

June 12, 1965

It's about time to introduce you to the future President of the United States. Or perhaps to the first man to travel around the rings of the planet Saturn. Or perhaps to the next Hemingway. Or to the first American Pope. We're not quite sure yet which one it is. Fortunately, there's still a little bit of time to decide, since this future President (or astronaut or Hemingway or Pope) is now a mere six pounds, six ounces, and at the time of this writing he's only three and a half hours old. But it's never too early to plan.

There are, of course, certain factors going against him. First, he was not born in a log cabin; he was born in Methodist Hospital, Houston -- therefore, he lacks the pioneer background in his campaign for the Presidency. However, there is a fireplace in our house and he can study there by candlelight if he wishes. Second, at this moment his father is a complete physical wreck compared to the sheer perfection in size vision, and reflexes of the astronauts -- however, we have a lot of books on space science around the house, and if he studies enough maybe he can think his way around any obstacles in the Saturn Project. Third, he ain't been born into no family of Hemingways, but the next time there's a civil war in Spain he'll be sure to sign up as a news correspondent and -- who knows? Finally, a birth in Methodist Hospital is not too good a start to the papacy -- but it is indeed Ecumenical.

The mother is doing fine and at this moment she is asleep, dreaming great dreams for her son. The delivery was fast and relatively easy. For that, both parents are relieved and thankful.

And his name? Oh yes, it is Lawrence David Kavanagh III. Remember that name. You just may be hearing it again.

From the pen of his proud parents,

Larry and Judy Kavanagh

P.S. Visiting hours most any time at 4506 Mount Vernon Street in Houston.

4506 Mt. Vernon St.  
Houston, Texas 77006

August 16, 1967

It unnerves a father to hear that his wife has just given birth to a girl, because a man doesn't know anything about women -- especially small ones. So he certainly doesn't know how to be a father to one. But he's happy because he knows that now he'll have a little carbon copy of his most precious possession around the house.

A mother, on the other hand, is in ecstasy at having a daughter, because it's somebody she can dress and teach to be a lady. And also she thinks it's somebody she can understand.

So each parent is happy in a different but special way. In our case the happiness is doubled in knowing that we have a girl who is healthy and red-cheeked and who bears the name of Moira Healy Kavanagh.

Moira is a dainty little girl. She has long thin fingers, a short round nose, brown hair, and two small but powerful lungs. She carries so many of our hopes and dreams to sleep with her that you wouldn't think it could all be contained in six pounds and three ounces. And our dreams will grow as Moira grows -- a year older each August sixteenth.

What will she be like as she matures? How will she behave as a young lady and as a woman? Who will influence her and whom will she influence? What men will be in her life?

Who knows? All we can say for sure is that we wish the best for her, and her mother and father (and brother) are right now as proud and as happy as we can be.

From the pen of her excited parents,

*Larry and Judy Kavanagh*

Larry and Judy Kavanagh

4107 Chatelain Road  
Annandale, Virginia 22003

February 5, 1970

A tiny infant is perhaps the most beautiful of all things. It is new life springing forth, a small but vigorous addition to humanity, a most vivid manifestation of the continuing miracle of creation. Who knows what many wonderful dreams may be spinning through the mind of a fragile little child, still much closer to heaven than to earth? In an age of anxiety, doubts, fears, and suspicions, a tiny babe is innocence itself, much too full of the pure breath of life to have tasted any of the impurities with which man has so often become infested.

A new breath of life entered our lives today, at 1:15 on a Thursday afternoon. She is barely more than six pounds in weight, but in those few pounds she has the essence of all things which make life worth living for those of us larger and older. She is well-formed, healthy in every respect, and very happy when resting in her mother's arms. She is Brigit Monica Kavanagh. Brigit, the strong but submissive Celtic girl; Monica, the loving and ever-hopeful mother of St. Augustine.

There will be many diapers, many hungry cries in the middle of the night, and a little less sleep for those around her; but there will also be love, affection, and the large lump in her parents' throats which stems from knowing that, for the time being, this creature of God is entrusted entirely to our care for her every want and need. She will grow, she will try to imitate her brother and sister in many ways, and all too soon she will achieve her independence. When that day comes, we only hope she can embrace the whole world with as much warmth and love as we have for her as we embrace her now.

We most happily welcome Brigit into our family and most happily introduce her to you.

From the pen of her excited parents,

Larry and Judy Kavanagh

507 Virginia Avenue  
Alexandria, Virginia 22302  
April 9, 1971

Life is very precious. We all cling to it tightly, especially if we sense a danger in losing it. No man can give us life, for understanding the mystery of life is not in the domain of man. And today, on Good Friday 1971, while we remembered how one man surrendered his life for humanity, another life, a new life, was just coming to us.

This gift came at 9:53 in the morning, at Sibley Hospital in Washington. It was, after a thankfully speedy delivery, a boy. He is dark-haired, well formed, just over six pounds in weight, and his name is Damian Michael Kavanagh. In giving him this name we trust that he will live up to the example of St. Damian, a physician who cared for his patients' souls as well as their bodies; and St. Michael, who has ever been the strong right arm of God.

Given a little time we know that Damian will learn to climb trees, splash through mud, fly a kite, and hunt for frogs and caterpillars. Given more time, who knows? The world is full of challenges, and once he finds a worthy object on which to focus his maturing efforts, we are sure that he will find his niche.

For the moment we are relieved and happy to have shared in this new gift of life. All of us - Damian's brother and sisters Larry, Moira, Brigit, as well as his mother and father - welcome him with love to our hearts and our home; and we invite you today to share this joy with us.

From the pen of his proud parents,

Larry and Judy Kavanagh

Rt. 1, Box 242  
Louisa, Virginia 23093

November 12, 1975

Our family has its anxious moments, even though we are living on a farm now and can see every day the measured calmness with which nature makes the seasons pass. There are times when we can foresee events that will forever change the pace of our lives, forever change the view of life of all those within our family circle. We have foreseen such an event, we have eagerly awaited it these past nine months, and yesterday we saw its culmination - a new member to add to our family, a new citizen to change the world. Though the entrance of life is a hard experience for both child and mother, the memory of the pains are swiftly overcome by the joy of having produced with God a vibrant new flame of life.

And so yesterday, at 3 o'clock in the afternoon, crying and fussing for all her seven pounds, nine ounces' worth, Miriam Judith Kavanagh came out of nine months' darkness into the light of the world. She appears to be very healthy and her mother appears to be well on the road towards a speedy recovery; and we want this letter to be our way of telling you about it. In giving her her name, we hope that she will become a reflection of Miriam, the sister of Moses, who aided her brother in one of the greatest enterprises of man and God; a reflection of Judith her mother; and a reflection of the Judith of Bethulia of long ago, who was loyal to her people in spite of temptations against them, and who with two strokes of her arm accomplished for her people what an entire army could not.

Our life is now forever changed, our anxieties are relieved, and our whole family - mother, father, and brothers and sisters Larry, Moira, Brigit, and Damian - are as proud as we can be to welcome Miriam to our home. We invite you to drop in and see us sometime soon, so that we can show off our new joy to you.

From her happy parents,

Larry and Judy Kavanagh

Rt. 1, Box 451  
Louisa, VA 23093

June 29, 1978

Long ago there was a preacher of exceptional strength and faith, and with a legendary hard head. He once entered a town to preach, and met with so much resistance, that a crowd dragged him outside the town walls, stoned him until his body was limp, and left him for the dogs to finish off. But the preacher didn't die; he gathered strength through the night and by morning managed to stand up. At this point a prudent man would have thanked God for being alive and moved on to the next town; but not this one. Instead, he threw back his hard head, re-entered the town walls, and preached again to the same startled crowd that had stoned him.

The man's name was Paul. He had the courage of a Roman, the cleverness of a Greek, and the heart and soul of a Hebrew, because he himself was all three.

We have a Paul, too. Paul Miller Kavanagh, born June 29, 1978, at Martha Jefferson Hospital, six pounds, ten ounces, nineteen and a half inches tall. In emulation of his namesake, the great St. Paul of Tarsus, our Paul entered the world crying at the top of his lungs, to let everyone in Charlottesville know that he had arrived. He cried before the doctor touched him, even before he had officially completed the act of being born. Then he stretched out his arms and legs and fingers and toes so that all in the delivery room could see that his faculties were all in the right proportions; and once he was sure he had everyone's attention, he fell asleep, briefly, so that we could look back upon his mother, reassured that she had come through the birth in high spirits herself.

We're very glad to have you, Paul. You've already shown us enough spunk to suggest that you've inherited an Irish temper and a Cajun stubbornness in addition to your other talents. Welcome to the world, let us introduce you to the rest of the family, to Larry, Moira, Brigit, Damian, and Miriam, who are all ready to love you and instruct you in the ways of pulling at Mom and Dad's coattails. May you succeed in life half as well as the Paul of old.

Announced by his proud parents,

Larry and Judy Kavanagh