

Father Carlin, Mr. and Mrs. Zielinski, Ken and Rosie, young Anthony, Tracey, the entire Zielinski family, assembled friends and loved ones. I was honored and humbled to be asked to say a few words this morning about a great man, a man who will be sorely missed. It is indeed a very sad day for all of us. We have lost a great man in the prime of his life, a man full of vision, energy, passion, friendship and love. It is appropriate and even natural for us to grieve and to be sad, to ask why could God take someone from us who is so young and full of life and potential; we could be mad that he was taken from his son, Anthony and the love of his life, Tracey, with so much living to do and so much love to share - but Anthony wouldn't want us to do that. He would not want us to think of his suffering or his death but rather his triumphs in life. He had the trait that we all admired so much....**He was the eternal optimist.** A glass half full type of person who always found good in a tough situation. He would want us to remember all of the great things he was to all of us and to the world. So that is what I attempt to do this morning.

Anthony was so much to so many different people. He had so many talents and wore so many hats so well. He was Anthony the public and community servant, Anthony the business man, Anthony the friend, Anthony the family man, and Anthony the father. He was so much to so many of us.

First, there was Anthony the public and community servant. He was as good as there was. Early on in his political career, Anthony led the local Democratic Party when I met him and always ran things like clockwork. His agenda was clear and his meetings were well-organized. I served on council with Anthony in the mid 90's - we were two of three new councilman elected in 1995 and became fast friends. Anthony quickly became a respected voice within the city. He was loved by his constituents and gave them great service. In 2001, after 3 terms on council, he went to pursue other interests ~ but I knew he'd miss it and would someday be back.

In 2003, I sought his advice when deciding whether to run for mayor and even convinced him to run again for council so that we could tackle the city's challenges as a team. He ran and won by a landslide ~ which he always did. Funny thing is that he was so well liked that he usually was unopposed. When I introduced him at public events, I told the assembled crowds that he was the most popular Parma public official in this era. I meant it then and still do today. He was good with constituents and he frequently won over his adversaries, which were very few, if any.

Most people know that Parma's financial situation is strong today mostly because of Anthony's good work and his steady guidance and advice. He was a conservative but accurate forecaster of the city's finances. I told him often that if

politics didn't work that he should replace Dick Goddard as Cleveland's legendary weatherman in that he was good at forecasting the future.

In tough times, he was like a rock. Steady, forthcoming, and sincere. When I had bad news to deliver to employees about city finances, Anthony offered to sit right next to me and help me deliver it. When a difficult political problem came up he always gave us good advice. I know today that several of us sought Anthony out first when there were tough problems and decisions to be made and when advice and counsel was needed. During tough campaigns, Anthony was always in the room offering sound and smart political advice and if you could garner his support, you were not only very lucky but very likely to succeed.

I have said a lot recently, that as a leader in our political movement, he was like the glue that kept us all on track and working together.

But politics was only part of his service to the community. He was active in the Rotary Club and the Chamber of Commerce. Anthony was a co-founder of Leadership for Tomorrow - a legacy that will live on in his memory that encouraged young people to be involved in public service. Anthony knew it was important to cultivate young people. As for Anthony's legacy as a public and community servant - well done Anthony!

Then there was Anthony the businessman. Whether it was Kaufman Container, mortgage loans, financial strategies, or government relations... Anthony

was good at what he did. He was easy to deal with, extremely trustworthy, and incredibly hard working. I spoke with Tracey the day he passed away and she said that he was always on the move. She said that he exhausted her with how he was always on the go and loved it. He was a real hustler and hard worker and was really very good at everything he did.

Anthony brought his good business sense to city hall. He treated his employees well and they all loved him. He treated his customers, the public very well also. Anthony had extraordinary business sense that we all admired.

Then there was Anthony the friend ~which has been said so much the last few days. Anthony had a way about him. An aura if you will. When he was in a room, everyone wanted to be near him. When he talked to you, he made you feel like you were the only person that mattered. And that didn't matter if you were his friend or not - he treated everyone like this. As busy as he was - he always, always made time for his friends. His best friend Tom Mastroianni and he were inseparable. I figured it was because Anthony liked pizza and pasta from PJay's so much and wanted to bulk up a little. They were like brothers. Anthony had so many friends.

Sometimes I think that Anthony cared about his many friends so much that he didn't take enough time for himself. Often times, he would call just to check in on you for no reason. And he would definitely be one of the first to call you when

something bad happened or times were tough. Isn't that one of the truest measures of a good friend ~ someone who would always have your back? Anthony always had our backs and never thought twice about it.

AZ - as we referred to him - was also incredibly good natured. Never flustered and always there with a kind hearted joke or a comforting word for his friends. One of the words I have heard over and over again over the last few days was the word "**gentleman**". A guy who would bend over backwards to make everyone else comfortable, even if it was the first time he met you. Anthony was indeed a true **gentleman**. Clearly, Anthony the friend was a great friend to many.

Anthony was the ultimate family man. We all knew Anthony as a dedicated family man and father to little Anthony. People have said that you can tell what kind of person someone is if you meet their parents. Anthony's mom and dad are special people; kind-hearted, dedicated, hard working, extraordinarily loving, family oriented and very supportive of their children ~ Ken, Rose and Anthony. These are traits that were passed along to all the children. Anthony was so proud of his upbringing and his family and talked about it often.

When I met Tracey a several years ago, I knew that Anthony had fallen hard. They were in love and Anthony let everyone know it. Tracey, your unconditional love for Anthony and your caring spirit for him over the last year is a tribute to that

relationship and the love you shared for each other. Anthony is lucky to have had you and your family in his life for the years that you shared.

And then there is young Anthony. Anthony, you were so lucky to have your dad and he was so lucky to have you. Everyone knew how much your father loved you. He was so proud of you. At Monday morning meetings he would tell us about all the time he spent with you throughout the preceding weekend. He would tell us about your father-son outings, your sporting events, the movies you saw, the road trips you took and where you went for dinner. He reported how you did in school, all of the funny things you would say and everything about you.

He and I even hatched a plan how you would definitely run and become Mayor of Parma someday. There was no doubt about it in our minds. Your dad wants great things for you.

Anthony, when you think about your dad in the days, months, and years to come, I want you to remember not only how much you loved your dad but how much he loved you. I also want you to know how respected, loved and revered your dad was to all of us and to everyone he met. He was proud of you and wanted you to grow up to do great things. He knew that you would work hard and do the best you could, but he also knew that, like all kids, you weren't perfect and that at times you would make mistakes. When that happened he wanted you to learn from your mistakes and be a better person for them. He also wanted you to be a good friend

to all. To help people when they were in need. To be patient with others and to help those who couldn't help themselves. And to be loyal to your family and never forget where you came from.

Anthony - we know that today you are sad just like the rest of us. It is ok to cry. But we want you to know that we know that your dad wanted you to continue to live life to its fullest, to be happy and to remember him as the dad you always knew.

Today we mourn the loss of a local icon ~ a colleague, a leader, a friend, a neighbor, a brother, a father, a lover. Let us not remember how he left us but what he meant to us when he was here. Let us celebrate the time we had together and look forward to the day we will see him again.

God Bless you Anthony ~