



Former Vikings Pro Bowler visits Rochester to talk faith and football

Reported by Holden Krusemark

ROCHESTER, Minn. (KTTC) — Former Vikings Offensive Lineman Matt Birk was in Rochester, visiting Lourdes High School.

It was a night full of laughter, but also a night full of football and faith, something Birk says goes hand in hand.



Birk grew up in St. Paul and says he never could have dreamed of playing for his hometown team, even after the Vikings drafted him in the sixth round.

He eventually became a six time pro-bowler and super bowl champion with the Ravens, as well as earning the 2011 Walter Payton Man of the Year award.

But he says despite all the accolades and becoming the highest paid center in NFL history, he felt empty inside.

He says it was getting back to his Catholic roots, while in the NFL, that helped him become the man he is today.

“I think the

biggest thing that football did for me was actually brought me back to my faith. I kind of experienced all of the great things that the world has to offer. I was playing for the Vikings, I had money, I had fame, I kind of had more worldly success than I had ever thought was possible for me. Yet I was also very empty, there was a God shaped hole inside of me,” said Birk.

He also said playing high school sports were some of the best times he had playing the game, wanting to tell young players to just take things one moment at a time and enjoy what is right in front of them.

