

FROM THE VICAR'S DESK

Shay Goes Home

Part II of II

However, as Shay stepped up to the plate, the pitcher, recognizing that the other team was putting winning aside for this moment in Shay's life, moved in a few steps to lob the ball in softly, so Shay could at least make contact. The first pitch came and Shay swung clumsily and missed. The pitcher again took a few steps forward to toss the ball softly towards Shay. As the pitch came in, Shay swung at the ball & hit a slow ground ball right back at the pitcher.

The game would be over now. The pitcher picked up the soft grounder and could have easily thrown the ball to the first baseman. Shay would have been out by a mile and that would have been the end of the game.

Instead, the pitcher threw the ball right over the first baseman's head, out of the reach of all teammates. Everyone from the stands and both teams started yelling, "*Shay, run to first! Run to first!*" Never in his life had Shay ever run that far, but he made it to first base. He scampered down the baseline, wide-eyed and startled.

Everyone yelled, "*Run to second! Run to second!*" Catching his breath, Shay awkwardly ran towards second, gleaming and struggling to make it to the base. By the time Shay rounded second base, the right fielder had the ball...the smallest guy on their team, who now had his first chance to be the hero for his team. He could have thrown the ball to the second baseman for the tag, but he understood the pitcher's intentions, so he too, intentionally, threw the ball high and over the third baseman's head. Shay ran toward third base deliriously, as the runners ahead of him circled the bases toward home.

All were screaming, "*Shay, Shay, Shay! All-the-way-Shay!*" Shay made it to third base because the opposing shortstop ran to help him by turning him in the direction of third base & whispered in his ear, "*Run to third, Shay. Run to third.*" As Shay rounded third, the boys from both teams and the spectators were on their feet screaming, "*Shay, run home! Run home!*" Shay ran to home, stepped on the plate, and was cheered as the hero, who hit the grand slam & won the game for his team.

"*That day,*" said the father softly, with tears rolling down his face, "*the boys from both teams brought a piece of true love and humanity into this world.*"

Shay didn't make it to another summer. He died that winter, having never forgotten being the hero & making his father so happy and coming home, feeling his mother tearfully embrace him —her little hero.

'Nuff said! —fr. "t."