

**Tim Russert, *Meet the Press***  
**Address to Gesu School 8<sup>th</sup> Graders**  
**Gesu School Library**  
**October 22, 2007**

**Chris Beck:** ...to have Mr. Tim Russert with us this morning. He has been a long time supporter and [advisory] trustee of our school and he's best known as managing editor and moderator of *Meet the Press*. He's a political analyst for NBC Nightly News and the *Today Program*, anchor for MSNBC and the *Tim Russert Show* on CNBC, Senior Vice President and Washington Bureau Chief for NBC News. He is the author of two New York Times #1 Best Selling books, *Big Russ and Me* and *Wisdom of our Fathers*. And my guess is that Mr. Russert has probably interviewed every person in the world who you have heard of and you would look up to and want to learn about. We are so honored to have him here and you all should feel so honored to have him spend this time with you all.

[Applause]

**Tim Russert:** Thank you. I'm not sure I remember digging 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Much like you, I would be sitting in class wondering what I was doing there, what I was trying or supposed to learn. I had a nun named Sr. Mary Lucielle, a sister, and I was in the back of the room not paying attention one day, and she looked at me and said, "You have to pay attention." And then I started talking out of turn. The next [inaudible] a little bit, and she did this [made hand gesture summoning someone with his finger]. "Come here." So I started walking to the front of the room. She said, "Timothy, we need to find an alternative vehicle to channel your excessive energy." So what did she do? Scolded me, told me I had to stay after school and then she said, "You have ability, but you're not using it. We're going to start a school newspaper and you're going to be the editor." Back then we didn't have computers. You used to have to mimeograph things. Staple 'em. Collate 'em. So I started writing. I would go interview students. I would interview teachers. I would interview parents. I'd go to our school basketball game and I'd write stories about it. And I fell in love with it. I finally found something I was passionate about. And the president at that time was John Kennedy. He was a senator from Massachusetts, the first Catholic ever elected President of the United States. On November 22<sup>nd</sup> 1963 he was shot in Dallas, Texas, and we wrote a special edition of our 8<sup>th</sup> grade newspaper. And we sent it to his widow, Mrs. Kennedy, his brother Robert Kennedy who was Attorney General. And they wrote letters back: "Dear Students at St. Bonaventure School, thank you for writing this newspaper. Thank you for this special edition." I couldn't believe it. I was in South Buffalo and it came from Philadelphia. And people in Washington are reading this newspaper and acknowledging it. I began to dream. Maybe I could go to Washington. Maybe I could interview presidents. Now that seemed so far away for me. Back then, I was like you, in 8<sup>th</sup> grade, 7<sup>th</sup> grade. And suddenly this one little school newspaper created a nexus, a connection, for me. And because of my work on that paper, I went to Canisius High School. It's just like Saint Joe's [Prep]. And there I encountered a priest [inaudible statement followed by laughter] only he's a real nice guy. This was Father Stern. He was the Prefect of Discipline. And I was in the hallway trying to eat a sandwich, which I wasn't supposed to be doing. You can't eat in the prep, it was in school. And he grabbed me and he goes "I caught ya. I caught ya." I said, "Father, please, I'm new here. I don't know all the rules. Don't you have any mercy?" He said, "Russert, mercy's for God. I deliver justice." [laughter] Two weeks of after school detention – J.U.G. – oh! I had to go home to my parents and explain why I was late from school and I got grounded for two weeks. That's a big deal. But then I, because of my work on the newspaper, then went to Canisius High School. Then I went to college. Then I took a year off and taught school. I was a school teacher for a year. I taught History and English. Saved some money and went to law school and became a lawyer. Keep going in education, getting education, trying to learn. Then I went to move to Washington. I moved to Washington D.C., I mean so far away. And yet kept the saying: It's all basic. What did they teach me at St. Bonaventure School? What do they teach you at Gesu? You learn how to read. You learn how to write. And you learn right from wrong. That's the secret of life. That's the secret of life.

My dad is 83 years old. When he enlisted at 17 years old when WWII broke out, he quit school, like a lot of other men of his generation, because we were at war. Adolph Hitler and the Nazis were on a march around the

world. He went to sign up for the war. His B-24 Liberator plane crashed. He was in the hospital for 6 months. He got out, came home, went back to Buffalo, met my mom and he started his second mission, and that was to raise and educate 4 kids. Four of us. He had 2 full-time jobs for 30 years. He was a sanitation, or garbage, man and a truck driver. That's what my dad did, every day of his life. He worked and worked and worked. Why? Because he wanted us to have a chance to go to school - a place like Gesu. And my mom. She was at home. She had a rule - we used to go out and play. We didn't have play dates. We used to play in the street. But we had to be at the kitchen table at 4:45 while she cooked supper. And we had to do our homework. She signed our homework every night. She was telling us "This is important. Your father and I didn't have a chance to go to school. You guys have a chance to go to school. Take advantage of it." And so she would sign our homework. And then in my mind I said, "Boy this is serious stuff. Mom's." We couldn't trade our pencil for a fork to eat unless our homework was done, which is a big incentive if you're hungry. You'll do homework. You'll do anything to eat. And so I'm hearing that at home and I'm hearing the same lesson at school. And so I get to Washington and there are a lot of people there from a lot of different backgrounds - very rich people, people with a lot of accents, people who went to Harvard and all these famous schools. And I'm there from Buffalo, St. Bonaventure. I thought jeez, this is big, I don't know if I can compete with these people. Guess what. I realized that I could compete. The lessons I learned at St. Bonaventure, the lessons you're learning at Gesu, prepare you to compete with anybody anywhere. Anywhere. And so I started interviewing people. I interviewed President Bush. I interviewed Michael Jordan, Charles Barkley, Hillary Clinton, Barack Obama. Name [inaudible]. I talked to all of them. I prepared. What do I do? I prepared. I read everything about their lives. I want to know who they are, where they came from. How they think about things. What makes them tick. I have all - you master all subjects when you sit down and they'll say, "What do you want to talk about?" I say, "I could talk to you for 10 hours. I have more questions to ask you than you ever dreamt of." It's all about preparation. It's doing your work. Getting ready. So whether it's an exam - a math exam, a social studies exam, English exam - or interviewing the President of the United States, it's all very similar. Just apply yourself with hard work, accountability, discipline, organization, all the things you're taught. You know the one thing I didn't realize, if you read your lessons, you go to class and pay attention, and then you review your notes, exams are pretty easy. If you don't do that - if you don't read your lessons, if you don't pay attention, if you daydream in class, then they can get pretty hard. It's the secret of life. Work hard. You laugh often. And you keep your honor. If you do those three things, you can do anything you want to do. You can go as far as you want to go. You can achieve almost anything with the right kind of direction and guidance and the preparation you're getting now. So now we have a big presidential election. A lot of people want to be President of the United States in 2008. And everyone will be looking at all these candidates. And how do you find out about the candidates? The candidates will say, "I can resolve the war in Iraq. I can protect Social Security. I can give you more money for education. We can become energy independent. We can have healthcare for everybody." That's what candidates do. What does a journalist do? What does a reporter do? "Excuse me, Candidate. Excuse me, Governor. Excuse me, Senator. How are you going to do that? Who's going to pay for that? Are you going to keep your word? Because a couple of years ago you said you were going to do that and you didn't do it." That's the way our system works. Political leaders telling people this is what they want to do. And journalists challenging them. Challenging them. Saying, "Come on, how you're going to do that. Show us in black and white." And how do you do that? You have to be prepared. You have to know their positions as well as they do. It's exciting and it's interesting and it's necessary for our country to work. It's who you talk to an athlete. You talk to him or her about what they do, and how they do it, and how they prepare for it. And then you read later on that an athlete was somehow influence by a steroid or drugs. You ask them about that, and how is that fair. Isn't that - you're supposed to have a level playing field [inaudible]. But it's all about preparation. The only way you hold people accountable is by being prepared to challenge them and ask them. And you don't have to do it in a mean way. You do it in a civil way. You have a conversation. You be polite with people. You can disagree agreeably. You don't have to yell and scream. My mom had a wonderful expression: "Empty barrels make the most noise." And people yelling and screaming "Hey, look at me!" as opposed to having a thoughtful discussion. I want to debate [inaudible]. I like to debate. I like to discuss things. You're in favor. I'm against. Let's have an intellectual discussion and support your viewpoint. That's what politics is all about. That's what life's all about. The bottom line - there's a big election coming up. Pay attention to it. You know why? It affects you in every way. One of these people who might be the President of the United States, they're going to decide what kind of education

programs we should have in our country, how much money goes to education. There going to decide whether or not they believe global warming is here in our environment. They're going to decide about how much dependency we're going to have on oil from around the world, [inaudible] places. You know the country Brazil in South America? They now run all of their automobiles on sugarcane because they were afraid that oil could dry up quickly with problems in Iraq, Iran, or Venezuela. Think about this. The President of the United States picks Supreme Court Justices, judges who make decisions. They're on the court for life. Some people on the Supreme Court now will be there when you are young adults. Think about that. Elections have consequences. So maybe a school project would be, let's learn about the candidates. Someone say, "I want to know more about Barack Obama. Who is he? Where did he come from?" Hillary Clinton. Rudy Guliani. Find out who these people are. Talk about it in class. It could be quite interesting, and I think very very helpful for you. Because they're going to play a role in your lives, as you go on to high school and college, they're going to be president. You want to know who these people are. But the most important thing is, one of you could run for president someday. One of you could have my job someday, on *Meet the Press* every Sunday morning, on television, on NBC, interviewing people. I was exactly in your position. I sat in that chair. That's where I came from. It happened to be Buffalo rather than Philadelphia, but it's the same education. The same principles. The same lessons. And if I can leave you with anything, it is exactly that. You are blessed to be part of Gesu and Gesu is blessed to have you. And this confluence, this coming together, of you and Gesu is for a purpose. And there is a wonderful passage in the Bible – my son's name is Luke – St. Luke says, "To whom much is given, much is expected." You've been given a lot. You've been given a Gesu education. Now it has opened doors and opportunities for you. Take full advantage of it. And when you get to be president, remember, I predicted it. O.K.? Thank you very much. [Applause]

**Russert:** We can play Meet the Press here. You can throw questions at me. Put me on the hot seat. Come on. Fire away. Yes.

**Teacher:** I'm doing an adult education class. Did you interview Mother Theresa?

**Russert:** Yes. I met Mother Theresa.

**Teacher:** There's a debate [inaudible] I'm sure you've read about how she strongly [inaudible] God in her life.

**Russert:** Yes.

**Teacher:** And I have my own sense about it, but did you have a chance to talk to her about her strong [inaudible]?

**Russert:** She was very candid about that. When she saw such poverty and such anguish, she'd say, "Dear God, how do you allow this? How does this happen?" But that's true of all of us. When I was in high school, 1967, there was a cover of Time Magazine, and it said, "God is dead." And he was, "Oh, God, we burn this magazine and throw it away." I had a Jesuit named Mike Duffy. He said, "Put your books away. This is what we're going to talk about. This is [inaudible]." And that's why it's called faith. Can I go and look in the drawer and say, "Here's God."? No, you can't say, "I've seen God. I've talked to God." But the one thing I do know, is I see God in people. You're all children of God. We're all people of God. You know if you have faith, that's what you believe. And so the notion that Mother Theresa, seeing leprosy and AIDS and anguish and pain, sometimes didn't say "What is this all about?" is ludicrous. I'm glad she did. I hope she did, because in the end, it only makes your faith stronger.

**Teacher:** That's exactly. I was just going to say, that's my belief. The challenge is [inaudible]. It makes us a better person.

**Russert:** I got a good friend of mine who lost his 16-year-old son. And I was trying very hard to help him through that healing process. And I remember when I was a little boy, one of our next door neighbors was killed

in the military service, and I was very upset by it. I was about 8 or 9. And my mother and father sat down with me and said, "You know, this is devastating. He's only 19 years old, but his mother and father had those 19 precious years." And they said to them, or He said to them, "Here's the deal. You only get Paul for 19 years. Then he comes home. Do you accept?" In a second. Because not to accept means that you'd never have those 19 wonderful, warm, precious, sensitive years with a son or a daughter, or anyone. And it takes a leap of faith to embrace that and accept it. But in the end it's the only way to give any kind of meaning to what happened. How can I possibly deal with this sudden departure of a loved one. Celebrate the time, the moments you have. And acknowledge those and accept those for what they are. People say, "Well how can you believe when you see all of the tragedies of the world, or people who misuse religion to further goals which are inconsistent with Christianity or other religious beliefs?" I can't reconcile that. I know it exists. I think that some people who call themselves religious do bad things. I accept all that. But I also know that in my own life and in the lives of the people I work with and walk with, if they have a core set of values and beliefs. I always ask people about the Sermon on the Mount. Who among us not to take care of people who need help? How in God's name or anyone's name is that something that's not worthy of all of us, and so necessary of all of us. The best speech I ever heard was that the best exercise for the human heart is reaching down and picking someone else up. We've all [inaudible]. We've all been down. And we remember people who picked us up. Remember that. Every one of you. You know in your life, there's an adult in your life, mom, dad, teacher, principal, coach, mentor, Big Brother, Big Sister, somebody, who you know is there for you. And there's no substitute for that. And as you move on in life, you're going to play that role too. There's going to be someone younger than you, someone less fortunate than you, who will need help. Pick 'em up. Dust 'em off. Get 'em on their way. Give them the same chance that Gesu's given you and that you're giving Gesu. It's great to have you all here. What a great coming together. Who else?

Yes, sir. Oh, this is going to be a hard one. I can feel it.

**Student:** My name is Lawrence \_\_\_\_\_. What book are you reading? What book are you reading?

**Russert:** What book am I reading right now? I just finished two books. One on Abraham Lincoln by Doris Kearns Goodwin, who's a presidential historian [*Team of Rivals: The Political Genius of Abraham Lincoln*]. It was interesting. It was how Lincoln took his political opponents and appointed them to high level government positions, even though they were his political opponents, because he realized that in order to unify and heal the country that he had to make that step. Very extraordinary, and I think very important, and very instructive, for the times we're in right now. And the other book I'm reading is one that an author was on the program yesterday, Sally Bedell Smith, about Bill and Hillary Clinton, and if she's elected president, what role would Bill have [*For the Love of Politics: Bill and Hillary Clinton: The White House Years*]. It would be the first time that we could have two presidents in the room at one time. And there's a lot of references to Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt, but Eleanor Roosevelt was not president. She was first lady in a very strong [inaudible]. So they both relate to my work but I'm finding both pretty enjoyable. What are you reading?

**Student:** To Kill A Mockingbird.

**Russert:** That's a pretty good one. [Inaudible.] Are you enjoying it?

**Student:** Yes.

**Russert:** What do you like about it?

**Russert:** Who's your favorite character?

**Student:** Jem.

**Russert:** Very good. Thank you for your question. Who else? What happened to the Eagles? [Laughter] How about the Bills? [Inaudible.] I went to 4 Superbowls and the Bills lost all 4 Superbowls. Four in a row. They lost them all. And the first one there was a field goal kicker named Scott Norwood. Did you ever hear his name? 47 yard field goal, 10 seconds to go, wide right. So ten years. [Inaudible] I was in the airport and this guy who was behind me said, "Excuse me, Mr. Russert, my name is Scott Norwood." I said, "Scott, I know who you are." [Laughter] "I think about you every night. Wide right! How could you miss it?!" [Sigh.] It's all right. The Eagles'll be back. The Phillies. The Phillies. Not bad! Better than the Mets! And you had a great run there at the end, right? Let's see how the Sixers do. [Laughter ] The answer the answer the answer with out [inaudible]. Yeah.

**Student:** My name is Niara \_\_\_ and I was wondering, what do you think about the [inaudible] of the violence in Philadelphia?

**Russert:** The violence? In Philadelphia? How much violence is going on here you mean?

**Student:** [Inaudible].

**Russert:** Yeah. Well, it's numbing. When you read about it. I saw the death toll, the murder rate. How people can take another's life. But it's something that you all have to one, be aware of, recognize it. You can't solve a problem unless you identify it, [inaudible]. So the first thing is you have to say is "[Inaudible]. And what's creating this. And who perpetrated the problem? And what's their motivation? And is it some crimes are murders unintentionally? Some are done out of desperation. Some are evil. Some for bad reasons, could be involving drugs, addiction. The most important thing is to have people sit down and put it all on the table. This is where the violence is occurring. These are the neighborhoods we have to focus on. And how are we going to do it. There are several approaches. We can say, O.K. we're going to crack down on the bad guys and put away citizens forever. O.K. that's one way. Two. How do we get into people's hearts and minds so they're not in a position to want to carry out the violence? Does that mean more opportunities in terms of jobs and in terms of rehabilitation? And in terms of treatment for addictions? I think it's all a piece. There's an expression – did you ever hear the expression tough love? It's a big thing in my family. Behavior modifications. You did something wrong. You knew it. You were told it was wrong. And you took steps to correct it. But you're also punished. You gave up rights. I couldn't go to the dance or I couldn't go to the basketball game. I'd be furious up in my room. I have the meanest father and mother in the world. How could they do this to me? And then I would sit there and start reflecting and I would say, "Wait a minute. They didn't do it. I did. I'm the one who acted up. I'm the one who broke curfew. And so I should accept responsibility for my behavior and not do it again. And when I did that, my life was a lot better. I got along better with my parents. I got to go to the dances and the games. I realized, you know, if you take control of yourself, you really control your own destiny in a big way. But I not only Philadelphia, every major area in this country has to really confront violence. It's poisonous. It just sucks all of life and positive feelings out of a community if you don't get control of it. [Inaudible] simplistic solution. Gotta [inaudible] people of goodwill from all different parts of the [inaudible]. Right? Yes sir.

**Student:** [Inaudible] Do you think Barack Obama has a chance to win the election?

**Russert:** Do I think Barack Obama has a chance to win the election? I do. And this is why. There's a state called Iowa, O.K.? That's where the first caucus is going to be. It's probably going to be January 3<sup>rd</sup>, maybe January 5<sup>th</sup>. Very early, next year, about 10 weeks away. And in Iowa, a caucus is when a group of people like this come to a room, people from different neighborhoods come and say "O.K. who do we want? Everybody who's for Barack Obama, stand over there. Everyone who's for Hillary Clinton stand over there." And they divide themselves up. And then they select the delegates. In all the national polls, polls of all people in the United State of America, democrats, Hillary Clinton is about 45% of the vote, Barack Obama is about 25%. She's way ahead. But in Iowa, it's almost even - Hillary Clinton, Barack Obama, and a third candidate named John Edwards. They're nip and tuck. Very close. O.K.? So what happens? In the next 10 weeks, they'll be debates and discussions of the candidates. If Barack Obama wins Iowa, then 5 days later they go to another state

called New Hampshire, up near Massachusetts. And in that state, Independents, there are three categories of voters - Democrats, Republicans, and Independents. In New Hampshire, Independents can cross over and vote either party. And Barack Obama, is very popular with independent voters in New Hampshire. [Inaudible] different kind of candidate. Unique candidate. [ Inaudible]. So if he wins Iowa, and then he goes to New Hampshire and he wins New Hampshire because of those independent voters [inaudible]. Then he goes to South Carolina. And in South Carolina, 50% of the democrats in South Carolina are African American. And they're very proud of [inaudible] the chance for a black man to be president of the United States. And I believe that they will solidify and rally around his candidacy. And if he wins South Carolina, he's on his way to his nomination. Now, if he loses in Iowa. Then that's going to be it. So watch it closely. You wanna run for president someday? Huh?

**Student:** [Inaudible.]

**Russert:** No? [Laughter]

**Russert:** How about vice president?

**Russert:** What would you like to do? Do you wanna be a journalist?

**Student:** [Inaudible]

**Russert:** Maybe? O.K. What's your favorite subject?

**Student:** Math

**Russert:** Really. Wow. My best subject was recess. I was good at that. I was the best recesser in the whole school. What are you laughing at? All right. Let's do another one. Yes, sir.

**Student:** [Inaudible] What do you like to do in your spare time?

**Russert:** In my spare time? My son is a senior at Boston College, and so I spent a lot of time coaching his teams, football, basketball, baseball. And going to sporting events. He's a great sportsman. He has a sports show on XM radio, on satellite radio. And in fact last night I was at Fenway Park. I saw the Boston Red Sox lock up the American League and go on the World Series. And so I really, I go to Washington Wizards games a lot in Washington. Gilbert Arenas. Great player. I like to take walks. Take a walk. Look around. When I went to high school [inaudible]. The first day I walked in the teacher said [Inaudible]. He said, "Take out a piece of paper. Describe what you saw walking into this building." What? Where's the true/false? Where's the spelling test? What do you mean describe what I saw walking in building? What kind of test is that? But I realized what he was doing. He was "Be aware of who you are. Be aware of your surroundings. Be aware of who's in this room." And it changed my life. In terms of walking into rooms, meeting with groups, you be aware of the situation. Be aware of your own presence within it. So now I am very conscious of it, as I try to learn. I walk and I look at buildings and what the significance is. When I see a statue, I want to know who it is and why it was put there. Helps you understand history – the development of a city or a state or a country. I like music. I listen to a lot of music. Do you like music? Yeah. Who's your favorite group? Or singer?

**Student:** [Inaudible].

**Russert:** And so my son is very good on the computer. He taught me a lot about that. We didn't have computers. We didn't have cell phones. We didn't have any of that stuff. And so I learned a lot from my son in terms of being on Facebook, and Google, and all these wonderful things that five, six years ago [inaudible]. A lot of information is available on the Internet. Imagine how hard it would be to get information, and yet it's really on there. [Inaudible.] Check it out. [Inaudible.] Make sure its real. But in terms of resources, the Internet

information is not enough. I have a dog, Custer the wonder dog. Seventeen years old. As a dog he's 97. [Inaudible.] He's hanging in there. What do you do in your spare time?

**Student:** Watch T.V.

**Russert:** Watch T.V. What do you watch on T.V.?

**Student:** [Inaudible].

**Russert:** O.K. Good luck.

**Student:** Do you play any sports?

**Russert:** Do I now or did I? I used to.

**Student:** When you used to play sports, what did you play?

**Russert:** Basketball, football, and baseball. Those were the big three when I grew up. Baseball was much bigger when I was a kid than it is now. We didn't have lacrosse and soccer. [Inaudible statements.]

**Student:** Did you play for your school?

**Russert:** Yeah. A lot of football and a lot of basketball. I had a basketball [inaudible]. I love basketball. Tough game. Do you play basketball?

**Student:** Yes

**Russert:** You got a school team here?

**Student:** [Inaudible] a school team.

**Russert:** You do? How do you do?

**Student:** [Inaudible]

**Russert:** How many points did you score?

**Student:** Me?

**Russert:** Yeah.

**Student:** [Inaudible]

**Russert:** What position? Forward? Guard?

**Student:** Forward.

**Russert:** Who's a guard? Where's a guard? Who's a guard? Point guard or shooting guard?

**Student:** Shooting Guard.

**Russert:** O.K. Can you hit three's?

**Student:** Yeah. I can.

**Russert:** If you hit a three, what do you do?

**Student:** [Inaudible] defense.

**Russert:** That's it! Do you get right back on defense? Huh? You don't? Huh? [Laughter]

**Student:** What's your favorite sport?

**Russert:** What's my favorite sport? Right now?

**Student:** When you were younger.

**Russert:** Oh, when I was younger? Basketball. Yeah. I was a. There was a college basketball team named St. Bonaventure. [Inaudible.] And one of the players on the team, Whitey Martin. [Inaudible]. Couldn't believe, they had beaten Ohio State, playing all kinds of teams they were going crazy. That was really exciting to watch. Now I like Boston College, where my son goes. [Inaudible]. They play ACC in basketball. They play Duke, North Carolina. How about you basketball? Football?

**Student:** Football.

**Russert:** Football. Are you a big Eagles fan? Don't tell me it's the Cowboys.

**Student:** The Chargers.

**Russert:** The Chargers!

**Russert:** L.T. L.T. can do it, man. L.T. can do it. You're a Patriots fan? Did you see that Brady has 6 touchdowns?

**Student:** He's the top quarterback in the league.

**Russert:** Who do you root for?

[Laughing]

**Russert:** Yes.

**Student:** In basketball and football, what positions did you play?

**Russert:** In basketball I was a guard. A small guard. I was very small in 8<sup>th</sup> grade and as a freshman in high school. And then in football I was a linebacker and I tried to be a tight end, but [inaudible] [laughing]. But you know what, the great thing about sports is not only winning and losing – I love to win – but there's nothing like playing on a team. When I was in college we played intramurals. We didn't play, I wasn't good enough to play on the college team. But we played intramurals, they're clubs you play in. And the guys I played with there are still my best friends in life. And we sit around and regale ourselves with stories. Remember how [inaudible memories.] Because what do you call a team? A team means you're all working together for a common purpose. You could be the best quarterback in the world, if you don't have a line protecting you, you're finished. If you don't have a receiver, to hold the ball, you're finished. If you can't establish a running game, you're finished. You could be a three-point ace in basketball, but someone's gotta get you the ball. Someone's

gotta rebound. Someone's gotta play defense. You can't do it alone. You can't do it alone in life either. That's the virtue and value of playing on a team.

**Beck:** Well, 8<sup>th</sup> graders, now the adults get a turn to share and hear from Mr. Russert.

**Russert:** I want to stay with the kids! [Laughter]

**Beck:** But if you all want to give Mr. Russert a wonderful round of applause. [Applause.]

**END TRANSCRIPTION**