

Funeral for Kathryn J. Fair

Born: March 31, 1922 Died: May 3, 2009 Funeral: May 7, 2009

Readings: Isaiah 25:6-9 Romans 14:7-9 John 6:3-15

Homily:

On behalf of everyone here at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish, I extend my sympathy to everyone close to Kathryn. I know this is a difficult time. I assure you of our prayers.

Later in today's service, Tim will share some personal words of remembrance about his grandmother.

Right now, we reflect on the truth that the Lord touched our lives in many ways through Kathryn's life. We believe that the Lord's love for Kathryn is strong; we also believe that the Lord will see us through this difficult challenge we face as we prepare to commend her to the everlasting care of God.

When followers of Jesus gather to say goodbye to a loved one, our lives are touched by the consolation offered to us by means of the Word of God proclaimed in the Scriptures.

Just a few moments ago, we heard Readings that assure us God's comforting presence.

The Prophet Isaiah issued a message to God's Chosen People a long time ago. He told them that the Lord would provide for God's people. He compared the saving love of God to a sumptuous feast ~ laden with rich food and choice wines. And the Prophet promised that in the fullness of time, the veil that veils all people, the web known as death that is woven over all the nations would be destroyed by God.

My friends, we continue to celebrate the Easter Season. We believe that by His death Jesus Christ conquered death. He is the one who invites Kathryn to an everlasting feast. The Lord Himself is the one who enables her to rejoice and be glad that the Lord shares such saving love!

I am sure that many memories have filled your minds and have been shared among each other concerning how Kathryn shared her love with you.

You remember the generous ways she cared not only for family members, but also for neighbors who were in need of assistance.

This parish was an important part of Kathryn and Charles' life for many years.

You are thankful for the more than sixty-seven years of marriage she shared with Charles. All of us also appreciate the wonderful ways she shared life with her daughter (Carol), two grandsons (Tim and Tom), and six great-grandchildren. We express our gratitude to God with all of these family members, along with her surviving sister (Ann) and surviving brother (Carl) and all members of the extended family.

I've been told that Kathryn liked to travel. In one sense, the conclusion of her life on earth is similar to the end of a journey. God is the Master of this journey for all of us. As Saint Paul said in his Letter to the Romans, "None of us lives as one's own master." Truly, the end of Kathryn's life reminds us that the life of each one of us belongs to the Lord.

Seven sisters and four brothers completed this journey before Kathryn. We believe that the Lord, the Master of our lives, has the ability to enable them and all who have made this journey before us to rejoice in the presence of God forever.

Kathryn touched many people with the goodness of God in many different places. She lived in Pennsylvania as a youngster, here in Niles on North Main Street for a short time then for many years on Margaret Avenue. Kathryn enjoyed the time she spent in Vienna and she made the very best of the time she lived in Florida.

When I met with some members of Kathryn's family two days ago, I was told that she loved to cook. That led me to choose the Gospel we heard. The description of people eating together due to the generosity of the Lord was a beautiful story. Many were the times Kathryn fed large groups of people, where stories were told, hungry bodies were fed, and spirits were nourished. The Gospel story tells us everyone was filled and much good food was gathered afterwards. As time goes on, every time you hear that Gospel story, remember Kathryn.

Now that her travels have ended, trust that she prays with us and she prays for us. Remember how she filled your lives with the goodness of God. In fact, she fed you so well that she will continue to nourish your spirits even after God welcomes her to eternal rest. Give thanks for her life each time you think of her. And let the Lord nourish your spirits when you call to mind the ways she reflected God's goodness.