

TRIBUTE TO MOM (MARY LAKE)

Mom considered herself “just plain Mary” and described herself as nondescript.; however, she was so much more to us. “Ornery” was the word that best described Daddy and when thinking about Mom several words come to mind. One word would be “contentment”. Mom was not inclined toward any great ambitions and spent most of her life simply content with whatever her lot in life might be. The word “stubborn” also comes to mind. For example: Tell her she needed to drink more water and she would just drink less or none at all. Of course, all of us reflect characteristics of our parents and each of us inherited a bit of a stubborn streak. Most of us, including myself, prefer to consider ourselves just strong-willed.....the exception being Judy, who may truly be stubborn; however, she learned to use it and channel it in a positive direction.

Mom, by nature, was not an overly patient person but several life experiences taught her to trust in God’s timing and not her own but it didn’t come naturally or easily. The first five years with no children was difficult for her, although I repeatedly assured her I was worth waiting for. Of course, Christine, number 12, maintained it took 12 tries to finally get it right. The past few years also tried her patience as she slowly lost her quality of life.....losing most of her vision, her ability to read and write and the ability to get around easily. The final indignity was needing to be placed in a rehab center. Her wish to return to her heavenly home had continued to grow stronger as the years, months, weeks and days passed. Finally, her timing and God’s timing coincided and on Friday, July 1st, her prayers were answered. We are very grateful to “Hospice of the Valley” for the respect, dignity and comfort she was provided during her last two days.

Before getting married, Mom once wished for 12 children if they all could be like Daddy. When Mom was 20, her mother died suddenly at age 51. It was very devastating to her. She wished to live a long life--even to 100 to make up for the years her Mom did not have. Of course, she didn’t consider that her quality of life might not be too good at 100 and some years ago had decided she was ready to move on. Kate used to remind her that if she hadn’t lived such a virtuous life with no drinking, smoking or wild living, maybe she could have had her prayers answered a little sooner. So maybe one needs to be careful what one wishes for and maybe a few vices in life aren’t so bad.

One of the things I most respected about Mom was her ability to accept others without judgment. She held herself to a very high standard but did not judge others by that standard. She did not just overlook other’s imperfections but embraced them as reflections of Christ-saw the Christ in them-warts and all.

I do want to take this time on behalf of myself and my remaining siblings to personally and publically thank Skippy for all the years she gave to Mom’s care. She did so with a joyful heart, never complaining and truly looked out for Mom’s best interests. I know she had an extensive support system that she turned to and appreciated

along the way. We would also like to acknowledge that her boys, Rick, Jeff and Anthony made a great contribution in not having their Mom available to them as much as they might have liked and yet, they were there for her all along the way. Skippy has served God and our family faithfully the past 10 years, doing only what God led her to do and still maintained her own interests and family relationships. Our prayers will be with her as she moves to the next phase of her life with God leading the way. Thank you and God bless.

During the last month of her life Mom had the opportunity to spend quality time with each of her children. Although some did not return for this service and others are taking a private...a repeat of this service to Uncle Charlie, Dad's remaining brother in Ohio. All my siblings rose to the occasion and their Mom's needs during her days of decline.

We celebrated her 94th birthday on June 4th at the rehab center with many family members present. I was most touched on the Tuesday preceding her death when we returned to the rehab center as Mom was being transported to the emergency room, thinking she was alone, only to find that she was in good hands with Tim standing beside the bed holding her hand. Another touching moment came when Debbie and Curtis arrived, when Mom wanted them, the same day. Debbie spent the rest of the day and all night then went with Mom in the ambulance the following afternoon to the Hospice facility. She then went to work that night with no sleep. It was not easy seeing Mom go downhill so rapidly and no matter how difficult, I am proud to say that we followed her wishes, although, maybe not our own, in letting her go.

Our generation has been asked to step to the front of the line and we are now truly the senior generation. I suddenly feel much older. And finally, she is reunited with Daddy, Christine, her Mom and all who have gone before. We were all introduced to the Lord through our Mother. It will be our job to live lives worthy of joining them when the days of our lives have ended.

Written and delivered by Sandy Dickmann at the memorial service

For her Mother, Mary Lake on July 11, 2011.