

Memoirs, Testimonials, and Eulogies for Kathleen

This document is a collection, presented in no particular order, of memoirs, testimonials, and eulogies written by the Wright siblings, grandchildren, and others, either shortly before or shortly after Kathleen's death in November, 1994.

Terri Wright's Memoir of her Grandmother

Somewhere along the way I heard someone remark that EYES serve as the gateway into a person's soul. With relation to Grammy this was most certainly the case. The sparkle and gleam from Grammy's EYES is an image that stands above all others in my mind. One glimpse conveyed emotions and feelings which words could not. Simply said, Grammy viewed the world and those around her through a lens coated with love. Some folks were blessed with the opportunity to read and study her soul more than others. Yet, we were all lucky enough to have fallen under her gaze, even if for only a moment. It is these scattered twinklings that remain dear to my heart. Thank you Grammy.

Terri

November 1994

Katie Mitchell's Memoir of her Grandmother

It was one morning, when I must have been about eight or nine years old. Terri and I had slept over at the Kinross house to spend time with Grammie and Pop. In the morning while Grammie was making us breakfast, we were somehow left alone in the kitchen, together. She asked me what I wanted for the coming Christmas, if I could have anything in the world. I frowned and looked down with sadness and explained to her my dilemma of wanting a puppy, but mom and dad wouldn't buy one for me- too messy. At this, she through her head back and began laughing. She laughed so hard it startled my pouting and I looked up. She said, "You know, your father begged us for a cat when he was about your age. And so we finally got him one. He just spent the whole time torturing the poor thing!" She continued to laugh and laugh and said that my dad was probably just worried that I'd torture the puppy.

I used the advice and new ammunition against the parents. It never worked, though. I never got the puppy. But that doesn't matter. It was Grammie's laughter, her smile, her beautiful quality to make me stop pouting and laugh along with her that morning- that is how I will remember her. I love you Grammie.

Katie

November 1994

Monica McGinn-Wright's Testimonial to her Mother

Dear Mom,

Now that Jerry and I have a child of our own, I'm looking forward to loving and caring for him as you and Dad have for me. We'll have to have another child before I can use your much borrowed line, "Love one another." do you remember saying that as your pried us off each other when we were little? I do.

During my last visit home Katie gave me a great compliment. She said something like I had a lot of Mom in me in the way I interacted with Timmy. I feel so fortunate and grateful to have had such a great mothering model. I just know all of us kids feel the same in that regard.

I recently wrote you a letter with a number of remembrances in it. I don't necessarily want to repeat them again here except to say that you and Dad have had such a major, positive impact on me. I only hope that Jerry and I can do the same for Timmy.

I did want to share a couple of other memories that I have of you that you may not remember. One evening when apparently I couldn't get your attention when I wanted it, I figured I'd really show you. I figured that if I ran away, you'd be really sorry. You'd be so worried that when I finally came back you'd just hug and kiss me and tell me how sorry you were about it all. I took my blanket and ran away.

I walked and hid on the side of the hill by the Connors. At the time I thought that was a long way away, even though it was just at the end of Kinross. I waited for what I thought was a very long time. In all likelihood it was probably ten minutes. When I came back I was shocked to find out that you hadn't even noticed I was gone!

What's weird to me is that I can't remember how I felt about it. So whatever you did must have "made it better" because that's one of my favorite stories to tell to this day. That, I think is a testament to how you were able to always make me feel loved, no matter what.

I also have fond memories of you playing beautiful music as you worked around the house. And later you'd sit down and watch Maureen and me as we performed our ballet dances to the music.

Big family gatherings were always wonderful at our house. I remember the Christmas breakfasts and the Thanksgiving dinners. I also remember the special time out to breakfast with just you and Dad on our First Communion day.

You had this way of making me feel special. I don't doubt that each one of us was somehow made to feel this way. I remember the budget envelopes that you had. Every once in a while you'd take me aside and say, "I had a little extra this month. Why don't you take this and go buy a new blouse." You probably did that with everyone, didn't you!?

Well Mom, you know I could go on and on. It's a great thing to have so many good memories. As you've been battling with your health it's natural for us to all want to reminisce about all that you've meant to us. I'm also glad we've had the chance to share some of these memories with you.

All my love Mom,

Monica

10/17/94

Martha Toth's Memoir of her Mother

Memories of Mom

There are, of course, innumerable examples of Mom's incredible selflessness. I remember, for example - and with some guilt - how often something seemed important enough to rate interruption of her paltry twenty minute afternoon naps. And I have a clear memory of her sinking into a living-room chair one evening with a newspaper and a sigh, whereupon I immediately and shamelessly asked whether she would ask me some spelling words. This was during my spelling-bee era, so the list could go on indefinitely. Of course she did it without hesitation.

But I feel a little better when I recall the visit Mom and Dad made to my home in Florida when Leilah was just a couple of weeks old. Gary was off on some mystery-mission covert operations training for weeks, so I was glad for the company.

We lived not much more than a block north of the Gulf Coast, and one day I took the four of us to the beach. You had to drive down the coast a little ways to actually get to the gulf shore. We stayed two or three hours, I think. Leilah ate and slept and I read at a sheltered picnic table, but Mom and Dad actually sunbathed and swam.

When we got back to my place, Mom beamed as she said, "You know, this is the first time I ever remember coming back from the beach and NOT having to take care of anyone else. I can just get into the shower and stay as long as I want. What a luxury!" (Luckily, Dad didn't start calling for a martini until she had made good her escape!)

I was so pleased to be able to offer her that opportunity to NOT have to give, for a change.

Martha
10/13/94

John Wright's Memoir of his Mother

LETTING GO

It's been so long ago, I had to look it up in my files: July 1975. On a typical Saturday that summer, almost 20 years past, I was busy with a not-so-typical travel plan.

Almost 23, I was still living at Kinross with Mom & Dad after graduating from U of M the previous summer. Life was good: I had been lucky enough to land a good job with the DOD, despite the Vietnam drawdown; and I was benefiting from free room and board with literally no restrictions.

Nevertheless, an inner drive to set-out on my own (not to mention the attraction of Jug Bay) had prompted a steady transfer of my worldly possessions from Kinross to the Pax River rental over the course of a week or so.

I'd like to think that "self-centered insensitivity" is too strong a characterization. "Preoccupation with excitement" is a more palatable--though admittedly biased--explanation. For whatever reason, that July afternoon found me at the front door, giving Mom & Dad a genuine but routine and rapid good-bye. In retrospect, I was acting as if this was a departure for a long weekend to Ocean City As I passed through the door, a final backward glance revealed the broader scope of the day's event. Mom was crying, tears she was unsuccessfully trying to hide.

Although the scene is tattooed in my memory, Mom's exact words to me when I went back to her side were lost in the emotion. As will be no surprise to any in the family, her first reaction was to apologize--she didn't want to put a damper on my departure. Despite her happiness over my good fortune and excitement, she just couldn't deny the pain, as yet another of her chicks was leaving the nest. With tears running down her cheeks, Mom told me she loved me, and then let go.

That memory sustains me now that there's been a role reversal of sorts.

I've cried tears of happiness that Mom has found peace from pain. I've cried tears of pain that Mom is gone. Now, with a declaration of a son's love for a mother who showed how it's done, I'm going to let go.

John

11/23/94

George Wright's Memoir of his Mother

In the early 1950's, the Wright family, then living in the three-bedroom house at 10104 Dallas Avenue, got its first television set. It was, of course, bulky by today's standards, a 12-inch (diagonal measurement!) Westinghouse, about a foot and a half by two feet, two and a half feet deep. Its left side was the first thing you'd see as you entered the living room through the front door. But on Saturday mornings, we would all be looking at the front.

1950's Saturday mornings weren't the cartoon/advertising ghettos of today, but they were definitely children's territory. (Those were the days, remember, when TV stations ended their Saturday broadcasting hours at 1 PM!) There was a regular line-up of shows we'd watch: Captain Midnight, Smilin' Ed and Froggie, a Republic Pictures B- grade cowboy movie, and Commander Buzz Corry in Space Patrol. Then it was Guy Madison in Wild Bill Hickok, up to the desolation of snow on all channels at 1 PM.

Only recently have some of us learned how lame the scripts of those shows were. These days, you can hear radio episodes of Space Patrol on Sunday night's nostalgia radio here in Baltimore. One evening I heard a radio episode which had been recycled for later TV production. It is this particular episode—and Mom's reaction to it—that I remember.

While we were watching TV, Mom would be doing her Mom things, in her bedroom, down the hall to our left and left again, or in the kitchen, down the hall to our left and then to the right. She must have passed through the living room occasionally, on her way to the stairs to the two upstairs bedrooms, but we were oblivious. But wherever she was, she managed to keep track of what was happening on TV.

In one particular Space Patrol episode, Commander Corry and Cadet Happy had entered a seemingly unoccupied and derelict space vessel, only to fall under the domination of an alien intelligence. The alien intelligence wasn't carbon-based, but silicon-based, resident in an array of crystals "...arranged in a precise mathematical array." After a several commercials for Rice Chex and a few minutes of stumbling around in thrall to the alien, valiant Commander Corry figured out the situation and escaped alien domination by tumbling the carefully arranged crystal matrix to the deck.

During the next commercial break, Mom dumbfounded us all by coming in and actually turning off the TV before 1 PM! She explained to us all that the episode we had just seen was totally unbelievable because of the presence of the alien life-form. As an arrangement of crystals, she said, it didn't have a soul! It couldn't possibly be alive or intelligent without this gift from God. This wasn't offered as a diatribe or a moralistic sermon, just a simple statement of fact. After this brief clarification, she turned the TV back on, just as the on-going commercial ended.

I think that most of us, even though our ages were probably still in single digits, realized that, hey, it was only a TV show! Nevertheless, we all learned that Mom cared about us, cared enough to monitor what we were watching and cared enough to consider what we might be learning from it. She cared enough to take a stand and tell us what she believed was right. This may have been the first time that some of us noticed this, but it certainly wasn't the last. Mom always cared.

George,

November 26, 1994

Charlie Wright's Memoir of his Mother

What to write? What to say? At first I thought I'd be able to write about Mom. But as I thought about it, I realized that I couldn't find any thoughts. Of course I was looking for deep, life-changing thoughts and memories. My memories of Mom are tiny vignettes. Nothing really stands out. Perhaps this says more about me than about Mom.

Though I was in second grade when we moved to Kinross, I have no notable memories of Mom prior to that time. Mom always bought plenty of crackers and oatmeal cookies so that I could have a snack of cookies and milk when I got home from school. She always picked the kind of cookies that I liked. Like Maureen, I always went grocery shopping with her when I could. I loved to push the carts around. And I too remember that she provided a small list of things I could get solo while she shopped for other items. Perhaps I was too slow to realize that, using this tactic, she was able to 'get rid of me' for a while by doing that. But I loved it.

At home she was the work horse. The laundry alone was a full day's work. Several huge piles sorted by color. And with the relatively small washing machine, it required six loads to get it all done. Twice a week. Including drying (much of the wash hung on the line in the laundry room to avoid shrinkage) and folding it was a full eight hours work. And ironing. No wonder she called it laundry DAY. Her afternoon nap was her only real pleasure of the day. Half an hour after lunch while Grandma Wright watched her soaps. Interrupting Mom's nap was something you did only in a genuine emergency. But when you did wake her up, it was rare that she would complain. And then there was the cooking. She was the ultimate in creativity. How she could cook for a dozen people every night is now quite an amazement to me. And she knew how to make 'hamburger helper-like things before they were commercialized.

She would get up very early. Though at the time I had no idea how early, it must have been 5:30 or before. She would fix Dad his breakfast, drive him to work downtown and return in time to drive George and me to St. Anselm's. And then repeat the process in the afternoon to pick us up again and then Dad too. I remember that she would drive downtown to meet Dad for lunch occasionally. I always thought it was neat that they would go out to lunch.

She was so organized. Payday was quite a ritual. A dresser drawer full of little envelopes. I remember seeing several \$100 bills for the first time and being in awe. At the bank, the bills were broken up into the 14-day portions. Like a business- so many 20's, so many 10's, 5's and so on. Then the change. An exact number of quarters, dimes, and nickels. Then at home, the money was dealt out into the envelopes for groceries, money for the paper boy, allowances for all of us kids, and milk money for each of us each day for two weeks. One envelope for each category, neatly filed away in her dresser drawer. Dad paid the bills that came by mail. Mom managed the 'petty cash' account. And she did it like a business.

There's a period between when I was about 12 and 20 that I don't much remember Mom (or Dad or anyone for that matter). I suppose that I was busy trying to figure out just what life was about. The transition from child to adult perhaps. My adult memories begin from after I joined the Navy. The letters always seemed to come from Mom. Oh, they told of everyone- but Mom was the one who wrote them. As with many of you, I have the pictures (in my mind and on film) of Mom visiting us when the kids were infants. Pictures of her sitting in a chair, with one on each side reading a book and playing with their toys.

And visits to the Oaks. She would sit and listen as Dad and I talked about computers and such. Content, apparently, to just enjoy the company. Only in the last year or so did I take the time to sit and visit with her. Always a joy to talk with. Always just a bit sad to see you leave.

Upon reflection, it's not surprising that I believe there's quite a bit of Mom in me. Her practicality, her ability to accept bad along with the good, and her ability to keep a positive attitude. Kate said just the other day that the only thing she could think of to say the night Mom died was "she was a good Mom". Kate was somewhat discouraged that such a statement sounded so small and inconsequential. I thought exactly the opposite. I can't think of five words that could better express the totality of what she was. I'll be forever proud that she wasn't only my Mom, she also was a good Mom.

I miss you, Mom.
Charlie
November 1994

Jack's Eulogy to Kathleen

Today we celebrate the entry into heaven of our beloved wife, mother, grammy, aunt, and sister, Kathleen. We are at once elated for her victory, and grieved by our loss. The poet hasn't lived who could adequately portray in mere words the incredible unselfishness and indomitable spirit of our dear departed exemplar extraordinaire. To say that she will be missed would be to slight the truth, because the fact is that, for those who really knew her and loved her, she will never be absent. She will be forever lurking over our shoulders—counseling, encouraging, inspiring. Or, as one 7-year old granddaughter put it: "Mom, Grammy's spirit can fly now. Did you know that? Since she is a spirit now, she can fly to whomever in the family might need her, and rest on their shoulder." As they say, "Out of the mouths of babes..."

Beyond that, we will also be reminded of her at the sight of every needy or sorrowing person that we may ever meet, and so be inspired to emulate her example of unremitting compassion. Her lifelong loving commitment to her husband, children, and their families, with utter disregard for her own needs or desires, was so complete and rare as to defy description. And her concern for others didn't end with her family. She constantly reached out to her friends, neighbors, and indeed to the whole community. After raising her own family she dedicated herself to the service of others, first as an active volunteer in a nursing home, and for the last decade of her life—with her physical energies on the decline—she was a key phone coordinator of Silver Spring Help, a volunteer group that provides emergency assistance to less fortunate neighbors. Her spirit will lurk in the background of every gathering of family or friends who knew her, her cheerful presence to the very end marking her as a person anyone and everyone was delighted to be around. She will be an extremely hard act to follow.

Her last days were very trying, to put it mildly, being marked by the sad but inevitable decline in human dignity that often accompanies final illnesses, not to mention prolonged bouts with debilitating and demoralizing pain. As another perturbed and bewildered small grandchild was heard to say, "I've never seen my Dad cry before." But through all this Kathleen herself, as throughout her entire life, vented no slightest single whimper of complaint, and indeed whenever she spoke, it was to voice her concern for the trouble and inconvenience that she might be causing those who deemed it a high privilege to attend her and comfort her. That was her lifelong trademark: concern for others—always first and foremost—with nary a thought of herself. She was by every measure an ideal wife, a model mother—a truly remarkable woman and, we might even venture—a saint! So, we can't really mourn her passing. Rather, we can only be elated at her attaining the peace and serenity of heaven that her earthly labors, which she didn't consider labor at all, so justly merited. She has at last shed every vestige of earthly bondage, and now confronts that Immense All-Loving Incomprehensibility, which we call God. She has fought the good fight, she has finished the race, she has kept the faith. She now shares in the glory of God, his angels, and his saints. We can only add: Glory be to God! Thanks be to God! Go in peace! "The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

Katie Wright Pugliese's Testimonial to Kathleen

I recently attended a self-improvement class for work. In order to help us focus on our values and what kind of person we wanted to be, they gave us an exercise to do that went something like this: imagine you're at your own funeral. What would you want people to say about you, and what would you want to be able to say about your life.

Many adjectives came to mind: kind, generous, fun-loving, giving, patient, hard-working, fair, loyal, courageous, gutsy, caring. Of course, the exercise had its intended effect of making me aware of how divergent my actions are from my goals. Upon further reflection, however, I realized something else. The person my adjectives had described was my Mom. I smiled at that recognition. She was a great example to us all.

And now, some memories...in no particular order.

My mother used to pick me up from High School on those days when I stayed after for extracurricular activities. While waiting, I'd regale my friends with humorous stories and impressions of my mom. My friends would be both incredulous and in stitches. Incredulous that such a wonderful, unique, sparkling personality existed especially in a Mom/adult form. In stitches because my mom could be downright funny in her irreverence and spunk. I remember being proud that I had such a mom.

I've been told by my siblings that I was one of the more challenging of the Wright children. Of course, I dispute this claim. But the sheer numbers (8 kids against 1) suggest that my opinion is biased. I know it's hard to believe, but they claim I was demanding. They say I was a whiner and a complainer who needed constant attention. If this were true, we'd all agree that a Mother would be within her rights to lose her temper with such a child. And yet, I don't ever remember my mother yelling at me. Exasperation? Yes. But always with a love so obvious that it balanced out any of the negative. You might question, and rightly so, that claim. Never yelled? Nine kids? Never Yelled? But again, the numbers tell the story. I've never heard any of my brothers or sisters tell a story where Mom yelled or lost it.

This September, my parents celebrated their 52nd anniversary. They'd been sweethearts for 63 years. Amazing. Outwardly, it might have seemed that my parents had a very traditional marriage, but let me clue you in on a shocking little secret. Jack and Kathleen were ahead of their times. Theirs was a true partnership where differing opinions were respected and sought after. My father has a reputation, all undeserved of course, for being forceful and opinionated. Because my mother was calm and collected, one might get the impression that she was easily swayed or contained. Not so. She was a feisty thing, full of opinions herself. I've pleasant memories of after-dinner discussions in the kitchen on various topics: politics, religion, whatever. The discussions were always quite vocal and free-flowing. I can see my Mom now, hands perched confidently and purposefully on her hips, going head to head with any of us, Dad included.

And of course, there is the peacemaker side of my mom. As a young kid, I remember getting into a squabble or two with my brothers or sisters. We'd be going at it quite loudly, only to hear my Mom's voice from the other room: "Love One Another!" The affect this had on us fighting kids was immediate: we'd stop fighting, turn quizzically toward the voice, tum back toward each other, and crack up laughing. "Love One another!?", we seemed to be saying to each other. "What a stupid thing to say!" It totally cracked us up...and, of course, stopped the fight. Now, when my own children fight, I'm the one calling from the other room, "Love one another!" And it's my kids cracking up with laughter. And the beat goes on.

And finally, one trait I really loved about my Mom, is that she was fun, and she appreciated the funny in each of us. She truly enjoyed what and who she had when she had it. How many of us can say that? We're always so busy with the details of life that we often forget to have fun and enjoy what we have. And so, friends and family, let us all pay tribute to this fine lady by promising ourselves to enjoy what we have while we have it, to love life, to "Love One Another."

November 1994

Fr. Dan's Eulogy for Kathleen

11-26-94 Memorial Mass for Kathleen Prov31:10-31 IJ3:1-2 Mt.11:25-30

Intro. The Son of God emptied himself of His divine majesty to come among us. He humbled himself even to death on a cross to redeem us from sin and death. He rose from the dead as the first fruits of all who believe in Him. Let us affirm our belief in His saving death and acknowledge our responsibility for it by our sins.

Lord by your cross and resurrection you have restored us to life.

By your obedience you have blotted out the guilt of our disobedience.

Xt (sic), by your passion you have taken the sting out of death.

Homily: Why this strange collection of readings? I picked them, so I'll tell you why. It is because of something I learned after a visit with Kathleen early on in her sickness. At the time she was ready to die, and reminded me of the way our mother used to say, 'I've had everything I want out of life.' But, with Kathleen there was one final problem. 'I hate to be such a burden on my children with all their responsibility.'

I didn't know (???) to that at the moment, but later on it occurred to me that this mother of 10 was being asked to become like a little child before she could enter the kingdom of heaven. I suggested this to her on my next visit, and I hope it helped her. It is a hard lesson to learn, but we will all need to learn it. Jesus was speaking to all of us when he said, 'unless you turn and become like children, you will not enter the kg of heaven.'

I picked the first reading because it describes the incredible variety of tasks carried out by a full time mother of a large family: Shopping, sewing, gardening, cooking, teaching, disciplining, and for Kathleen, 2 more tasks not mentioned in proverbs: caring for her mother-in-law for many years, and chauffeuring all the kids. Jack admitted that he had to learn to put gas in the car after she got sick.

But at end the Lord was asking her to become like a helpless child. What the Lord is recommending about children is not any supposed innocence or virtue. I have noticed how some young day-campers can be like little cannibals. He recommends the condition of dependence which goes with childhood and which they take for granted. Children know they are not expected to earn their own room and board, and can confidently expect all they need will be given to them as long as they try to conform to the house rules. If there is anything they can't do for themselves, they usually don't even need to ask. One mother said that a baby has only two worries, input and output.

As we grow up we learn to do more and more for ourselves, and in fact at adolescence we have to assert our independence. Then as an adult we can take on all kinds of responsibilities not only for ourselves, but for others. How long does this last? Mothers are not finished until they have been grandmothers for a whole new generation.

During the prime of life, especially if we are healthy and prosperous, we can easily lose sight of our radical dependence on God. (In the song of Moses Deut 32:15 'Israel grew fat and kicked.' i.e. kicked off the traces of God's law.) The dependence which is so obvious for children with respect to their parents can be outgrown and forgotten when they up, but this ought never to happen to our awareness of our dependence on God. We can never outgrow our need to pray: Our Father. At every meal we need to remind ourselves that this food is His gift even though we paid for it. And, in fact, God has many ways of reminding us that we still need his help in all sorts of crises. After every human resource has failed, we have to turn to God in humble child-like prayer. It is so comforting to say, 'The Lord is my shepherd,' but to allow Him to play that role we have to play our role as sheep.

I'm sure Kathleen and Jack had many occasions to practice the advice of St. Peter: 'Cast your cares on the Lord, because He cares for you,' Pet5:7

Fr. Dan's Eulogy for Kathleen

God knows how to train us with a carefully graded sequence of tests, so that when the final test comes, we will be ready for it. How else can you explain the superhuman serenity with which Kathleen endured all the pain and loss of control of the last months; or the humility and trust that enabled her to become a helpless infant in the care of her own children and husband? Or how was Jack able to stand so firm 'like a rock'. I was so moved by his remark as reported by Katie, as Kathleen's breathing was slowing to a stop, 'I thought I'd be ready for this. I can't believe I'm not ready.' By the grace of God, you were ready, without even knowing about it. 'It will be given to you in that hour'. We can rely on this promise of the Lord.

Dying is a gradual process of losing control, of surrendering to God something we had come to realize had been entirely up to us. We come to realize our helplessness. Like the man who fell off a cliff and managed to grab a tree half way down. There was nothing he could do, no one else to help, so he calls for help: to God. And God answers: 'OK, just let go, and I will catch you.' Are you ready for this? This takes trust. You can't bargain, 'Just hold me first, then I'll let go.'

How do we get ready for the ultimate test of our trust in God? I have already said we don't learn it all at once, but only gradually by 'dying daily', i.e. by being faithful in little things.

Another great help is to read and meditate on the way Christ related to His Father in the gospels: At His birth: 'I come to do your will.' At age 12: 'I must be about my Father's business.' And at the end, 'Not my will but thine be done' and 'Into thy hands I commend my spirit.' Yes, and for our comfort, He even cried out, 'Why have you forsaken me?'

And finally, right now, we can join Him in a very real but mysterious way in His death and resurrection at mass: 'Offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God, your spiritual sacrifice.'

(Intro to Prayer of the Faithful) Also at mass we can access a special means of communicating that reaches beyond the range of E-mail. Call it C.S. for short, the Communion of Saints. This is our message: We come to you Father through J.C. your son. Remember our sister Kathleen, whom you have called from this life. In Baptism she died with Xt (sic), may she also share his resurrection - we pray to the Lord.

Prayer of the faithful:

For the church, that she may proclaim Christ, and Him crucified as the only answer to the problem of pain, suffering and death.

For our country, that our civil laws will not yield to the pressure of those who advocate euthanasia.

For doctors, nurses and family members caring for the dying, that they may be guided by the Holy Spirit in decisions about what care to give or withhold.

For all those suffering from cancer, that through it they may draw closer to Christ and experience his compassion and mercy.

For ourselves, that at each mass we may offer our bodies as a living sacrifice with Christ, and be ready with our lamps lit when He calls us to Himself.

Letter from Jack's Prison Pen-Pal regarding Kathleen's Death

Well, Hello THERE Good Man!

Man- Man- Man!...WOW!...Man, I am Truly at a Lost For Words. I Certainly want to Encourage you to Keep Your Spirits Up. You definitely did **ALL** you could do being Human! And, given your Current Conditions, you provided the Best **LOVE** and **SPIRITUAL Comport** to her as best you could...Remember she wrote and Told me these things. Therefore, I am simply saying, **'Take It Easy On Your Little Self!'** C-W would never want you to be Depressed over Her Deliverance; She'd want you to Carry on just like you've been doing and simply Standfast until your calling. For she has went before you to prepare your Place Of Rest! "Believe This!?"..

You see, 'Everything Happens For A Reason.' God is certainly in Control of **Our Lives**. God has simply call'd Her...(Before You) to best prepare your proper Place OF Rest, For who could do a better Job Than Her?! Just as God brought the Two Of You to Share in His Earthly Places- He shall Equally provide it that the Two Of You Should Also Dwell in Heavenly Places Together for purposes of Continuing His Missions- which is the very reasons he Created the Both of you to Serve. And, Know Good Man that there isn't none in Heaven or in the Earth who could preform these Tasks as best as You, C-W, or anyone else- as We are ALL very Special and Unique Persons in His Creation...And, He gives Not Account For His Purposes! He simply USE'S US according to His Reasons. Where We are Concerned- It remains a Mystery! And, it Should remain a Mystery to us as Humans for it is His Will and Not Mine, Not Yours, Nor is it another's.

C-W Knew This!...I Know This!...And, I am in agreement that You also Knows This!...I am Simply saying, "Be Happy." For Her Suffering is Over! Just as Yours, Mines, and ALL Saints shall be delivered some day. I Commend Your High Spirits of Understanding that it was His Call! For in Knowing it WAS His Call- We must Learn to Move Yet Forward in much prayer and Acknowledgment Yearning, Learning, Watching, Hoping that He Might Equally Have Compassion to Deliver Us from our Woe's...But, being yet Humble and in much Patients and Submittal that, **It Be In His Season and According To His Will-** That we be not Puffed Up; as if to Dictate His Purpose.

For God Knows what we need- God knows this Chess Game better than You and I. C-W has Received Her Promise- the Promise Of Deliverance...Is this not what God says?! Certainly! Equally Yours will not come until He is Finished with whatever Plan he is WORKING THROUGH YOU TO DO. WOW!...That's Awesome isn't it? To Know that God Lives, Use's and Works though us to Get His Job Done in the Earth. 'Good God Al Mighty!'

Letter from Jack's Prison Pen-Pal regarding Kathleen's Death

What a Blessing to be even Worthy to Share in His Glory! Man, believe me— C-W is FINE! And, she's watching over you and ALL Humanity Just like she did while she was with us...Huh?!'...Yeah, C-W is in your very presents now— Just like WE can't see Christ; But are Commanded to believe— equally you'd better know that C-W isn't Separated From you! Talk to her...Believe me she **IS** in your Mist! She will manifest in Dreams, Visions; By way of certain Information, Scriptures, and of course through these Messages. She will be conveying to you— that it's alright!, It' s Wonderful! It's Beautiful! And that you shall be delivered— but no. sooner than **His Will Is Completed Through You.**

Is Mary still around— Please say Hello for me? Thank you. Ole Faithful Charlie We always call him. That Fellow is Truly a Blessing isn't he? **From Henceforth I'd Like To Serve As A Reminder 'To Watch!'....To Be On The Look Out!...'For God Shall Be Calling You Even More So Now.'** He will be saying, "Let Go and Let Me (**Work**) through you; don't Take it Personal, Sure it was a very Devastated Lost to Us ALL. And, More—so To You I Know! But, Remember Now; It was in the Beginning and It is Right Now— "**His Will**"

We don't Run Anything. The upswing is We Have Each Other as Pals— To Carry one another through the Storms for however Long it Takes. I have to wonder however, Having said all this— "How will you yet Survive?" I mean, There will be Times when you will feel Lonesome. You Know, There's simply things that you Two Guy's did that no Two Other's will ever Understand; I trust you know what I'm saying.

I now have to wonder will you be moving in with Immediate Family Members?...You Know, to Help Subside the Loneliness at times. And you need not feel if you'd be of problems to anyone— Not So! Sometimes people Understand, when you think they don't. People Know what you are going through and you'd be surprised to know who'll Help— If you'd only ask.

I'll close this out and get it in the mail. But I am really wanting to know you are spending your days and if you are sleeping well, and I exceptionally want to know if you'd consider moving in with Relatives. Thank you for the Support \$ it is always a Blessing.

"I Am With You Always— And I was very Sad, but Happy To Hear the News."

/s/ Ken

P.S. 'Get Your Rest and Please Write Back Soon?'

God Blesses—

P.P.S "Please send Obituaries?"

Maureen's Remembrances of Kathleen

Subj: Thurs Morning
Date: 94-11-17 EST
From: MoPeny5
To: Joaks, GEO@chatsubo.loyola.edu
To: ANNE MAYER@bfs-tpcs.ucsd.edu
To: WRIGHT@rtc.reston.paramax.com
To: MWTOTH@eecs.umich.edu, Pelczar
To: ROCKYB@usaferam.af.mil, Wright9119
To: MONICA8

First take care of business:

1st: Me and my family plan on leaving on Thanksgiving evening and drive while kids are sleeping - then get hotel room and have only half a drive left on Friday morning. Plan to arrive probably late lunch, early afternoon on Friday the 25th. Kate if this is a problem time wise - let me know what I need to do. Joe wants me to reconfirm with you that it really is okay that we stay with you - he was concerned about the previous mention of having a full house at Thanksgiving way back when. I personally would prefer to stay with some family member rather than a hotel (not for the money but for the support). Departure time still up in the air - assume we would leave in time for us to get back to work on that Monday. Haven't really discussed those details with Joe yet.

2nd: As far as me helping with the pamphlet - I would be more than willing to do that - have access to photo scan stuff but I think Katie's comment of it not being feasible since George has the photo is correct time wise with me being out of town. I am just getting discouraged and frustrated because I can't come up with anything eloquent or beautiful to contribute and it makes me feel horrible. Dad says that it will come to me - I hope so.

3rd: Is there any way that you can think of that the "younger" grandkids could contribute at the memorial service? I fortunately haven't been to many (especially one that includes such a large family) and don't know where a feasible or practical spot would be for them but I think Angela would like to feel like she is doing something special for her Grammy. I don't think Cassi really cares one way or the other but I am referring to the 5-10 age range such as Angie, Monica & Joe P., Alice, Jack and Curt (is it with a "C"?). I know they didn't know Grammy as well as the "older" grandkids but I personally think that they (my kid anyway) would like to "do" something out of respect for Grammy.

4th: I also want to express my thanks and appreciation to the local spouses for their support through all this. I have been somewhat selfish in thinking that this only affects us and that is really stupid. Apparently Pat, Kathy, Rita and Greg have been there when it really counted and hope that I can be the same way when I am put in the same situation with Joe. I can't really say what I'm trying to say except to tell you thanks a lot! I know it must have been particularly hard for Pat and Greg since they have lost a parent and most probably had to relive a little of that themselves in going through this. I know that my mother-in-law even started to get a little choked up last night at Cassi's party when we started talking about the loss of a parent because her mother died when Joe was young and it is still hard for her.

Maureen's Remembrances of Kathleen

Now on a final note I am going to try and recollect about Mom things that I feel could be edited or pulled from for the memorial pamphlet. If it sounds chopping or whatever - I am not trying to be eloquent or win a creative writing award or anything just merely jotting down remembrances and what comes to mind - use as you see fit.

I remember when I was about 12-13 years old I think and I was in the kitchen with Mom and the phone rang and it was Mrs. Russin (spelling?) calling to tell Mom she had seen one of my siblings, I think it was Katie and Monica, that's irrelevant however, smoking and hanging out somewhere in Four Corners. Well all I remember was that it was the first time I actually heard Mom get somewhat rude with someone, she commented on the phone very firmly that her children were her concern and that she doesn't think that it is any of her business and would appreciate no further calls like that. Afterward I asked her what it was about and that is when I learned the details of the conversation but I remember thinking, Man that's cool, because Mrs. Russin was always nosing in on everyone's business and I was so impressed by Mom's firm response to her nosey-ness.

One "bad" experience that I remember of Mom was the one and only time she ever spanked me. For some reason I assume I was probably about 5 years old at the time but really have no idea. Monica and I were "playing" at the top of the stairs and Monica was beating up on me of course, ha, ha, so I pushed her down the stairs. Apparently she cut her lip or something and Mom came out of the kitchen and immediately after seeing what happened and Monica's explanation of the facts, ha, ha, took me into the living room on that long brown sofa and laid me on her lap and gave me one big spanking. No profound words are remembered but I can vividly remember it happening and how shocked I was that Mom would do that. I don't think I ever pushed Monica down the stairs again.

Do you all remember when Mom & Dad used to play tummy? I was always asking Mom to play with me and of course, she was always cooking or something and one night I remember when I asked both Mom & Dad if they wanted to play (I always asked almost every night if I remember right) and always expected a no answer. This night however they agreed to play with me. I remember sitting down at the dining room table playing gin rummy. I don't remember who won - I assume they probably let me win. I was so excited to be actually playing an "adult" card game with them. That was one of the few that I can recall that I got specific one-on-one time with both Mom and Dad. Very enjoyable.

Remember the laundry instructions when Mom had to go in the hospital? I don't remember what she was going for but she had left specific 3-4 page step-by-step instructions on how to do the laundry taped up on the wall above the washing machine. I got such a kick out of that. I now find myself whenever I leave the house for a period of time leaving notes on where things are and what the normal routine is for Joe or whoever is staying behind.

When I was about 14-15 I remember coming into the kitchen while Mom was cooking Dad's lunch on a Saturday while Dad sat in his "spot." She was fixing a grilled cheese sandwich and it had margarine on the bread so it would grill (oops, the secret is out Dad). I remember commenting in a regular voice while washing my hands or something that I thought Dad couldn't stand butter. Her mouth dropped and she immediately put her finger to my mouth and said, "Shhh, he might hear you. He doesn't know." I thought that was really cool Dad because you either didn't hear me or choose not to hear me because you ate the sandwich. And after you

Maureen's Remembrances of Kathleen

left, Mom commented to me that she didn't see any other way to fix a decent cheese sandwich and a little butter won't kill you.

My most pleasant memories though believe it or not are going to the grocery store with Mom. It usually was just me and Mom on those Saturday mornings and as I look back now I realize she was trying to sneak out before I woke up but I remember many times when I would catch her walking out the door with her purse and yell after her to give me a second to get dressed. I remember now the "Okay dear, but hurry." I can really relate to that because it is a total distraction trying to grocery shop with a 5-7 year old who wants to "help" and she'd put up with me anyway and act like she enjoyed my company most of the time, ha, ha. She would go to the Acme in White Oak for the "big" shopping and would always get there right when the opened, "to avoid the crowds" she would say. She would have two baskets full of groceries and I would push one and she would get the other. Once I learned to read she would give me a short list of my own to go get stuff. Then when we got home I would play clerk as we put the groceries away together.

A fairly recent memory was when I was and staying at Katie's house with the kids. Joe was not with us on this trip. It was during the time that she had the chemo belt on. I remember visting at Mom & Dad's apartment and saying how I would really like to give my kids a chance to see a little bit more of her before we left and suggested a pizza lunch at Katie's without Dad where he wouldn't get stressed out. Not that I didn't want Dad there I just knew with Mom's cancer and all I wanted my kids to have an opportunity to have at least one chance to "play" with their Grammy without the worry of having to be quiet. So anyway - I ordered a Ledo's pizza and Mom came over to Katie's and had pizza with us then we all went out to their living room and Mom played Mother May I with them. Cassi I think was too little - I'm not even sure if she was awake or not I just vividly remember Mom standing at the fireplace hopping on one foot and then taking two "giant steps" towards Angela. I just sat on the couch and drank it all in. It was wonderful to witness. She didn't stay very long - maybe an hour because she was worried about Dad but that didn't matter. I don't think it meant as much to Angela as it did to me to be able to watch it.

What about at stop signs, "One two three stop, one two three go."

Thinking about all these small remembrances and not really being able to think of anything profound. I had forgotten about the "Love One Another" until it was mentioned. All I can think of right now is the small things above that apparently had an impact on me. And as Anne and Katie have expressed you sit back and realize how much we are in fact a mixture of our two parents and what similarities we can see in ourselves from Mom. I remember also friends telling me they always wanted my Mom to drive us because she was funny and didn't bother us and let us be kids. What an ultimate compliment for a parent. It reminds me of the time I picked up my bosses' kids from school one day and I had done it before and their 2nd grader (all boys) was just looking at me like I was crazy. As he went to get out of the car he commented, "You're silly, I like you." Is that the Mom in me? I know on one hand I have a lot of Mom's parenting style but I definitely don't have the patience, as Anne had said Mom never appeared to lose her cool, where me on the other hand have done so many times. I have been known, god forbid, to yell at my kids out of sheer frustration. I also know that I definitely do not have the magnetism that Mom had towards kids. Most kids find me "silly" and "cool" but I do not draw them like Mom did. I wish I could. I still feel uncomfortable sometimes with the young nephews and nieces when I try to get them to know me or "like" me. I watch Katie and Monica who have managed to stay in

Maureen's Remembrances of Kathleen

contact with the older nephews and nieces such as George's & Charlie's kids and I feel a bit awkward around them - not anything they do - just not quite sure how to be. Weird? Anyway, my reason for bringing that up was to with Anne and Katie that we are a mixed bag of genes and we have had two wonderful parents who have managed to make us feel very, very loved no matter what. It is still rather strange to not address these letters "Dear Mom & Dad" anymore. Mom will always be there even if only in spirit and hopefully she will "land on my shoulder" quite often as Angela had said.

Anne's Eulogy for Kathleen

I represent the children of Kathleen. We ask that you today remember her, our mother, as we knew and loved her.

Mom's guiding principle her distillation of the Golden Rule was "Love One Another." Mom's life was an example of that rule in practice every day.

We all recall from childhood moments when she used this phrase: In admonition—ending inter-sibling rivalry; In sympathy—for victim of the wrath of teacher, playmate, or perhaps a boss; In counsel—bidding us let go of anger and of hurt, to understand, to practice fairness, to forgive.

As we all grew, secure within a household managed on this guiding principle, we sought out love, we married, we raised families, often had occasion to evaluate ourselves as adults by Mom's golden rule. It is so simple. And so hard to practice. Mom could make it look so easy. And we think it really was for her, because she lived those words. She lived them, and they came alive by her example to us all. And Mom's grandchildren, some too young today to know her well, have all been touched by Mom's example. We, who loved her almost beyond words, all hope our children learn to practice Kathleen's golden rule.

For Kathleen Wright, "Love one another" was no bland cliché, nor simple formula from one without the time to learn complexities of a dispute. Mom's one demand, her challenge, her insistence, her advice, "Love one another," cut through the emotional, the painful, the complex, to recognize the simple truth that loving one another, and supporting those we love, is what gives meaning to our lives.

We remember Mom as one so grounded in the basics, so unfazed by the distractions, complications, and confusions of her life, so sure of her religious faith that just to know her was to share a bit the peace she knew. Mom also knew that loving one another doesn't always work. She wasn't so naive as to believe that everyone lived by her golden rule. She understood that following her rule did not and does not guarantee a "happy ever after" ending—or not here, at least.

She knew that bad things sometimes happened to good people, so, to comfort us when we were wronged, she'd say, "Offer it up." Today, the phrase might be "Get over it." The difference is that Mom saw even in adversity an opportunity for love to rule, to make a bad thing good. She did not want to simply heal our anger or our hurt at some injustice. No, she wanted us to use love as a tool, to conquer the injustice, and to make us better, doing good.

Mom's little sayings—for example, Original Sin as the one source for all our failures and our lapses—came to be familiar jokes that knit us and our families to this day. Our spouses and our children know what "OS" means when blamed for failures and lapses. They may laugh now, as we laughed then, and still do now and then, at the simplicity of Kathleen's sayings. Growing up, we all at some point came to know Mom's words were neither simple, facile, pat, nor obsolete. As we get older—even wiser now—we find essential truth and soundness in Mom's words. We find ourselves returning to the place our Mom began—and ended: understanding that by following her words, we end by following her path, someday to be united in the warmth and love of Kathleen Wright, our mother.

Letter to Jack on Kathleen's Death

Nov. 21, 1994

Dear Jack:

Only now, am I able to write you with words of sympathy for your dear, dear wife, Kathleen. When I first heard the diagnosis at the end of August after her operation, I retreated into a shell, remembering my own mother's demise from that cursed disease. I knew that the end would be painful and unbearable to watch and I was afraid. But wait. What is this I see? A family joining hands together and loving their mother/wife even more than they ever had before. Every once in a while I emerged from my ostrich pose, and learned of another heroic way your family had dealt with this tragic circumstance. It was so heartbreaking to see Kate come home, so demoralized and stricken with grief for her mom, the first thing I wanted to do was run. But your family taught me that death should not be treated in such a cowering way. Every story of every act of kindness rang true, and reverberated with a love that I have not witnessed before. Your support and care giving to your girl friend of 63 years, wife of 52, was no small task, and showed me truly the way to walk like a man. Kathleen, of course, deserved no less, and you were there with the goods. May you be forever blessed for this. Your wife rests in peace now, with a serene smile and knowledge that all her hard work, tears, fears, and concerns for her family were paid back in spades when the bell tolled. I can only hope that when my time comes, or Kate's, that I will be by your example, ready to lean into my family like a sail in the wind, and be lifted up, and transported, and transformed, and finally at peace. I promise to you that I have learned from you and your family, and I will be there when the time comes. May God bless you, Kathleen, and your family in these difficult days.

Love,

/s/ Mary P.

Anne's Thoughts of Kathleen

For her daughters, Mom wrote the book on how to be a mother. Because she made it look so easy to give of herself for her children, some of us had a difficult time when we first became mothers ourselves - and we only had a few kids to her nine!

The basis of Mom's mothering skills seems to me to have been her ability and willingness to gladly, selflessly provide the support and the "heart" to make her children secure in the knowledge that they were loved. Mom's heart provided the root from which the hearts of her children were able to grow and flower.

Motherroot

Creation often
needs two hearts
one to root
and one to flower
One to sustain
in time of drought
and hold fast
against winds of pain
the fragile bloom
that in the glory
of its hour
affirms a heart
unsung, unseen

Marilou Awiakta, "Abiding Appalachia"

Anne

11/1/94