years. He died in January 2009, at home at the age of 93. Thankfully, he was never ill. I appreciate the opportunity I had to obtain a first class education. I believe that I have made the most of what I was given. I hope Sister Marion would agree.