



Lt. Charles E. Gratch Memorial Scholarship

Charlie Gratch is the older brother to Vincent Gratch, a father to four St Agatha students, including Jacob, who graduated last year. Charlie was the second of eleven children. He received an appointment to the United States Air Force Academy, where he graduated in 1978 with a degree in Electrical Engineering. After graduation, Charlie was assigned to the 4950th ARIA Test Wing at Wright Patterson AFB in Dayton, Ohio. A Mission Coordinator on a very unique aircraft that provided an airborne platform for critical tracking, telemetry, and operational support to NASA, the Navy and the Air Force, international treaty verification, and other roles crucial to national defense, Charlie's Wing brought him to far-away lands such as Tahiti, Easter Island, Guam, Peru, Ascension Island, Australia, South Africa and other neat places. Tragically, in May of 1981, at the age of 24, Charlie and 20 other souls lost their lives when their EC-135 crashed while conducting a routine domestic training mission.

Charlie loved his job, his Wing, and his fellow service members. He loved life and was devoted to the Air Force, his friends, family, and his Catholic faith. His smile lit up the darkest of rooms and his sense of humor was second to none. Charlie worked hard and played hard, and was loved and respected by everyone that knew him.

The recipient of the Lt. Charles E. Gratch Memorial Scholarship will go to a young man that will attend a Catholic High School. The individual will be a hard-worker, be close to his family, love his country and its ideals of liberty and justice for all, be kind and compassionate to others, show respect for our men and women in uniform, and most importantly, strive to live his best life in our Catholic faith. This scholarship will be for one year, to be applied to tuition at the student's high school.