

REMEMBERING A MAN OF CARMEL: ERIC P. JOHNSON, MOUNT CARMEL GRADUATE, CRESPI CARMELITE COACH

Men of Carmel, Crusaders, and Celts gathered at the Chapel in the Crespi Carmelite Student Commons to celebrate the life of **Eric Patrick Johnson MCHS '75** who passed away on July 29, 2010.

The family and friends of Eric Johnson gathered on Thursday, August 5, 2010 to recall his life, tragically cut short awaiting surgery for a heart and kidney transplant. Eric, a well loved son, brother, father, husband, and friend was a graduate of Mount Carmel High School in its waning years at Hoover and 7th Streets in Los Angeles. He came to Crespi Carmelite at the request of fellow Mount Carmel grad, Paul Muff MCHS '65, who was Varsity Basketball Coach, in the early '80's. Eric, a well respected coach, developed life-long friendships with many of the young athletes he mentored. Members of his Crespi team attending the service were: **Michael Salerno '83, Michael Lang '83, Keith Woods '83, Rik Hartman '82, Chris Nikchevich '82, Hilary Condren '82, and Mark Ferraro '76**. Their attendance, along with fellow Mount Carmel Alumni, **Ron MC '75** and **Nick Gueringer MC '76**, at his funeral mass was a testament to his wisdom and leadership as a son of Carmel.

Eric's faith played a major role in his life. Educated in the parochial school system of the Los Angeles Archdiocese, Eric attended St. Michael's where he first began to develop his gift of creating lifelong friendships with peers. At Mount Carmel High School, Eric was a member of the basketball team; a love for the game carried him through life as a coach to many young players.

Following his years coaching at Crespi Carmelite, Eric ventured into the world of business, although he once again enjoyed coaching at LA City College for the women's basketball program. As time passed, however, his health no longer allowed him to fulfill his life's passion.

Michael James CCHS '82 spoke of Eric as having a special motto that he lived by: "Treat people fair and genuinely. Don't show favoritism."

His life was lauded by **Kevin McKesson MC '75**, class mate **Tony Gueringer MC '74**, Michael James, a member of his 1982 JV Basketball team at Crespi Carmelite, and Des Johnson, a dear friend.

Eric leaves behind his two daughters, Hailey and Erica, his mother, Sara, and sisters, Karen (Michael Lambert) and Rachel, numerous extended family members and his former wives, Rose, and Cathy, with whom he remained close, as well as his many brothers in Carmel from Mount Carmel and Crespi Carmelite High Schools.

Fr. Paul Henson, O. Carm., Principal of Crespi Carmelite, presided over the Mass of Resurrection and shared the promise of heaven with each of Eric's loved ones, assuring them that Eric had brought a piece of them in his heart to heaven.