

**Albert W. Kilian
Memories
3-5-18**

My 1st cousin Albert Walter Kilian was born about 6 months after my birthdate and lived only about 1 ½ miles from our farmhouse. Even so, I did not get to play much with him when we were kids because, well you see, he had cerebral palsy. But I remember how happy and determined he was throughout his life. He always had a big grin for you and I don't recall ever seeing or hearing him whine about his condition. Many times, I witnessed his unwavering desire and determination to live a normal life. He was an inspiration to everyone that had an opportunity to be around him.

I remember us being together in grade school at St. Michael's in Winchester. My memory is from when we were in the "big room," the room for 5th through 8th graders. Teacher Martin Schuetze would have Paul Gersch or me help Albert from time to time with physical activities related to school work. In addition to the 3 Rs, Albert learned about his Savior Jesus Christ, God's Holy Word, and Christian songs. I know that while Albert was at St. Michael's, he memorized many Bible verses like the rest of us did. So, I am sure that he knew very well Bible verses such as:

"Thy Word is truth." (John 17:17),

"Thy Word is lamp unto my feet and light unto my path." (Psalm 119:105),

"God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3:16),

"Thou shalt love the Lord, thy God, with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy mind." (Matthew 22:37),

"Trust in the Lord with all thine heart." (Proverbs 3:5),

"The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin." (1 John 1:7),

"Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world." (Matthew 28:20), and many more.

On another occasion during grade-school years, we were at Zilss Memorial Hall in Winchester for a celebration. Albert was proudly walking using a pair of board-like devices attached to his shoes. It helped him maintain his balance as he shuffled from one end of the hall to the other. He was as proud of this accomplishment as he could be and was grinning from ear to ear. Being able to walk on his own did not come easily; he worked with his parents and therapists over a long time to get to this point. On occasions like this, he wore a head pad ("scull cap"), much like the old leather football helmets, to protect his head and ears in case he fell. And he took many falls over the years but was undaunted in his quest to walk and do many of the things that others were able to do.

Years later, I learned that Albert had earned a college degree while living in San Antonio (perhaps from St. Mary's University or Trinity University). It's another example of Albert's determination to accomplish something in his life. Years later while visiting the Zoch farm in Winchester with my wife and children, Albert drove up in a motor cycle with a side car. Now, this just about beats everything, I thought! I could not believe it! This guy, who could barely walk and with frequent muscle spasms in his arms and hands, driving a motor cycle – amazing! With gloves, hat, and goggles, he was virtually a caricature of himself but he was happy and full of life. He offered to take us for a ride in his side car and my wife, being the adventurous one, took him up on his offer. (Yes, she returned safely, of course!)

He was an amazing guy in spite of his "handicap!" I am confident that he inspired many of the people he met while living in San Antonio. Albert suffers no handicap today as he is in heaven with his Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Thanks for the memories and inspiration Albert! Your cousin, Erwin J. Zoch