

Responding to the death of a friend

How do you respond to a friend's death? As teenagers most of us don't know what to do or how to respond because losing someone at a young age isn't supposed to happen.

This past week the St. Margaret and Calvert Hall communities lost a member and I lost a friend. Jack Levee, or as he liked to spell it "Jak," passed away July 3 from a bad allergic reaction. I had the pleasure of spending my entire time in elementary and middle school with him at St. Margaret as well as three years at Calvert Hall. Jack was a rising senior at The Hall.

According to his closest friends, Jack was a very caring person and a true friend. Jack was a very upbeat, happy, unique and energetic person. In fact, the only way I can remember him is with a smile on his face. He would always have a joke to share and he'd find something positive in every situation. Another way to describe him is crazy (in a good way!). Whether it be carrying a slurpee into exams or dying his hair "Monster (energy drink) green" he would follow the saying "you only live once." Jack even closed out the eighth-grade fashion show at St. Margaret's in his fencing uniform - a sport he was said to be very good at.

During Jack's struggle, social media played a large role in updates on his condition and a basic location for voicing concern. A common post on Jack's Facebook page was "praying for you". A "hashtag" was even created on Twitter (#prayersforJack) by his sister, John Carroll student, Abbey Levee.

A few days before his passing a prayer vigil was held at St. Margaret Church. Father Doug Kenney estimated about 175 were in physical attendance. I say "physical" because a live video stream was hosted by John Carroll student Jon Yantz for those unable to physically attend. The Levee family took advantage of this opportunity by watching and listening to the vigil on a laptop. I was on the way back to Texas from a college visit in Oklahoma so I unfortunately wasn't able to attend. Thanks to Jon and social media I was able to pray with my peers via a cell phone hundreds of miles

away.

So how do you deal with the passing of someone so young? You find strength in your family, friends, school community and of course your faith. We can cherish the relationships we have now and know that even at difficult times we have each other to lean on.



*Jack Levee (center in the black shirt) was a friend and classmate of Evan Zimmer.
(Evan Zimmer | CR photography intern)*