

EULOGY FOR A SON - BY CRIS FIORE

My son Anthony died May 31, 2014 from heroin. This is the eulogy I delivered at his funeral.

A voice is heard in Ramah, mourning and great weeping, Rachel weeping for her children and refusing to be comforted, because they are no more.

Today, again, Warrington is Ramah, and we are all Rachel. Another child is no more.

I loved Anthony, something that was not always easy to do. Anthony loved Eminem and 50 cent and Lil Wayne. Whenever any of them were about to come out with a new CD, Anthony always knew about it when the news first broke and he had to get the CD the day it came out. He loved movies and had recently developed a fondness for chick flicks. I suppose this shouldn't surprise me. When he was a baby, his favorite video was "The Little Mermaid." He devoured each and every Harry Potter novel the week it was published, proudly reporting how many pages he'd read each day. And as each book was made into a movie, he and I would see them, and if it wasn't the day they were released Anthony was sorely disappointed.

He loved candy.

He loved his car.

He loved his brother.

He loved his mother.

He loved the Lord.

And he loved heroin.

Lord how he loved heroin. And because he loved heroin so much and because he thought it loved him back, he'll never get to take his brother to the Eminem & Rihanna concert this August. He'll never get to enjoy the case of Sour Patch Kids candy he ordered and that was delivered two days after he died. He won't get to train Caesar, the Boxer puppy he bought from a breeder in Oklahoma just two weeks ago. And for the first time in years, there's plenty of recording capacity on the DVR.

His death is a shock, but it's not a surprise. He had been slow dancing with death for more than five years. He overdosed and almost died. His friend overdosed and almost died in front of his eyes. He was arrested. He overdosed again. He was arrested again. He spent a week on the street and a month in prison.

And each and every time we said, "Anthony, please, take this as a sign. It's a warning. Take it to heart. You need to change your behavior." And each and every time he said he knew and he would. But at some point, each of those warnings was forgotten. And all that remained was the mantra of the young. "It's my life and I'll do what I want. I'm only hurting myself."

"It's my life."

Every time another young person says, "It's my life," Satan smiles.

"It's my life and I'll do what I want."

Yes, of course you will. But your actions have consequences and sometimes your mistakes are irreversible.

"I'm only hurting myself."

Really? I wish I had words strong enough and true enough to convince you of the staggering selfishness of that remark. And how wrong it is.

Almost exactly one week ago my lips were pressed against Anthony's cold, pale lips, trying desperately to breathe air into lungs too full of fluid to receive it.

For the last week his mother has carried one of Anthony's unwashed shirts around with her, holding it to her face so she can smell him. She sleeps in his bed with his shirt and a framed photograph of Anthony. Everywhere she turns something else reminds her of Anthony. The leftovers from the last food he bought – food was a very big thing with Anthony. The stale remnants of the last soda he ever drank. She wants to die, so she can see her first born again.

Nick, who is one of the best people I know, has spent much of the last week with his arm around his mother. Nick, who was already an old soul, has aged 10 years in the last week. I don't know if he will ever smile again.

But, hey, It's your life. Do what you want. But before you ever again dare say, "I'm only hurting myself," look at your mother, look up the word 'inconsolable' and remember Anthony's mother.

Anthony kept a small scrap of paper with a verse he had copied from scripture pinned above his desk, right in front of his laptop, where he could look at it every day. The prophet Isaiah speaking to God:

"You will keep in perfect peace
those whose minds are steadfast,
because they trust in you."

An assurance from the Lord, that gave Anthony comfort. Later in that same verse there are words of comfort for those of us Anthony left behind when he went home:

"But your dead will live, Lord;
their bodies will rise—
let those who dwell in the dust
wake up and shout for joy—
your dew is like the dew of the morning;
the earth will give birth to her dead."

Goodbye my son.



**Anthony Fiore:
10/11/89 – 5/31/14**

Find the YouTube video: search "Eulogy for a Son Cris Fiore"

