

# Southdown Annual Benefit Dinner

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*May 11, 2017*

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TRIBUTE TO J.J. BARNICKE

BY THOMAS G. MCCARTHY, EMMANUEL CONVALESCENT FOUNDATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS

It is fitting on our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary that we have chosen to honor the life and legacy of Joseph Barnicke, one of the original initiators of Southdown.

It is an honor and a privilege for me to add some insight into the priorities of this exceptional man who had such an enormous impact on my own life.

As many of you know, I had a front row seat to watch his impressive story unfold, as I was his partner and friend for over 40 years.

His energy and efforts on behalf of a myriad of charitable causes is legendary, as evidenced by the bio in tonight's program.

His name is synonymous with first class performance in every aspect of his personal and business dealings, and is the reason that he continues to be such a positive inspiration in so many ways today.

Joe has completed his life journey and I am confident that he is now home safely in the arms of his creator, the one he honored all his days.

I know for certain that the good that people do in this life lives on in our hearts and remains forever. The memory of Joe Barnicke is alive and well, as the mention of his name brings a smile to your face, and evokes strong feelings of gratitude and admiration for all that he gave and accomplished.

We learned from him that giving is far more rewarding than receiving, and that in helping others, we are truly helping ourselves.

So let's consider some of the lessons we learned from the example of this remarkable man that will help us all along our own way.

His great friend, Cardinal Carter, pointed out repeatedly that the most important form of leadership resides not necessarily in the hands of the powerful in our society, but is found in the hands of those who gave of their time, their talents and their resources to help those who cannot help themselves.

He further made the point that the most noble deed of the human heart is to reach down and lift someone up.

In this regard, Joe Barnicke scored very high marks indeed.

Without regard for fanfare, thanks, or acclaim, in the kindly and generous deeds of everyday to those who crossed his path, Joe provided the highest form of leadership in our community.

He often spoke of the role of faith, family and generosity in the culture of our company.

It came through loud and clear in all his dealings with others and was the trademark of our company. I might add that it also was the secret behind our success.

He was always quick to remind us that with success comes serious responsibility to others.

His life and example should make the words of St Luke ring in our collective ears, as a reminder that from those to whom much has been given, much will be expected.

It is clear then that Joe understood the mandate of Cardinal Carter that in the service of others is where the most important form of leadership resides.

He also had a strong sense of family, another quality we would all do well to emulate. He lost his beloved wife, Justina, at a young age, leaving him to raise a family of five children alone.

The love and esteem he held for his wife Justine translated into a fierce determination on his part to ensure the future of his three sons and two daughters- and what a splendid job he did. All of them turned out to be a credit to him and they have more than lived up to his very high standards.

The single most dominant influence and guiding force in the life of Joe Barnicke was always his rock solid faith. It dominated every move he made, and it shone like a beacon for all to see. He wore his faith proudly on his sleeve as a badge of honor.

So the most pertinent question for all of this evening is “how does his example resonate in our own lives and bring real meaning to everything we do.”

Our short span of life is like a few threads in a tapestry. Sometimes in our confusion, we see it from the underside, with all its knots, tangles, and imperfections.

Through our faith however, we realize that our creator sees it from the other side, in all its beauty and splendor.

Because of people like Joseph Barnicke, we know that our faith teaches us to trust him who knows the end from the very beginning.

Perhaps the beautiful words of the poet Haskins will help us all to see the path to follow.

He writes:

*And I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year*

*Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown*

*And he replied*

*Go out into the darkness and place your hand into the hand of God*

*That shall be for you better than light and safer than a known way*

So let us give thanks tonight for the gift of Joe Barnicke’s example, his friendship, and his guidance.

May almighty God in his infinite love and mercy rest his noble soul in peace.

Believe me, my friends, when I say that you will not see the likes of him again!