

Journal of Contemporary Health Law & Policy (1985-2015)

Volume 22 | Issue 1

Article 2

2005

A Fond Farewell

George P. Smith II

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarship.law.edu/jchlp>

Recommended Citation

George P. Smith II, *A Fond Farewell*, 22 J. Contemp. Health L. & Pol'y 1 (2006).

Available at: <https://scholarship.law.edu/jchlp/vol22/iss1/2>

This Dedication is brought to you for free and open access by CUA Law Scholarship Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in Journal of Contemporary Health Law & Policy (1985-2015) by an authorized editor of CUA Law Scholarship Repository. For more information, please contact edinger@law.edu.

A FOND FAREWELL

*George P. Smith, II**

Lord make me as an instrument of Thy peace;
where there is hatred, let me sow love;
where there is injury, pardon;
where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, light;
where there is sadness, joy.

Grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console;
to be understood as to understand;
to be loved as to love.

For it is in giving that we receive;
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

-The Prayer of St. Francis of Assisi

At the Memorial Service for Steven P. Frankino at the Chapel of St. Thomas at Villanova University, on October 3, 2005, the President of the University, Reverend Edmund Dobbin, OSA, observed that the Mass card for the service carried a picture of St. Francis of Assisi, Steve's favorite saint, and set forth his eloquent Prayer which—in a very real way—codified Steve's personal philosophy of life. Building upon this observation and amplifying aspects of the Prayer of St. Francis, the eulogy—delivered by Steve's children, Christina, Alleen and Sean—stressed their father's unconditional love and respect for all people. Loyalty to faith, family, and friends was central to his life plan.

For Steve, the sage counsel of Polonius to his son, Laertes, in Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, rang true every day of his life; for he believed that in

* Professor of Law, The Catholic University of America, and Founding Faculty Editor, *The Journal of Contemporary Health Law and Policy*.

being true to one's self, one could not be false to any one.¹ And, further, that the true or ultimate measure of an individual's own worth was to be found in the manner by which others were treated.

With all whom he had professional and social contact, Steve treated everyone with respect and humaneness. Sharing the "products" of his culinary skills, then, became simply an expression of friendship and love. In the spirit of his culinary mentor, Julia Child, he never skimmed on butter! Steve was always comfortable and at ease either preparing gourmet dishes in his kitchen, dining at a Michelin three star restaurant with a bottle of Dom Perignon or enjoying a simple glass of campari and soda with a hamburger on the Via Veneto in Rome. Just as his dining tastes were rich and diverse, so too was his passion for good music—ranging from Italian Grand Opera to Lawrence Welk. There can be no doubt that in all things and in all ways, Steve lived greatly—and especially in the law.²

It has been suggested that "good deans (like good waiters) find their satisfaction in other peoples success."³ Surely, with Steven P. Frankino, three law school faculties where he served as Dean—Creighton, Catholic, and Villanova Universities—profited mightily from not only his skills as *maitre d'*, but—metaphorically as well—from his equal dedicated talents as a Master *Sommelier* and gourmet *chef de cuisine*, resplendent in full *toque blanche*. The academic banquets over which he presided were not only prepared after careful study and from "secret" recipes, but were nutritious and always served with panache. Indeed, Steven's whole career was a "nonstop commitment of talents and energy to the services of others."⁴

At the Catholic University Law School, Steven strove to create "a sense of serenity and comfort among [his] colleagues."⁵ And, he succeeded admirably. Not only did his deanship advance a "renaissance" of spirit among the faculty,⁶ the student body and the alumni, but his administrative skills gave use to the establishment of the Communications Law, Law and

1. LORD POLONIUS. This above all: to thine ownself be true,
And it must follow, as the night of day
Thou canst not then be false to any man.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE, THE TRAGEDY OF HAMLET, PRINCE OF DENMARK, act 1, Scene 3.

2. OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES, *The Profession of Law*, in COLLECTED LEGAL PAPERS 29 (1920).

3. Carl E. Schneider, *Tribute to Dean Lee E. Teitelbaum*, 90 CORNELL L. REV. 5, 7 (2004).

4. Ralph J. Rohner, *The Patient and Prescience of a Chess Master*, 43 VILL. L. REV. 3 (1998).

5. *Id.* at 4.

6. *Id.* at 5.

Public Policy, and the Comparative and International Law programs and *The Journal of Contemporary Health Law and Policy*.⁷

In much the same way as his former professor, colleague and friend, Dean John L. Garvey, approached his deanship,⁸ Steve—as his immediate successor—stressed personal integrity, honesty, trust, decency, and compassion in all of his faculty associations as well as student and alumni relationships.

By recognizing the pioneering intellectual spirit of one of his predecessor deans at the law school, Steven inaugurated a distinguished lecture series honoring Brendan F. Brown and then proceeded to bring national and international speakers to the Law School and thereby enrich the very fiber of the academic community. Today, this series stands as an enduring testament to Steve's vision and to his open-minded curiosity as an intellectual Catholic.

Because of a personal relationship of trust and confidence with the then President of the University, Professor Edmund D. Pellegrino, M.D.,⁹ Dean Frankino was allowed to redesign the faculty compensation plan which then became the central step in his plan for faculty enhancement and redevelopment and a precursor to an even bigger challenge: finding better physical facilities for the Law School!

Steve's somewhat suppressed "architectural talents" allowed him to think creatively as Professor James P. White, the Consultant for Legal Education of the American Bar Association, "encouraged" the Law School and the University to deal with the need for new or expanded physical facilities. From a wrap-around wing to the preexisting Leahy Hall where the School was located, to acquisition and renovation of the then Augustinian and Franciscan Seminaries, Steve "tinkered." In a very real way, this tinkering was a skillful way to educate the central administration of the University to the great need of the law school for relocation. It remained for his long-time college and law school friend, Professor Ralph J. Rohner, to succeed him as Dean and actually build the magnificent new building which the Law School now occupies—a building of which Dean Frankino could only dream.

The reason for *The Journal of Contemporary Health Law and Policy* being established and perhaps its central purpose complemented one of the goals Dean Frankino saw that a Catholic Law School should dedicate itself to: namely, the pursuit of truth and the promotion of social justice through law reform. In his powerful St. Ives Lecture entitled, *The Nature of a Catholic Law School—Personal Reflections*, delivered at the Law School on April 9, 1981, Dean Frankino observed that Catholic law schools should

7. *Id.*

8. Editorial Bd., John L. Garvey: A Tribute, 49 CATH. U.L. REV. 1 (1999).

9. See generally Steven P. Frankino, *Dedication, Edmund D. Pellegrino*, 6 J. CONTEMP. HEALTH L. & POL'Y xi (1990).

never aim to be merely parochial. Rather, they should seek to be pluralistic and, as such, “discover, impart, and apply truth and values from all perspectives” guided always by a spirit of Christian humanism.¹⁰ Steven saw this as not only a worthy goal but a responsibility to be met. Over the years, the *Health Law Journal* has striven to remain loyal to this vision of its Founding Dean.

Finally, in much the same way that Steve—as an international traveler—said repeatedly to those whom he left at the conclusion of his trips, it is appropriate to say to him now—*Adios, Arrivederci, Auf Wiedersehen, Au revoir, Do svidanja, Do widzenia, Shalom*.¹¹

10. Editorial Bd., *Dedication*, 1 J. CONTEMP. HEALTH L. & POL'Y 1 (1985).

11. There are over 450 ways to say goodbye in various foreign languages. Jennifer Runner, “Goodbye” in over 450 Languages, <http://www.elite.net/~runner/jennifers/goodbye/htm> (last visited Jan. 24, 2006).