

Josemaria Palma Manrique

STMC Class of 2004



A Knight's Journey

By Keara Goco Luarca

On September 8, 2012, Josemaria Manrique unexpectedly passed away in a motor vehicle accident while returning back to school in Thunder Bay, Ontario. At the age of 26, this young man's passing can only be described as tragedy. He is greatly missed by his parents, Joselito and Emmeline, and siblings, Emil and Jasmin, as well as family and loved ones.

Josemaria, known to family and friends as 'Jomar', led a life full of beautiful moments. In a too short time on this earth, he was able to touch the lives of so many. Easygoing, fun, and caring, he loved wholeheartedly and lived with purpose and faith.

On September 16, 1985, Jomar was born in Quezon City, Philippines where he spent most of his childhood days, aside from a period in Kenya, Africa. Jomar was an outgoing child with an infectious joy. He easily made friends wherever he went, building relationships with people now living all around the world. Jomar had an ability to maintain these friendships even across many miles and years. After moving to Canada, Jomar attended South Slope Elementary, where he received awards in Sports, Citizenship and Fine Arts. He attended St. Thomas More Collegiate, where he actively joined sports teams in cross-country, basketball, track & field and tennis; and was a member of the STMC Chamber Choir and Band.

His interests were many and can be seen in the variety of friendships he cultivated. His passion for music was undeniable to all who knew him. He was a trained classical guitarist, percussionist, and loved jazz music. He was a student of Robert Jordan at the Vancouver Academy of Music. Even though he was very talented, Jomar encouraged people of all talent levels to play with him. He was always willing to teach and share his knowledge, and it was easy to see that Jomar lived and loved music. He volunteered his time and talents in the Sunday 7 PM choir as instrumentalist and altar server at St. Francis de Sales Parish, the Light of Jesus Family Vancouver Worship Team, St. Bernadette Parish Fundraising Yule Ball 2009, and was a member of the Rondalla (a Filipino folk ensemble) of the Kababayang Pilipino of BC, performing in their 10th and 15th year anniversary shows.

His pursuits varied and along with his friends, he enjoyed playing video games, reading comics, and was interested in technology. He also had a passion for hockey and was an avid fan of the Vancouver Canucks.

Jomar was a driven learner. He pursued education with determination and was incredibly successful. He earned a degree in Applied Science from Kwantlen Polytechnic University, and then attended BCIT, earning a degree in Chemical Sciences. His last pursuit was a Chemical Engineering degree at Lakehead University in Thunder Bay which he was to finish this year.

It is not because of these many accomplishments that we celebrate Jomar, but because of the memories he was able to give to those who knew him. Even at the end, he continued to give to those who are in need by being an organ donor. His ongoing love to other people will now be shown through all the different recipients as he will now live through them. Now when you hear your favorite song, remember a funny story, or are surrounded by your greatest friends, you remember the way Jomar lived his life and how he has touched many people. And because of this, he will always be missed.

