



Richard A. Carey

Dickie the Dinosaur,* Originally from Dorchester (O.F.D.)

* I don't have, or I don't use the four C's (Cable, Cells, Computers, Credits).

Wherever it is I may roam,
No matter how far from home,
In the air, on land or sea,
I'm proud to be an O.F.D.

On the Feast of St. Francis Xavier in 1935 I became the last of the Carey family from Fuller St., Dorchester ("God's Country") to come into the outside world (and I'll be the last to leave it). After four years of home schooling from my parents (Alice and John) and my siblings (John, Florence, and Harold), I came under the tutelage of the Sisters of Notre Dame for eight years at St. Gregory's School, where the values and lessons I had learned at home were reinforced. Then, they were reinforced again at Boston Latin School, our country's oldest public school, which, I believe, after Boston College High School, produced more priestly vocations in the early 1950's than any other high school in the State.

My next move was to Cardinal O'Connell Seminary in Jamaica Plain where, except for a more regimented life style, my two years (1954-56) were similar to life outside the walls - Mass, studies, sports. The same was true in 1st Philosophy at St. John's Seminary, Brighton. At both seminaries I met many great guys among both the faculty and the student body, My most memorable day at St, John's was a Wednesday in March of 1957. Instead of going on an assigned walk, I decided to take in a high school basketball game at Boston Garden. That decision was a turning point in my life, for a few months later my career at St. John's came to a close.

However, my seminary training continued. I signed up for the Diocese of Burlington, VT and finished my philosophy studies at Le Seminaire de Philosophie in Montreal and, then, began 1st Theology at Le Grand Seminaire. The Rule was less rigid in Canada, but the studies were tougher, mainly because most of the classes were taught in French or Latin. On the sports front, though, I learned how to play a new sport for me, hockey. As was the case in Boston, I met many marvelous men in Montreal. In May of 1959 I left the seminary again-- but, this time, voluntarily and permanently.

My next school experience took place in North Easton, MA where I completed my college education (1959-61) at Stonehill College with a major in English and a minor in French. After college it was time to go out into the world to find a job that I loved (as the saying goes), so that I would never have to work a day in my life. For the most part, that is what happened.

Children, born and unborn, have been a big part of my life-rearing, teaching, coaching, and fostering those who were born, while fighting for the legal right-to-life protection of the most helpless members of our human family, the innocent unborn. The teaching (English, French, math, history, etc.) and coaching (baseball, basketball) part in schools, mostly high schools (public and Catholic) is something I did for about 20 years in Boston and Weymouth. This 1962-1992 stretch was broken up mainly by full-time, pro-life work. I was privileged to be a founding member of Mass. Citizens FOR Life and its first executive director (1972-78). Since then my pro-life activities have been limited to letter-writing, fund-raising, working for pro-life candidates, lobbying, praying for life and encouraging priests to include pro-life petitions among the Prayers of the Faithful.

Sports, also, (for the past 60-plus years) have been a big part of my life, not only in the schools but outside, as well--mainly baseball, fast-pitch softball, basketball, and billiards (pool) - by playing or by coaching, directing, and/or organizing teams, leagues, and tournaments. Even though most of us, nowadays, are not able to run up and down a ball field or a basketball court anymore, we can still walk around a pool table; and, by playing, we can still enjoy the same friendly competition and camaraderie that we experienced when we played sports as kids. Remember: ".We don't stop playing when we get old - we get old when we stop playing." When not playing, coaching, or organizing sports, I have been writing a newspaper sports column and/or doing a local Cable TV sports commentary for about 30 years.

Oldsters: In addition to working with and for the young, I have, for the past 20 years, been working with and for the elderly as an activities director/coordinator leading singing, writing, and reminiscing groups at nursing homes, senior centers, and assisted living facilities. In many ways, dealing with seniors is similar to working with kids. This should not be surprising, for "old people are just kids with wrinkles."

The Ides of March: As we all remember, March 15 was not a lucky day for Julius Caesar. However, March 15, 1975 was a very fortunate day for me, for, on that day, I married my wife, Joan. Subsequently, we were blessed with three children - Alice, Hal, and Melissa. We have been further blessed in that they have all done well and are living their lives close to God and His Church. We have eight grandchildren who have been born, three of them just this past year. In addition to our own children and grandchildren, my wife and I have had eight foster children, whom we have taken in as babies the past six years. "There is nothing as beautiful as a baby."

For what has been a good life, I thank God every day, often reciting the following prayer/poem I first recited in a homiletics class at St. John's many years ago. I thought that some of you might want to use it sometime.

Thanks be to God for His goodness to me.

Thanks be to God now and for eternity.

Thanks be to God for the wonders He has done.

Thanks be to God for His dear and only Son.

Thanks be to God for His sweet virgin mother.

Thanks be to God for becoming our Brother.

Thanks be to God during life and at my death.

Thanks be to God just when drawing my last breath.

I leave you with this last request - part of a Tennyson poem I remember from my Boston Latin School days:

"...If thou shouldst never see my face again, pray for my soul. For, what are men better than sheep or goats that nourish a blind life within the brain, if knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer both for themselves and those who call them friend? Wherefore, let your voice rise like a fountain for me night and day. More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of. For, so the whole round earth is bound by gold chains about the feet of God."

Oremus pro invicem.

R.A.C. - O.F.D. - R.I.P.

Vaya con Dios.