

January 17, 2006

Kathryn Abigail,

First, let me say that I'm thinking of you knowing that you have LCAT testing coming-up in February - I'll be thinking (and praying) about that time...though not knowing the content or challenges that lie ahead for you. In general, your (you, Matthew, Ben & Brian) academics are important to me; and given the importance of school, my desire is to be attuned to your needs if possible - now that I actually know where you are attending school.

Some months ago, before learning that you had moved, I paid a visit to Jacksonville to Twin Oaks Middle School; there, the staff informed me that you were not enrolled and, moreover, that you did not attend a Duval County school. Thanking the staff was not enough simply because the information led me to realize that St. Johns County was your new "stomping ground" and that Landrum is your new school. I am delighted that you are at home in Saint Augustine - the place where you tracked a trail (along the ocean), played on the carousel, and did so many other fun things in this old village.

A previous letter to Matthew pertained to Martin Luther King and specifically his *Essay from a Birmingham Jail*. An outcry of mercy to the public of that day, the essay argues the desire for freedom among his people, his race. Another civil rights leader, Nelson Mandela said: "For to be free is not merely to cast off one's chains, but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others..." Thus freedom is not only ourselves, our rights or privileges; but freedom is about similar rights and privileges for all people, citizens, and similar.

I believe that freedom comes in degrees and, thus, freedom to one person may be limitations and restrictions to another. The excess or abuse of freedom by one may actually result in the limitations and restrictions of another. Freedom must never be devalued or abused; but freedom must remain highly priced, precious, and pursued - that others and future generations may enjoy the same. Tell me what you think. I love you.