

Vin Scully and the sacred soundtrack of summer

When the news of iconic American sportscaster Vin Scully's passing came this week, I immediately thought of my father. A lifelong baseball fanatic, it was Daddy who taught me to love the game. But it was Vin Scully, the perpetual soundtrack of my family's summers, who taught me to know it. With every pitch he called, Scully infused an infectious passion for the game.

But it was Scully's trademark ability to let the roar of the crowd tell a story all its own that points to the deep humility that made him who he was – a broadcaster, but also as a family man and a person of deep faith. It takes humility to let a masterpiece homer or miraculous catch speak for itself. It also takes humility to live one's Catholic faith as quietly and consistently as Scully did.

Six weeks after my birth in Fort Wayne, Indiana, in 1963, my parents loaded me and their few possessions into a car and departed for a new future in California. While I lack memories of that road trip – the first of many our family would take – I always imagine that we listened to Scully call games on a tinny AM radio signal as we drove westward. The Dodgers would go on to win the World Series in a 4-0 spanking of the Yankees that October while my parents and I settled into a tiny apartment in Southern California.

While we lived in Orange County, we were Dodgers fans through and through. Daddy taught me to keep score as soon as I could write. My tallying of every pitch – a skill perfected at my brothers' Little League games – was aided immensely by Vin Scully's precise and enthusiastic ability to convey the action. In the late summer of 1981, my parents drove me to college at Daddy's dream school, Notre Dame, in our family's

motorhome. Vin Scully's voice accompanied us along the road, calling the games that would carry the Dodgers to another World Series victory that year.

While I never met Vin Scully personally, I wept copious tears this week when I learned of his passing at the age of 94. For me, his voice was the sacred soundtrack of summer. While we made it out to Dodger Stadium a few times each year, our family mostly tracked the Dodgers' seasons, the good and the bad, through Scully's broadcasts on the radio or a small black and white television as we ate hot dogs for dinner.

When Scully formally retired on Oct. 2, 2016, he left behind not only an unparalleled professional career but also a legacy of grace.

Formal obituaries of the man will list his many awards and achievements, including the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the Commissioner of Baseball's Historic Achievement Award and a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. We also pause to remember Scully's profound devotion to his Catholic faith and his generosity of spirit and philanthropism.

Scully's Catholic accolades include a Life Achievement Award from the Catholic Academy of Communications Professionals at the Gabriel Awards and his 2009 reception of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles' Cardinal's Award. Probably more significant to him personally was his devotion to the Mass. He made it a priority to attend Mass prior to Sunday games and to be an active parishioner at his local parish, sitting quietly in his pew at St. Jude the Apostle Catholic Church in Westlake Village, California. In 2016, Vin partnered with Catholic Athletes for Christ to record an audio Rosary marked by his signature syntax and love for Our Lady. In 2020, Vin Scully donated his sizable baseball memorabilia collection to be auctioned for a variety of charitable causes.

This week in Los Angeles and around the globe, baseball fans

are reminiscing about the life of Vin Scully. Our social media feeds are filled with sentiments about how Vin Scully meant far more to us than simply baseball. Our memories of the man are commingled with our memories of our childhood. For generations of Dodgers fans, Scully's iconic style of storytelling permeates our family lore, our trips to the ballpark where we listened to the radio even as we sat in the bleachers, but also our long car trips, our backyard barbecues and those headiest of moments when the magic of a perfectly timed home run could speak for itself.

Vin Scully was preceded in death by his first wife Joan (1972) and his second wife Sandra (2021) and his son Michael (1994). He is survived by his loving family, including four children, 21 grandchildren, and six great-grandchildren.

Rest in peace, Mr. Scully. And please give Daddy a high-five for me.

Lisa Hendey writes from California.