

*Mass of Christian Burial for
Elaine Ann (Salerno) DelMonico
1941 - 2019*



*St. Mary of Mt. Carmel/ Blessed Sacrament Church
Utica, NY
October 9, 2019*

We welcome you to this celebration of Elaine's life, and her entrance into new life. Thank you for being here. Many of the musical prayers for today's liturgy were favorites of Elaine's, and specially chosen by her ahead of time. They carry in their exuberance the joy of the resurrection of Christ, in which she now fully shares.

We encourage you to join in our sung prayer. It is a sign that we are united in faith. We sing in the confidence that our prayer can assist Elaine in her final union with God, and comfort us in our grief.

Presider: Fr. Jim Cesta, Pastor

*Concelebrating Priests: Fr. Fred Daley, Fr. Richard Dellos, Fr. Robert Kelly,
Fr. Joseph Salerno, Fr. Scott VanDerveer*

Prelude & Welcome

We Will Sing Our Song to God choir

With a Shepherd's Care (#654)

*Elaine's sacred remains are accompanied into our church, where she worshiped regularly, by her son Marc, nephews Robert Padula and Tom Clark, and great nephew Dominic Clark. Please **remain seated** during this movement.*

Welcome & Reflection on Elaine's Life *offered by Marc*



Introductory Rites

Gathering Song *Lights of the City please stand*

Specially chosen by Elaine, our gathering song reminds us of the last book of the Bible, the Book of Revelation, and the promise of the new and eternal city where God will reign forever and all will share in its light. This song was sung at the funerals for both of Elaine's parents. We now sing it again as she enters the City of God.

I can almost see the lights of the city shining down on me.

I can almost see the lights of the city; forevermore I shall be free.

Sprinkling with Holy Water & Placing of the Pall and Cross

The blessing of Elaine's sacred remains with water and the covering of the casket with the pall, together with the Easter Candle lit at her head, all recall her baptism. The Latin American cross which adorns the casket was a gift of her son Marc; its vibrance speaks of the vitality of her faith and that of the crafter who fashioned and painted it by hand. The simple verse sung at this time reflects the themes of new life and comfort. The prayers are offered by Fr. Jim.

Streams of living water shall flow from within you.

God will wipe away every tear from your eye.

First Reading Isaiah 43 *excerpted*

The reading from the prophet Isaiah are the words of God, uttered as a love song for God's people. It speaks of God's desire to rescue and save the people from all harm – a desire that transcends even death itself. This is a promise which Elaine held close to her heart throughout her life, and especially during her illness. It is proclaimed by Elaine's niece, Debbe Clark.

Responsorial Psalm 30 I Will Praise You Lord

This sung response is our reply to the rescue God has promised in the first reading. For such undeserved and overflowing love, the only reply is praise and thanks. This is the experience of Elaine and all those who know the rescue and redemption of God in their lives.

I will praise you, Lord! I will praise you, Lord,
for you have rescued me! You have rescued me!

Second Reading Acts 10:34-43

The Acts of the Apostles recounts the life of the early church after the resurrection of Jesus. In this passage, Peter responds to a revelation from God which has changed his viewpoint. He recognizes that God's abiding love, spoken of in the first reading, is now available, through Christ, to all people. This is the faith of the church in which Elaine was raised and which she lived throughout her life. It is proclaimed by Elaine's nephew Robert.

Gospel Acclamation & Gospel Luke 24:13-35

The Gospel of Luke presents an appearance of Jesus following his resurrection to two disciples who, having witnessed his terrible crucifixion and death, are bereft of hope. Through his conversation and meal with them, Jesus restores that hope and rekindles their faith. The pattern of sharing the story of Jesus and breaking bread is the pattern of our liturgy – a liturgy in which Elaine participated frequently in this parish. It is proclaimed by Fr. Scott.

Homily offered by Fr. Scott

Prayers of the Church

These prayers name the needs of the community and of our world, and include prayers for Elaine and her family. They are offered by Elaine's nephew, Tom.

Risen Lord, receive our prayer.

Offering of Gifts Over My Head

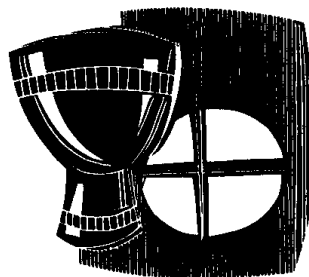
This is another song chosen by Elaine. While it subtly recalls her great love of music in all its forms, the words of the song also reminded her - and remind us - that even in the darkest moments of our lives and our world, the music of God's presence is never absent, and never, ever late. The gifts of bread and wine are presented by Elaine's sister, Phyllis Padula niece, Crystal Padula, and great nephew, Dominic.

Over my head, I hear music in the air, (3x)
there must be a God somewhere!

Eucharistic Prayer Acclamations *sung*

Our Father *recited* / **Sign of Peace** / **Lamb of God** *sung*

Communion



All are welcome to come forward in the communion procession. Those who do not wish or are not ready to participate in Holy Communion are invited forward to receive a blessing. This can be indicated by folding your arms across your chest as you approach the minister of Communion. The breadth of God's welcome is never exhausted. Communion of bread and cup will be offered.

The words of the song, "Amazing Grace" by John Newton have grounded Christians across the globe in the profound transforming reality of God's love in our lives and in our world, which we name "grace." God's grace is broad enough for the entire world and deep enough to touch the core of people in the daily realities of life. That reality is also affirmed in the song "For God So Loved the World," a beautiful rendition of the famous passages in John 3 which speak of the love of God - a constant guiding star in Elaine's life. That love endures through all of history and time, and far beyond.

For God so loved the world, God gave the only Son,
so that everyone who believes in him may not die but have life.
So much God loved the world. So much God loves the world.

Amazing Grace (#612, vss. 1,2,5) with Pachelbel's Canon

Prayer and Final Commendation

The sung prayer offered as Elaine's sacred remains are incensed is "Bambelela," a term from the indigenous Sotho tribe in South Africa. It translates into English as "Never give up." The song is used as an encouragement to members of the tribe who are experiencing suffering or the loss of a loved one. It was a favorite of Elaine's, frequently sung in our parish at Easter time, where it evokes the promise of new life in Christ and reminds us of his message to not be afraid.

Bambelela / Never Give Up



Dismissal and Procession to the Place of Committal

This final song of the liturgy was also chosen by Elaine. The vitality of this beautiful African American spiritual captured her heart and imagination the first time she heard it sung by the parish choir. Often sung in the days before Christmas, it is the promise that every moment of our lives is 'soon,' and that the depth of Christ's love is always there. It is a reminder to be open to God's promise. We move forward with our lives, as Elaine did - knowing that our 'soon' is always time enough for God to embrace us.

Soon and Very Soon (#770)



As we take leave of the church with the sacred remains of our sister, Elaine, we invite you to **Calvary Cemetery** on Oneida St. for the Rite of Committal. As Elaine enters eternal life, her remains return to the earth from which we all come. Please join us for this brief service.

Following the committal, all who have celebrated Elaine's life are invited to the Fort Schuyler Club, at 254 Genesee St., at Court Street, for a meal in Elaine's memory, featuring some of her favorite foods. There is limited street parking on Genesee Street, so you may wish to find parking in the small lot behind the club, accessible on Broadway, the lot at nearby City Hall, or the city lot located less than a block away on the opposite side of Genesee Street, between the Stanley Theater and Firestone.

Thank you for your continued prayers for Elaine and her family.

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'Take Me Home' choir

During her final illness over these past months, Elaine's most fervent desire, for which she fought valiantly, was to 'go home' – by which she meant her home on Brinckerhoff Ave. She longed for independence and the ability to care for herself, even as she struggled with her health. At the same time, her desire was deeper – to 'go home' to sustaining relationships, to 'go home' to be with family members who had gone before and, ultimately, to 'go home' to God forever. We pray with and for her this final prayer, confident that she is now home, wrapped in the loving embrace of Christ, our Blessed Mother, St. Jude, St. Francis, all the saints, her parents and deceased family and friends. And she is 'home' with us, wrapped in the love of our hearts, until we, too, are reunited with her in God's heavenly embrace.

Take me home to your dwelling place, in your sweet embrace,
ready to hold me in your arms.

Take me home to your loving eyes, in you alone I'll rise,
singing forever, in your arms. Take me home.



Thank you to all those who helped celebrate Elaine's entrance into glory. All of the priests at today's liturgy are connected to Elaine's life: Fr. Jim, the current pastor of St. Mary of Mt. Carmel/Blessed Sacrament; Frs. Fred and Richard, former parochial vicar at Blessed Sacrament; Fr. Joe, pastor of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish, Utica, where Elaine's sister Phyllis and her family have celebrated their faith, and Fr. Scott, a dear family friend through Elaine's son Marc. Special thanks to the Elacqua family for their overflowing care and attention to Elaine's family and the preparations for and activities of the liturgy: Peter, Karen, Anne, Vincent, & David. Deep gratitude for the musicians and music ministers of the parish, whose dynamic and faith-filled singing inspired Elaine in her life of faith.

Elaine's son Marc is collecting stories about Elaine to share with her family and friends. If you would like to participate, please reach him at marc.delmonico@gmail.com.

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