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2003–2004 VSB President

Dear fellow Virginia lawyers:

This is my prayer for our profession:

May we, as lawyers, remember that ours is a noble and invaluable profession.

May we, as lawyers, continue to safeguard the rule of law for all people.

May we, as lawyers, continue to be generous with our time, compassion and intellect for the benefit of our communities, the commonwealth and this country.

May we, as lawyers, continue to do the good work of the bar for the benefit of the citizens of the commonwealth.

May we, as lawyers, remember that there are always others in greater need than we are and that, because of our privilege to practice law, we meet those needs.

May we, as lawyers, continue to share our wealth of knowledge, skills and abilities for the good of our clients, the judicial system and the law.

May we, as lawyers, remember that when those dark moments that inevitably come into each life occur, we remind each other of our goodness, our strength and our value to this world.

May we, as lawyers, renew and strengthen our contacts with each other, our local and specialty bars and the legislature.

May we, as lawyers, continue the important and valuable programs of the bar such as Lawyers Helping Lawyers, Access to Legal Services, Judicial Independence and the continued refinement of the finest disciplinary system anywhere.

May our young lawyers continue to make us proud and to outshine those of us who have strived to set the highest of standards in our profession.

May our senior lawyers continue to share with the profession the bounty of their wisdom and experience and to show by example how it is done well.

May we remember that it is not just about billable hours, negotiating the tightest contract or winning at trial.

May we remember what is important in this life:

Seeing your kids get an award at school, visiting your elderly neighbor, teaching an adult how to read, restocking the shelves at the Food Bank and walking the dogs at the SPCA.

May we remember the words of the Honorable Gerald Bruce Lee: "No one is going to say on their death bed that they wished they spent more time at the office, but they will say they wished they had spent more time with their kids."

May we remember that the best way to become a better lawyer is to become a better person.

Finally, that this year be a successful one for the bar, not because of the leadership of one person, but because of all of the dedicated bar members and staff doing what we have always done, which is, on a daily basis, to exceed the highest standards of ethical conduct and practice.

Amen.