

Joel Lopata

Pepperdine Volleyball player Joel Lopata on the passing of Athletic Chaplain Maurice Hilliard
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Hello, my name is Joel Lopata

I am one of the lucky athletes at this university that has been blessed to know Maurice Hilliard, a Pepperdine coach, athletic chaplain, and spiritual mentor for over 10 years. Today every member of Pepperdine's athletic community mourns his passing because his love impacted all of our lives. I have been asked to share a few words tonight in memory of our coach, mentor, and friend.

The book of Hebrews, chapter 11, lists the giants of the bible whose reward was not on **earth**, but in heaven. It says by faith **Noah**, by faith **Abraham**, and by faith **Moses chose God** over pleasure, security, and life itself. The book lists several other heroes of the faith **specifically**, but acknowledges that not all that gave their lives to God can be mentioned.

It describes those whose names didn't make the list in verse 37:

“they went about in sheepskins and goatskins, destitute, persecuted and mistreated--the world was not worthy of them. They wandered in deserts and mountains and in caves and holes in the ground. These were all commended for their faith, yet **none** of them received what was **promised**. God had planned something better for us so that only together with us would they be made perfect.”

Today, this very moment Maurice is made perfect. He left no treasure on earth but a lot of sweatsuits and a broken-down old jaguar, and his fresh shoes of course. But Maurice was running a race that **doesn't go** to the swift, and competed for a prize that **rust** and **mold** cannot take away, and neither will the grave. Jesus said, I oppose the proud but will **exalt** the humble. Tonight Maurice is exalted in heaven because he poured out God's love without ever thinking of himself.

Let us continue to remember Maurice by **laying** down our pride and loving one another like we are working for the prize that Maurice is receiving, the prize of eternal life with our savior, Jesus Christ.

Now, if you would please bow your heads with Skye as she opens our match with a word of prayer.