Today is cause for great celebration. Thirteen years of growing have gone into a wonderful girl whose Bat Mitzvah we celebrate today.

Thirteen years of love and laughter, of occasional tears and, of course, unreasonable parental demands.

How quickly time flies. Our baby is suddenly standing at the crossroads between childhood and adulthood. It is a fascinating and exciting time.

I want to thank all of you, family and friends who are here today to witness and support Isabella for this occasion.

Isabella, it would be nice to take credit for a fantastic daughter like you. But I have to admit that your ability to accomplish what you set out to do and bring happiness to others are gifts you were born with.

 From day one you captured my heart and my love for you just keeps on growing.

When you were small, it was such a joy to watch you discovering life. I sometimes wished the years would slow down so that I could enjoy those precious times a little longer.

 I so much enjoy our conversations about the world around us and the mysteries waiting to be discovered. We share the same inquisitive approach to everything we do and that is a very special bond.

But the years have continued to rush by.

You have amazed us with your academic abilities, your leadership qualities, your gift of writing, your musical talents and the courage you have when faced with new challenges.

Whether it is dealing with Type I diabetes, speaking or singing in front of hundreds of people, being interviewed on television, being a JDRF Ambassador, You have always exuded confidence and dared to be different.

You always pushed yourself to do what you felt needed to be done. You have continued to bring new joys, optimism about the world around us and certainly have continued to give new reasons for us to be proud of you.

You are at the center of one of the greatest and worthy traditions, religions and cultures in the world.

Within you now are responsibilities and opportunities that will reveal themselves to you. We hope and we know that you will grow into adulthood, a worthy member of the community.

Isabella you have so much to give and so far to go. In a world of forgotten values and neglected beliefs, it is good to see that you are acknowledging God as an important part of your life and what could be more fitting than your Torah portion today on the commandments to help chart your journey and guide you forward.

I hope that you will learn that your faith is a gift and that it is something that will stand with you for the rest of your life. Remember too that without family and faith, life can be a lonely journey.

Enjoy every day, enjoy your youth". Be kind to others so that they can find life good too. Especially be kind to your little sister who looks up to you and loves you very much.

Remember that sometimes life can change the greatest laid plans. Embrace change and learn to go with the wind. Know that sometimes there is a grander purpose at hand. Whatever you do though, do it with all the enthusiasm possible and remember that all the money, all the fame in the world does not help if you have not peace of mind and a clear conscience.

Your Papi who unfortunately cannot be with us today is here in spirit. He would be so proud, as we are, of what you have accomplished and that you would be carrying our faith as you have. He loved you so very much and he was always very fond of how sweet and attentive you were to him.

Bring and keep God into your life. Make him a part of everything you do. He will definitely be there for you when you need him. May God keep you in the palm of his hand and remember you will always be our little girl and we will always be there for you.