

Eulogy for Mother

*“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God...” –
Ephesians 2:8*

Pastor’s Note – This is a condensed version of the eulogy I shared at mom’s funeral Thursday, Jan 19th, 2017.

My Mom was the oldest of 5 children, and the only girl born to my grandparents, Bud and Jenny Fuchs. Mom and my Dad, Kirk Dietmeier, were married in the spring of 1961. I came along that November. We lived in many places throughout my childhood – the ones I remember were Freeport, Belvidere, and Pecatonica. Then we moved to Dad’s childhood home a year before brother Jeff was born, Maple Lawn Farm in rural Ridott.

Dad wasn’t around much, he often worked 7 days a week. That left Mom to be the caretaker of 4 often rammy (her word) kids. I remember as a child often moaning to her that I was bored, and, if that was the summer, she’d send me out to our multiple-acre garden and weed. If it were winter, she’d suggest I read a book, which I often did, developing within me a life-long love of books. I’m thankful, too, that Mom ensured I knew well Great Grandma Zita Belle Fuchs, whom I spent lots of time with and was a positive, formative influence on both Mom and I.

Though my parents’ relationship got rocky in my junior and senior high years, Mom found humor in many things, and she and I shared thousands of laughs through the years, even as I visited her in the nursing home, up until the last couple of visits.

There’s something about Mom, though, that is far more important than anything I’ve already said. Almighty God saved Mom from her sins. She was a believer in Jesus Christ, a recipient of God’s saving grace. And, that was not due to anything good about her. You see, Mom, like each of us, was a sinner at conception and birth. She came into this present life at war with God and anything righteous and holy. As she aged, she remained a sinner, in need of redemption from her hopeless spiritual condition. She may have been a kind person, capable of doing good things for others, but unless a Savior from outside of herself claimed her as His own, she remained dead in her sins and trespasses.

Sometime during her 22-year marriage to my Dad, Mom realized Jesus Christ was her Lord and Master. He gave her ears to hear, and she responded accordingly. She was convicted of her sinfulness, sought God’s forgiveness, and was born again! Her mind instantly saw that God was working out a good purpose in her, and her life had great meaning and purpose.

Notably, for me anyway, her new life in Christ was worked out regularly on Sunday mornings. Instead of staying home watching All-Star wrestling Sunday mornings on TV, Mom dragged sister Cathy and I (sometimes literally), and later my sister Gwen and brother Jeff, to Sunday School and worship. Despite my complaining and whining, she was showing me Jesus through our often titanic Sunday morning struggles.

And something wonderful was happening in my heart through that time – Mom was building within me a deep love for the Church. In time, I began to look forward to being in worship, and with God’s people on Sundays.

All of this tilled the hard ground of my cold, dead heart, and prepared it for God to breathe His Spirit within me, and change my heart into a fleshy heart molded to love and serve God. That took place during the first of my tours on active duty with the Air Force in England. God saved me from my sins. And I have God to thank, that He gave me a Mom who didn’t leave it up to me to decide whether or not I’d go to church when I was in my formative years.

There’s one more thing. In the time before she was afflicted by her malady, Mom regularly shared with me the prayer burdens of some of the people she was ministering to when Jan, Zach, Molly and I visited her and my stepfather Van. The greatest burden on her heart, however, was the salvation of each of her children and grandchildren. She prayed daily that God would save each of her kids and grandkids. Though that may not have happened during her life time, she planted gospel seeds. Others will water those seeds, and we look to God to bring the increase. ***Pastor Daren***