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Statement of Lidia Rodriguez (mother of Salome)

My first born son, Salome Rodriguez Jr. was a pure soul. His essence was undeniably beautiful. He had a heart that was more priceless than a million diamonds. The dimples in his smile would make anyone melt. His laughter was mesmerizingly contagious. No man nor woman who knew him could ignore his aura. It is like he engulfed you in this immediate feeling of harmony, whether he was simply in your presence or doing you a favor which he proudly did. Nothing was ever forced with him. His love was willing and free and you felt it in waves of joy. God took the backbone of our family, and even though we fell apart, we are united now exactly how he would want it to be.

Our hearts altogether beat harder and harder with a strength only a family can possess, knowing that our blood ran through his veins and his soul will never be forgotten as he watches us from above. We will see him again in due time and that's what brings us solace. He always came to my bed in the mornings ever since he was a child. Sometimes I would get upset that he had awakened me and now I wish he could be at the foot of the bed trying to get my attention. My sweet boy was always so caring. As a child he would work just so he could buy things to help me and my husband. It would hurt him that he was not able to pay rent when he was just a little boy because he wanted to help. It seems like you would only see his type of kindness in something out of a fairy-tale, but he was a true gentleman, and we raised my prince charming.

There's this legendary event that truly captures Jr's compassion. He was at his friend Eileen's house on the 4th of July. She has a brother named Nicholas who unfortunately has cancer. He was in and out of the hospital and our son felt the need to ask the mother of Nicholas if he could have permission to take him out and see the fireworks display. Since the boy's immune system was poor, he wasn't able to go to a lot of places, so Jr. got this brilliant idea to take him to a high cliff. Nicholas' mother entrusted him with her "precious cargo" and he promised her a safe return. She felt his angelic ambition and allowed this event to take place. Salome went to the top of Mt. Baldy and he placed little Nicholas on his big shoulders and they enjoyed that night. Nicholas was thrilled and that gave my son this feeling of happiness that he enjoyed sharing. As a 21 year old man at the time, Salome could have been anywhere, but he chose to be sharing his priceless smiles and remarkable love with a little child.

Jr. is a missionary soldier of the Father in heaven and he served as a Catholic missionary, but with work he didn't have time to serve again. Now, however, he is serving our Lord for all eternity. My son was a man with unchained love, and an unconditional and enlightened spirit that is now in the hands of our Lord and Father. We envy God for being able to be blessed with his soul.

Lidia Rodriguez  
Represented by Attorney Gloria Allred  
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