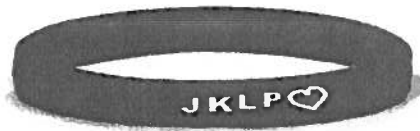


A CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL HOMECOMING

In mid-September, football fans at Detroit Central Catholic High School's Senior Parent Night had an unexpected surprise. After the other players had escorted their parents onto the field, 17-year-old Tanner Cipriano walked his mother, Rose, out to the 50-yard-line. According to the *Detroit News*, they received the loudest ovation of the entire game. Only months before, it had seemed unlikely Rose would ever walk again. On the night of April 16, Rose and Bob Cipriano's oldest son, 19-year-old Tucker, accompanied by a friend his age, broke into the family's home in search of drug money. They beat Bob to death and so badly battered Rose and Tanner's twin brother, Sal, that they were not expected to survive. Only Tanner and his 9-year-old sister escaped to safety.

TROUBLE IN A MODEL FAMILY

Adopted at birth from an addicted single mother, Tucker Cipriano soon showed signs of behavioral and learning disabilities. Bob and Rose found therapy to help him through his roughest spots, coached him in many different sports and enrolled him in promising school programs. But as the other children were born, Tucker grew alienated, began taking drugs, and finally wound up in jail. Trying "tough love" to bring him around, Rose and Bob told him he could return home only if he sought help for himself first. Even after they repeatedly reached out, Tucker felt unable to leave the streets. High on K2 (Spice), he enlisted a casual friend's help to rob and kill the only family he had known.



At the close of his father's funeral mass, Tanner Cipriano reflected on the faith he had seen in action in his parents' treatment of his wayward brother. "As a bystander," he said, "I never understood why my dad continued to love him, or why he didn't just give in and call Tucker a lost cause." But with his father gone and his mother and brother in intensive care, Tanner said he finally realized what a lesson in compassion his parents had taught their family, and he begged forgiveness for both Tucker and his accomplice because "it is only after true forgiveness that true healing will begin." From now on, Tanner said, he would adopt new middle initials, JKLP, for **Just Keep Loving People**.

"A LESSON IN LOVE"

It was a lesson embraced not only by Catholics but by the entire community who heard the story. A Muslim friend devised JKLP bracelets to raise funds for the family, and the slogan made its way onto Facebook pages and T-shirts for well-attended benefit races, swims, bowling tournaments and other fundraisers. Not only friends and neighbors but complete strangers offered help, allowing Rose and son Sal to obtain rehabilitative brain therapy their insurance would not cover. While the family's struggles are far from over, prayers continue to pour in for all of them, including Tucker. As Tanner said at the funeral, his dad "taught me a lot, and in the last week, he's taught me even more. This week has been a lesson in love" as affection poured out for a stricken family willing and even eager to seek healing through forgiveness.

Tanner's eulogy can be found at <http://www.themichigancatholic.com/2012/05/brother-asks-forgiveness-for-sibling-accused-in-fatal-attack/> in the May 4th edition of *Michigan Catholic*.