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# REGNUM CHRISTI NEWS OF THE WEEK

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# Lent Week 4: Moral poverty

Regnum Christi Live – March 31, 2014  
By Paola Trevino



We continue with the Popes message:  
"Moral destitution, which consists in slavery to vice and sin. How much pain is caused in families because one of their members – often a young person -- is a prisoner to alcohol, drugs, gambling or pornography! How many people no longer see meaning in life or prospects for the future, how many have lost hope!... In such cases, moral destitution can be considered impending suicide. This type of destitution is invariably linked to the spiritual destitution that we experience when we turn away from God and reject his love. If we think we don't need God who reaches out to us through Christ, because we believe we can make do on our own, we are headed for a fall. God alone can truly save and free us."

Reflect: Am I trapped in some kind of slavery to a vice or a sin? What is that "one thing" that is holding me back that I'm attached/chain to? Can it be a group of friends, a bad relationship, an environment that's holding me back?

Don't be afraid to walk away and run to safety, to your family, good friends, church, prayer...CHRIST IS WAITING FOR YOU!

Action:

- Go to confession
- Reach out to someone who is struggling with an addiction.

# The House

U. S. A. | WHO WE ARE | NEWS

## ***Help requested to open the new youth mission center for young men in Connecticut***

Regnum Christi members in Cheshire, Connecticut, the location of the Legion of Christ seminary in North America, are planning to make use of the supply of zealous young spiritual mentors by building an ECyD “mission” house there.

(Click [here](#) for more information on ECyD for boys. ECyD also has a program for girls - click [here](#).)

Called simply “The House,” the center is located next to the Cheshire seminary gymnasium. It is being promoted as “an epicenter of Catholic youth culture, where young men are eager to spread and grow their faith, guided by the ones who change culture as their life’s mission.”

According to Fr. Gregory Usselmann, LC, the mission center will provide a centralized location where high-school-aged young men involved in ECyD will both receive formation and host integration activities. “There are around 15 to 20 young men in this network already,” he said. “They are the ones who christened it ‘The House.’”

The building plan involves creating a retreat center and adoration chapel. From photos of recent ECyD incorporations at



Fr. Gregory Usselmann LC shows off the part of "The House" that will be the new chapel.



the not-yet-completed structure, the mission House is already helping bring in new members.

RC Connecticut is soliciting help to complete the structure, which they are hoping to officially open on Palm Sunday. Donors are being sought to purchase “bricks,” which are actually a square foot of the building, for \$30 each. Approximately 2,000 square feet, or 300 bricks, remain to be completed, and they are \$9,000 shy of their \$71,000 goal.

One generous donor has already pledged to match every “brick” up to \$5,000 each for the remaining 300 bricks.

“For something started this January 2014, I can’t tell you how inspiring it is to see the young men taking ownership for their



In February, 2014, during an open house for the new mission center, 12 young people incorporated into ECyD.



Thanks go out to Jorge Orellana and his brother Chris for overseeing the mission house construction.

Catholic formation by building the 'House' with very the materials you donated!" said Fr Simon Devereux LC. "And they insist upon doing Eucharistic Adoration for each donor. Not a bad trade off!"

Fr. Gregory said local RC members would like to thank Jorge Orellana, his brother Chris and cousin Roberto, who are handling the construction work. "They are heart and soul in the project," he said.

You can watch a short video of Fr. Gregory giving a virtual tour of the construction project at their website: <http://www.rcconnecticut.org/>.

If you have questions, or would like to donate, contact Fr. Gregory at [gusselmann@legionaries.org](mailto:gusselmann@legionaries.org)



Christian Chasse gives his ECyD testimony during the center open house.

# He has little time left

Regnum Christi Live – April 1, 2014  
By Becci Sheptock



“He’s got less than three weeks. Spend as much time as you can with him.”

These are not the words of a doctor to a heart-broken spouse; these are God’s words to you, right now.

These are Jesus’ last days. He’s got less than three weeks. To be more precise, He has less than three weeks until Good Friday, until the day he dies.

Let’s look at Lent, with this perspective, through the eyes of Mary, Jesus, and us.

First: Mary’s. She didn’t hear anyone say, as clearly as a doctor would, that he’s only got a limited amount of time left, but I can bet that she felt it. She had read the Scriptures; she knew that the Messiah was to suffer. She had probably been preparing herself ever since he was born, or ever since their flight into Egypt. But this didn’t necessarily make it any easier. Imagine the day that some of the disciples shared with her what he had spoken of, or maybe she was even there, hearing his words. That must have certainly been a sword in her heart. So, let’s say that she was expecting some sort of death to come in the near future. How would this change how she would look at her son? I leave that open for you to talk to her about. The only thing I want to mention is that when I pray about that, I not only see how she looks at Jesus, but how she looks at me. Throughout his last days, I

can see her caring for me, as His wife (or best friend) just as much as she would care for him... and he would smile at her with a glance that says "yes, please take care of her in my last days and onwards"...

Next: Jesus. I read a book that helped me to imagine what Jesus must have been going through in these weeks before his passion. It was the story of the last days of Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati. Similar to Jesus, he knew he was dying, but no one else did. His family even joked with him about not getting out of bed and sometimes complained about having to take care of him... He was lying there practically paralyzed, watching everyone coming and going from his room unaware of what was really going on. His sister- who wrote the book- said that looking back on it, she realized that some of the little actions he would make and even some of the sounds, were his way of saying "stay a little longer", "say a little more" not because he wanted the attention, but because he craved their love and presence and relished it because he knew it was fleeting. But he harbored no resentment. He was always smiling. I can imagine the weight on Jesus' shoulder- we see some of it in the Garden- and yet how he put aside all thoughts of himself and kept giving and giving. He lived those last days to the full. And then he was gone. His family and friends shocked, saying "If only we had known".

Now it's our turn: Contrary to the disciples, we do know. We have heard very clearly that he has 40 days, that he has even fewer. And we can choose what do with that time. I will share what my resolution has been, but then it is your turn. I have tried and will keep trying to spend as much time as I can with him. What are the little things that I have to get done, if I know that they will still be around but He will not be? Also, I have tried to see things in perspective. If I had someone dying, before my eyes, what would really matter? Life and death would make everything else so much smaller. And lastly, I have tried to RELISH the moments we have had together- isn't that something someone does in these kind of moments? Doesn't all that they have been given become an even greater gift, to be treasured?

To end, I give you just one more scene to imagine, relating to this last point I just mentioned. Let's say that you and Jesus are sitting together. You bring up a favorite moment you have had together... and practically relive it. You tell each other all the details and it comes back to you like it was yesterday. There is such a joy on his face. The weight of his impending death is lifted a little. The clouds part and there is sunshine for a little while.

He is grateful. This can also be Lent. Just because he has so few days, doesn't mean there has to be only sadness. Let's live them so close to him, filling His days with all our love and attention.

## Candles

Regnum Christi Live – April 1, 2014  
By Fr Simon Devereux LC



***"It's better to light a candle than to curse the darkness."***

25 years ago an Irish priest taught my parents this lesson.

They were staunch Catholics but often fell into complaining about all the things that were going wrong in the Church. This priest showed them not to ignore the problems, but to direct their criticism constructively by sharing it with those who could actually make a difference. And, more importantly, by rolling up their sleeves and getting to work on the solutions.

This made their faith more attractive to others and more enjoyable for them to live.

## **Through the Eyes of a Man and a Boy**

*Bloggers share their experience from a*

## *Father/Son visit to Sacred Heart Apostolic School*

*On Sunday, March 9, 2014, more than 30 boys, dads and Legionaries departed for a trip to visit the Sacred Heart Apostolic School in Rolling Prairie, Indiana. The following blogs excerpted from <http://texasconquestblog.blogspot.com/> detail the experience through the eyes of Ian, a 12-year-old from San Antonio, and a dad, Jose, from Houston.*

**by Ian Crossey, San Antonio, Texas**

### *Sacred Heart Journals Day 1*

On Monday we finished our trip to Sacred Heart Apostolic School. We arrived at about noon and had a great tour by an Apostolic. After the tour we visited the chapel and said the Angelus. At lunch we were introduced to the rules and told to mingle with the Apostolics and Canadian (visitors). At my table I sat with three Apostolics...but I noticed a kid sitting alone at a table. I went over and invited him to our table. Later I found out he was (from Canada) and was really talkative, therefore he got the Apostolics and I laughing and finally talking to each other.

After lunch we went over to the sand dunes, only about a thirty minute drive. Everyone had their own sled, and we went on a beginner slope to get the hang of sledding. Afterwards, we all took the long trek up a massive hill close by. Once at the top, several of us tried different ways of sliding down, some face first, feet first, "Surfboarding", and body sledding. After that, some of the guys built two awesome snow men while others started an epic snowball fight with the goal being of destroying the snowmen. Only one survived! From there we took a hike to Lake Michigan.

Once at Lake Michigan...we saw a frozen wave! We did not go onto the ice far enough to touch it, but we took several pictures. Many of us walked on the frozen shallows and now we are not lying when we say, "I walked on Lake Michigan!" or "I walked on Water!" ... and finally in about twenty minutes we got the bus over the slope and drove back to the school.

We all took showers, changed, and went to Mass. After Mass we ate dinner and went back to the dorm and changed into our relaxed clothes. After a

bit we went to the gym and played three rounds of dodgeball. No one was the real winner because teams were put on different sides in all three rounds. Next we went to the smaller chapel and said night prayers. We then went back to the dorm and fell asleep in about twenty minutes.

### *Sacred Heart Journals Day 2*

After a hard wake up at six-thirty we got ready for Mass and had our best dressed competition.

After Mass we ate breakfast and had our gospel reflection in the conference room. We played some sports and then took a bus ride to the Studebaker Museum and learned about many cars, tanks, and airplanes, some used by the military. The best thing that I saw at the Museum was the Presidential Limousine. It was really tiny to be a limousine, but I still thought it was awesome!

On the ride back to the school, we stopped at a turf field and played touch-football. We then headed back to the school and arrived just in time for lunch. After lunch we headed to the game room and gym and played soccer, ping-pong, pool, and board games. After dinner we went to the conference room for the talk show, "Meet the Apostolic"!

After the show we went back to the dorm and rested for a bit. Most people were about to go to bed, but then Brother Jared came in to the dormitory and asked, "Who wants to play dodge ball with the Canadians?"

Everyone jumped out of their beds and hurried down to the gym! At the end of the blood-boiling game the Texans won. We then said good night to Mary and (finally) went to bed!

### *Sacred Heart Journals Day 3*

Some of us helped make beignets (pastries, for breakfast) and shovel snow off the sidewalk in the morning. We thought it was good to help the Apostolics because they made all the meals for us and cleaned up the tables after the meals, therefore the least we could do was help with chores. It was fun figuring out what the Apostolics do as chores and then helping them out.

After breakfast and Mass we went to Notre Dame for a tour. It was really awesome! All of their statues have football nicknames, such as Touchdown Jesus, First Down Moses, and The Holy Handoff. On top of the Main Campus Building was an 8-foot tall statue of Mary. A thin layer of gold covered the statue of Mary, but all of the gold together could fit in an average person's fist.

At the basilica, there was a reliquary and a lot of icons. In the reliquary were pieces of the true Cross and relics from all 12 Apostles and 780 other saints. We also went to the Grotto, which was a replica of the real (Lourdes) grotto in France, and said the Angelus there.

We then went to the Ice Box Skating Rink and played hockey. The game was intense and hard to keep up with at the pace I was skating. My team lost in the end, but we did not care. We do not even have ice in Texas so why complain?

#### *Sacred Heart Journal Day 4*

Father Michael Sullivan arrived and was the priest for Mass. After Mass we went to breakfast, and then made two awesome snowball forts for a snowball fight. One of the forts was called the Alamo. The team that held the Alamo won, therefore they re-wrote Texas History! After the snowball fight we went into the woods and made a fire, and waited for the smores, hot chocolate, and gold fish....(then) we were going back to the field covered in snow to play football. The football game was awesome and everyone was falling over in the snow and distracting the quarterback with snowballs! We were all starving and went to lunch.

From lunch to dinner we played in the gym and game room that was awesome. We all love dodge ball and I had a great time playing it with my teammates. After dinner we went to the chapel with the Apostolics and prayed a rosary. I really like the way they pray it with the leader saying the Holy Mary part and everyone else saying the Hail Mary part for the next decade....We then said good night to Mary and went to bed.

**by Jose Rodriguez, a Houston, Texas, Dad**

#### *Sacred Heart Journals Day 1*

After 18 hours of travel, we arrived to Sacred Heart Apostolic School in Rolling Prairie, Indiana. As soon as we arrived, we received a warm

welcome by the Director and General Dean of the Apostolic school, Father Ronald and Father Jason. Father Ronald showed the dads our room which was nicknamed "The dads' frat house."

Shortly after, Alan Rodriguez, apostolic student gave us a tour of the school. After the tour, we all met in the dining room for lunch. We then got ready and headed out to the Warren Sand dunes state park where everyone sledded down the snow covered dunes. It was great to see some of the younger boys overcome their initial fear of sledding down. After their first time down, they didn't want to stop sledding...down those dunes! After sledding, we all walked over to see Lake Michigan and it was frozen! We were actually able to stand on the frozen lake! After this great experience, we now have bragging rights to say we walked on water!

We then headed back to Sacred Heart for a much needed shower and change of clothes. After freshening up, we had Mass in the Sacred heart chapel celebrated by both Father Michaels. We then ate, prayed night prayers and called it a night. I slept like a baby.

### *Sacred Heart Journals Day 2*

The day began with 7:00 am mass. We then ate breakfast and immediately after, headed to the Studebaker National Museum in South Bend, Indiana. It was such a great historical experience! The Studebaker Company went from building wagons and carriages in the 1910's to building cars and trucks in the 1940's. Studebaker even built jet engines and army tanks for the World War. Their motto was "Give more than you promise." Even though Studebaker stopped production of cars in 1964, I believe they accomplished their mission. This great company is a great inspiration to all Americans. Not only did Studebaker build beautiful classy cars, they also built race cars! No wonder all the boys were in awe after seeing all of the Studebaker models in the museum. After the museum tour, we asked several of the boys questions about what they learned about the Studebaker company and to my surprise, several of them knew when the company started and were able to name several of the different Studebaker models!

Immediately after the museum, we went to a nearby park with a soccer field made out of Astroturf. Since we had a football with us, we decided to play a game of touch football. There was definitely some great passing and

running plays. At the same time, there were some boys that were not really into football, so they started a snow ball fight with Father Michael Vanderbeek. (Personally, I think Father Michael lost the fight.)

After the football game, we needed to head back to Sacred Heart for lunch. We barely made it in time and were able to have lunch with the apostolic students and the Legionary brothers and priests that are in charge of the school. After lunch, we could tell that the boys were still energized so Brother Jared, Brother Drew, and Brother Jesus gave the boys several activity options: snow ball fight, indoor soccer, and game room which included, pool, ping pong, and air hockey. The boys picked and chose their activities and went off with their respective Brother.

After dinner, the boys had an opportunity to ask the apostolic students questions about their experience at Sacred Heart and how they ended up as apostolic students. Their responses were very motivating to hear. Some expressed that they had been wanting to be priests since they were young and others had lived retreats at the school and eventually became attracted to the Legion and eventually the priesthood. The apostolic students also expressed that they were extremely thankful to God for such a generous upbringing provided by their parents. With this conviction, they wanted to give back to God and wanted to do God's will....

Last but not least, our boys ended the day with a dodge ball competition against another Conquest group from Canada. The competition was fierce; however, I believe that at the end the TexasConquest boys were victorious. After the healthy competition, we had benediction and said good night to Mary and then it was lights out.

### *Sacred Heart Journals Day 3*

This morning some of the boys woke up early to shovel the snow off the front sidewalk. Some of the other boys helped an apostolic student make beignets for breakfast. I have been noticing more and more acts of charity from the boys as time passes by. This is of no surprise to me. Since the start of the trip, we have had daily Mass, confession opportunities, daily rosary, examination of conscience and daily prayer. Thank you Fathers and Brothers!

After Mass and a delicious breakfast, we headed off to tour the University of Notre Dame in South Bend, Indiana. The most impressive part of the

tour for me was the Basilica of the Sacred Heart and the Reliquary Chapel. The chapel contains more than 1600 relics representing more than 780 saints including all 12 apostles. Another impressive area of the university is the grotto which is an actual smaller scale replica of the original grotto in France. The boys had an opportunity to pray a Hail Mary and light up prayer candles.

We then went to the Ice Box skating rink to play ice hockey. Everyone started ice skating. There were some boys that did not know how to skate...Brother Jared and Father Michael Picard were assisting these boys. On the other hand, you could tell that some of the boys had skated before and were very confident. Within 20 minutes of getting on the ice, the hockey teams started forming. The competition was fierce!

After the ice skating and pizza, we headed back to the school. We showered and prayed our rosary. Father Michael Sullivan and Father Darren held a Q&A session for the boys and dads. The boys started asking Father Michael questions about the priesthood and asked Father Darren questions about the requirements on becoming an Apostolic. He explained that there were some requirements before becoming an apostolic student, one being an openness to the priesthood. Another concern was the time commitment. Some of the boys assumed that once you entered the school, you had to graduate from there. Father Darren clarified that if the boy was accepted to the school, the boy and the family would commit for only one year. When and if the student completes the year, an evaluation would be done to determine whether a second year would be an option for the boy and family. Some of these questions came from boys that I thought were not interested at all about the apostolic school, let alone the priesthood. Indeed the Holy Spirit works in mysterious ways.

Since we were leaving early the very next morning in order to make our trip to Chicago, we had to clean up our dorms, bathrooms and pack, even though it was pretty late and everybody was extremely tired. We all formed teams and started cleaning, sweeping and mopping the areas. We accomplished all the tasks said good night to Mary and went to sleep.

#### *Sacred Heart Journals Part 4*

We started off with 7:00 am mass and then had breakfast. We had planned a trip to Chicago today. However, due to the snowstorm that

passed through the night before, our schedule had to be altered. Brothers Jared and Drew...created a new schedule for the boys...an outdoor football game. The boys were excited to play football in a field with 9 inches of snow!

During this time, the dads were in charge of building a camp fire...success! This was the first campfire I built, so I was pretty proud of myself and the other dads. We had marshmallows and hot chocolate next to the campfire - it was a great morning!

Throughout the day, the boys were busy with many activities: multiple dodge ball games (I think the boys are addicted to that game), board games, ping pong, and many other games. Also, the students from Sacred Heart played a concert for our boys.

There were several acts of charity today. The boys assisted the Apostolic students with cleaning and set up the tables before lunch and dinner. Some of the boys even helped with the laundry. Initially, the boys were not enthusiastic about working. However, when Brother Jared reminded the boys to offer their sufferings for a Legionary priest who is battling cancer, their moods quickly changed.

That night, the dads got together with the Legionary priests and conversed over dinner and discussed ways to promote the Sacred Heart Apostolic School. We...need to get the word out to any interested families that are looking for an excellent environment where their boys can discern the priesthood.

## **Audio RC Handbook on Sale!**

U. S. A. | WHO WE ARE | NEWS

*The Regnum Christi Resource Center is offering monthly items at a discount*

The Regnum Christi Resource Center is having a sale!

Starting this month of April, one of the retail items in the store will be featured at a discount each month.

The item for April is the audio version of the Regnum Christi Handbook, now half price at \$8.49. The RC Handbook “provides a clear and simple explanation of what it means to be a member of Regnum Christi.”

You can go to this item in the store by clicking the following link: <https://www.missionnetwork.com/store/category/RCstore>.

To find the Resource Center on this RC website, go to the top section the home page.

#### Regnum Christi Store



#### RC Member Handbook -- Audio Set

**\*\*On Sale April 2014 - 1/2 Price\*\***

Regular Price \$16.99

The audio presentation of the RC Member Handbook, which provides a clear and simple explanation of what it means to be a member of Regnum Christi



## A shot and a prayer

**Regnum Christi Live – April 3, 2014**  
**By Jim Fair**



I dribbled the ball slowly, with fierce determination. Standing in the mid-court circle, I heard the seconds count

down in my head: five, four, three, two....I faked right, turned left and flung the ball toward the basket, a glorious Big Ten Championship to be won with my heroic shot.

The ball flew under the backboard and into the bushes behind the playground's blacktop court. But it all being the fantasy of a 10-year-old, there was no limit to how many times I could repeat the process. And sometime over the next half hour the ball would tumble through the net and my future hoops stardom was assured.

Like many boys growing up in Ohio in the early 1960s, playing college basketball was the ultimate dream. And like most, the dream fell victim to the reality of limited athletic ability by the end of high school.

Those dreams crept back from the mists of my mind last week when the regional folks from the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) ruled that Northwestern University football players were employees of the school who could be represented by a union. What unfair, exploitive, abusive suffering could have been visited upon the athletes at one of the nation's most prestigious (and expensive) universities? Too many wind sprints? Food bad in the cafeteria? Beds lumpy in the dorm?

Please. I'm sure some athletes have bad experiences. But my observation of college athletes is that they have a pretty good deal. First, they get to play a sport. (They don't "work" a sport.) They get special rooms, special food, special help with classes and homework. They don't pay for anything. And, not to be discounted, other students think they are cool.

Rather than forming a union, the athletes should be on their knees in the chapel, thanking God for the talents he gave them and the opportunity to exhibit them while getting a free education. Even under typical union rules, it is permissible to be grateful.

We seem to have a culture where gratitude, sacrifice and loyalty are considered silly or old-fashioned. (Egads, I'm starting to sound like my father – or grandfather.) But really...if a coach had offered me a college athletic scholarship I would have followed him through fire and flood to help the team.

But at Northwestern, the boys are forming a labor union.

In light of this, I did some research to determine why Northwestern football players want to be represented by a union. My conclusion isn't the same as the NLRB. I think the Northwestern players realize their "jobs" might be on the line and are looking for a little security.

DISCLOSURE: I am a graduate of the University of Illinois, which is a major athletic rival of Northwestern. We've not been so hot of late, but over our history we have five national football championships and 15 Big Ten football championships.

But I digress; Northwestern has a miserable excuse for a football program. The record speaks for itself.

The Wildcats (which are more like tabby cats) starting playing football in 1892. Most of their games have been played in the Big Ten Conference, traditionally one of the better leagues in the country.

In 117 seasons in the Big Ten, Northwestern won 259 games and lost 458. The Tabbies have a losing record versus every other Big Ten team except Indiana, which has not yet tried to unionize.

Northwestern played in its first bowl game (Rose) in 1948 and won. They didn't play in another bowl game until the 1995 Rose Bowl, which they lost. They lost their next eight bowl appearances, but won the Gator Bowl in 2012.

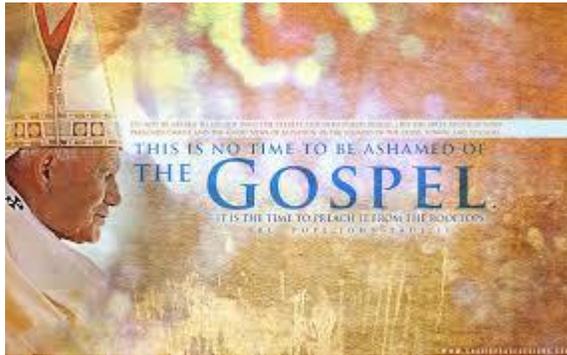
It seems to me that if anyone ought to be forming a union, it is the rest of the students, who pay tuition and have to "win" on their exams to stay in school. They could demand to be paid to watch football.

No, I never amounted to much in the world of athletics. But for whatever little talent God gave me, I'm grateful. And I pray that unionizing football players develop some gratitude for what God gave them.

## **Proclaim the Gospel**

**Regnum Christi Live – April 4**

By Fr Michael Sliney LC



*"Everything about us, all that we are, should 'proclaim the Gospel from the housetops'. All that we do and our whole lives should be an example of what the Gospel way of life means in practice, and should make it unmistakably clear that we belong to Jesus. Our entire being should be a living witness, a reflection of Jesus." -- Blessed Charles de Foucauld*

Imagine the good that will come about by bringing just one of your family members or friends closer to Christ. Think of the ripple effect that will have on their world and think of how much you will console the Sacred Heart of Christ! Let them see Christ in every aspect of who you are, but be sure to keep your "spiritual tank" full through a life of constant prayer and union with God!

## **Driving a Lethal Weapon**

U. S. A. | WHO WE ARE | NEWS

*Jim Rockwell shares his story to help students consider the consequences of their actions*

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On Feb. 17, 1984, Jim Rockwell made some irresponsible decisions that changed his life forever.

On April 2, 2014, Jim visited [Everest Collegiate High School](#), hoping to convince the students to consider the affects of their actions on themselves and others.

In an effort he calls the Rockwell Project, he has been traveling the country for 22 years now speaking to young people. Jim's website, <http://www.rockwellproject.com/>, states he hopes to deter underage drinking among teens and young adults. But it is likely his presence does so much more.

The lanky, congenial man now walks with a cane, has altered facial muscles and eyes that no longer work together. He speaks slowly and with difficulty. No one would know this is the same person in the photograph of his younger self, at age 16, a promising athlete and musician in Orange County, California, with everything going for him.

Like so many other young people, the 16-year-old Jim made bad decisions, and one tragic enough to cause an auto accident that almost ended his life.

On that fateful day, Jim not only decided to skip his late-day classes, but he influenced his friends to join him at his house to drink alcohol and go for



Jim Rockwell addressing the Everest students



a drive in the car.

He still harbors the guilt of endangering the others in the car with him when he would eventually misjudge a turn in the road and lose control, nearly hitting an innocent family in his neighborhood and striking a telephone pole.

“At least I had the good judgment to swerve and not hurt 4 innocent people,” he said. “I was the one driving. I should have suffered the consequences.”

While the two other boys in the car escaped major injury, Jim himself was thrown through the windshield onto the pavement. The car then rolled down the embankment and pinned his head to the ground.

“Everybody thought I was dead,” he said. “I had no noticeable vital signs.”

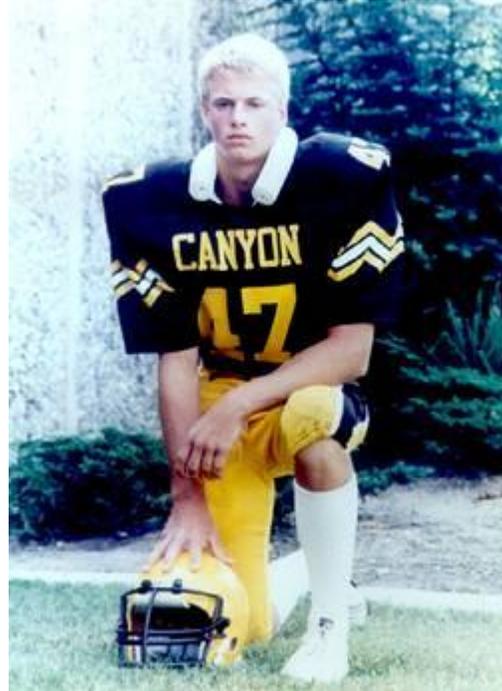
At the hospital, doctors would declare Jim brain dead and urge his parents to “pull the plug.”

“They said this over and over to them for 2 ½ days,” he said.

After 3 days, some slight brain activity would return, but doctors predicted Jim would never come out of his coma, and they wanted to transfer him to a facility for long term care.

“My Dad fought to keep me in ICU for three weeks,” Jim said. “Then I started to make motions like I would come out of it, and they couldn’t believe it.”

The roller coaster ride wasn’t over, however, and swelling on Jim’s brain would bring back his coma, and he was finally transferred out of ICU to the other facility. But after three weeks, Jim would become the



Jim Rockwell at age 16



first person to recover at that same facility. "I am a medical miracle."

Finally on July 26th of that year, Jim was sent home with the understanding that the long road of rehabilitation, toward some semblance of a normal life, had just begun.

He remembers how so-called "friends" at the time scattered "like cockroaches when the lights are turned on" when he returned to school in a wheelchair.

Jim said he discovered who his true friends were -- those who stayed with him and visited him nearly every day while he was in the hospital. "Those are the kind of people you should be with," he said. "They will benefit your life, throughout your life."

His true friends included his girlfriend at the time. However, Jim's anger and resentment would eventually drive her away. "I broke up with her," he admitted sadly. (Since then, he was blessed to meet a wonderful woman, and has been married for three years.)

"It drives me crazy about what I have to go through being disabled," he said. "If I had just been responsible..."

One of the things he most misses is his ability to play music. An accomplished pianist and trombone player in his teen years, Jim said he still has "music in my head and in my heart."

"Now performance is all I have left." Jim uses this gift to share his story and hopefully help young people to think twice about their choices.

What advice does he give?

- **Appreciate your gifts and try to improve yourself.** "You need to stay at 100 percent," he said. "You need all

- your percentage points so you can get through adult life. That is what life is about. Improvement...The brain is still developing and changing through age 25...Keep studying for that test, even if you get a C the first time.”

- **Be thankful for what you have.** “I wish I had the advantage of a school like this,” he said about Everest. “This is a wonderful place to be. My grade alone had 1,000 kids, with 30-45 in a class.”

- **Love your parents, and listen to them.** “It tears my heart out how I hurt my parents forever,” he said. He suggests, rather than ignoring the things parents say, young people should share what their parents tell them with their friends. “Then you can find out that their [your friends’] parents are saying the same things,” he said.

- **Regarding drugs and alcohol** -- “Just stay away from it. It’s not that tough.”

- **Concentrate on self control.** “Remember, when you are driving a car, it may be convenient, but you are driving a lethal weapon.”



Jim still has difficulty walking, speaking and seeing.



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