

Funeral for William E. Fisher, Jr.
Born: July 6 1921 Died: April 22, 2011 Age: 89
Funeral: April 27, 2011

Gospel: John 19:25-30

Homily:

All of us here at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church extend our sympathy to “Lil”, Bill’s children, siblings, grandchildren, in-laws, members of the extended family, and everyone closest to him. Know that you are in our prayers.

You gather this afternoon remembering the many ways Bill touched your lives. You knew him as a wonderful family member. You fondly recall the many things that brought Bill enjoyment in life, including his dog Missy, lottery tickets, crossword puzzles, playing golf, conversing on the telephone, and cheering for the Cleveland Browns and Cleveland Indians.

You will remember stories about Bill working hard with his father’s landscaping firm. His talents in landscaping earned him and “Lil” the Neighborhood Pride Award in the year 2000 for the decorative plants that adorned his house and well-tended lawn along with the improvements made on their house.

You will also fondly recall stories about how Bill went on to work at the Republic Steel Company as an administrative assistant to the superintendent before his retirement three decades ago, and the many stories associated with his work as head of security at the Eastwood Mall in Niles and his employment at the Cafaro offices in Youngstown.

Our nation is grateful for Bill’s service as a veteran in the United States Army during World War II as a sergeant tank commander. Special tribute for Bill’s military service will be presented after this Mass.

We have gathered here not only to give thanks for Bill’s life and to commend him to God’s everlasting care, but also to ponder the meaning of Bill’s passing in the light of our faith.

Bill was called home to be with the Lord on Good Friday afternoon. When I spoke with Candy on the telephone shortly after we made funeral arrangements, she mentioned how very special this is. Bill died on the day we remember Christ's saving love for us. Jesus stopped at nothing to show how much God wants to save us from everlasting death. We commend Bill to God's everlasting care during this Easter week, a time when we are especially grateful for the new hope and new life God gives to us because of this perfect obedience and loving sacrifice of the Lord who promises to raise us up, too.

You'll fondly remember referring to Bill as "Cowboy" for the way he persevered in his suffering. As time goes on, you'll also remember the fact that Bill was united with Jesus in His suffering and death. As the Gospel story from John told us a few moments ago, Jesus delivered over His spirit after saying "It is finished." The Lord's saving work was completed when He breathed no more, and Bill's nearly nine decades filled with so many experiences were totally caught up in this love of the Lord who waited to greet Bill when Bill breathed his last. It is our firm belief that Bill suffers no more and that the Lord who loves us all is able to fill him with new life.

The Lord knows you will miss having Bill among you in your home, and this same Lord assures you that Bill will always be in your heart.

May Christ, who promised to prepare a place for people of faith, welcome Bill to His care and continue to look upon us with compassion as we share our grief with the Lord and with each other.