

# EULOGY

**GIVEN BY BARBARA LARKIN (DAUGHTER)**

**MONDAY, JUNE 5, 2000**

**IN MEMORY OF ANN BARBARA TAMASY REED (MOTHER)**

**[October 9, 1912 -- June 2, 2000]**

Good morning. We are gathered here today to pay our respects and to honor the memory of my mother, Ann Barbara Tamasy Reed, who made the transition from the physical to the spiritual on June 2, 2000.

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Before I begin, I would like everyone to close your eyes and reflect upon whatever your own concept of God means to you, while I offer an opening prayer.

*Our Father/Mother God, please radiate your light and your unconditional love to all who are gathered here today in person and in spirit. Encompass this room with your healing energy and help us to find the strength we will need to carry us through this difficult time in our grieving as we mourn the loss of our loved one, Ann Reed. I pray that you will radiate to Ann's soul the enlightenment that will help her make an easy transition through the door you have opened for her for the next stage of her soul's progression. Please give those of us who grieve for her today, the strength to encourage her to go forward to the light. Thank you for your blessings and your love... Amen.*

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One of my mother's favorite quotes from the Bible was the 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm. I would like to read it at this time.

*"The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.*

*He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.*

*He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.*

*Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me, they rod and thy staff they comfort me.*

*Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou annointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.*

*Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever."*

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Because we do not have a minister conducting this service, I had not intended to include a sermon. In fact, I originally wrote the eulogy without a sermon. However, I am not going to let you off the hook that easily, and I am going to give a brief sermon.

Sometime between yesterday and today, a topic for a sermon came to me. The function of a sermon is to tell a story using some sort of analogy to put an idea into a different perspective and give us something to think about.

The topic of my sermon today is "Funerals... Why they are a sad event and why we feel so uncomfortable when we attend them."

There are some cultures where a funeral is considered a celebration or a happy event. Obviously, this is from the perspective of the deceased and not from the perspective of the mourners. If I took a poll here today, I think I would find that more people are sad than happy. I could also safely assume that, given a choice, this would not be the preferred event for today. I am sure nobody here woke up this morning saying, "What a nice day today. I would really like to go to a funeral."

Some of us are here because we are related to the deceased. Some are here because they are a friend or acquaintance of the deceased. Some here may not have even known my mother, but are here because they are a friend of my brother Ken's or a friend of mine and may have even suffered a similar loss and wanted to come to offer their condolences and give whatever comfort they could to their friend. I know it really means a lot to my brother and me that you came and that we have such wonderful friends who care about us and are sad when we are sad.

Why are we uncomfortable at funerals? Certainly we know that physical death is a part of the life cycle. We read about people dying in the papers every day. We may be sad for awhile ("Oh, what a shame that so many people died in that car accident") but soon the incident is forgotten and we do not give it another thought. After all, death is something that happens to somebody else.

Most of society is not comfortable about the subject of death. We do not like to think about it and we do not like to talk about it. It is not the subject of choice at social functions. We do not know what words to say to our friend who is grieving. We do not want to say the wrong thing or say something that will make the grieving person feel even sadder than he or she does already. What if we said something meant to comfort them and instead they start to cry? We would feel terrible. We do not want our friends to be sad or hurting inside. We do not understand that sometimes the person who is grieving for a loved one needs to talk about the person who has passed on, and share fond memories. Sometimes your friend just needs you to be there to listen. Sometimes all your friend needs from you is a hug. Sometimes just knowing you care is enough. You can never say the wrong thing if you say it from your heart and are sincere.

Why are we uncomfortable at funerals? I believe one reason is that when we attend a funeral of a loved one, we are forced to come to terms with our own mortality. This is especially true, the older we get, and the more we seem to be attending the funerals of our peers. Because we do not totally understand the process of death, we cannot imagine what it would be like and it is human nature to have a fear of the unknown.

In our culture, we put a great deal of emphasis on youth and physical appearance. We are terrified of the aging process. We spend millions of dollars on surgeries and products that promise us we can delay the aging process. We look in the mirror and lament every new gray hair and every new wrinkle. We think of ourselves as being only what we see reflected to us in the mirror. A physical body.

But, we are more than just a physical body. There are many parts that make us the person we are that are nonphysical. Our brain is physical, but our soul, our spirit, our mind, our emotions, and our thoughts are nonphysical. Both our physical parts and our nonphysical parts combine together to form our total being. A doctor could take an x-ray of our brain and could show us what our brain looked like. A doctor could not, however, show us what our mind looked like, or even where in the brain it could be found. A doctor could not point to the x-ray of our brain and say, "See that little spot right there? That is one of your thoughts." A thought is invisible because it is nonphysical. Yet, are not our thoughts very much a part of who we are?

Those of us who are here today are experiencing a feeling of loss and sadness because we will miss the physical presence of Ann Reed. But it will ease our sadness if we can look beyond the physical body and realize that our physical lives are only one manifestation of a soul's total expression and that each one of us has a nonphysical soul, mind, and thoughts as well as a physical body.

As a car is a vehicle that gets us from one place to another (and there are many other types of vehicles that can do this), the body is the soul's vehicle while we are here on earth. A car cannot take us anywhere without a driver to operate it. Yet, the driver is not the car; and the car is not the driver. A car will wear out; but the driver does not stay with it in the junkyard. The driver simply gets a different car to drive. Ann's soul was the driver of her body. Ann's vehicle contained some parts that wore out and her vehicle could no longer run without them. However, the real Ann, the driver, the soul, the spirit, essence, higher self, the "I AM" presence; whatever your name is for that super-consciousness, did not go anywhere. She is simply driving a nonphysical vehicle now, suitable for her new surroundings, but we cannot perceive it because we are still focused in a reality based upon the limitations imposed by physical time and space.

It is my belief that our consciousness can and does exist outside this physical reality which it allows us to perceive. The soul is indestructible - the soul is eternal - it has no beginning and no end... it simply "is". The soul is pure energy, and as such, it is constantly in motion, constantly changing form, leaving a magnetic field of energy as a memory of itself through each atom and molecule it passes. It leaves a part of itself, also, with us in what is called our memories. A part of Ann will always be alive in our memories of her. We feel sad, today, as we mourn her passing, but it time, fond memories will replace our tears.

Love and blessings to you all.

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I would like to read another short quote from the Bible, from St. John, 11, Verses: 25 and 26.

*"Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life: He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die.'"*

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At this time, I would like to share a few of my reflections about my life with my mother and some of the fond memories I have of her.

What can I say about my mother? She had a strong sense of responsibility toward her family and was always concerned about our welfare and what would be in our best interest. She was an old-fashioned homemaker and stay-at-home mother, who

loved keeping the home fires burning while we were at work or at school. As children, my brother Ken and I never came home to an empty house. My mother was always there when we had a hard day at school and needed a hug, or some cookies and milk. She always had the time to listen when I told her about my day at school. When I was inflicted with those nasty childhood illnesses, and confined to bed, she would bring me orange juice when I was thirsty, chicken soup when I was hungry, and would read to me when I could not fall asleep. She always made sure I got my homework assignments from school when I was absent so I would not fall behind in my studies.

Most of her days were spent doing housework, sewing, knitting or crocheting. Many of the clothes I wore to school were made with her loving hands. Other times she would curl up with a good book or a crossword puzzle, until it was time to prepare the evening meal.

On a nice day, you could always find her outside working in her garden. My mother had a green thumb and really enjoyed working in her garden. She had a colorful garden with many varieties of beautiful colored flowers, which gave her much pleasure. She loved flowers, and was especially fond of lilacs. She also grew rhubarb and baked delicious rhubarb pies. When I was growing up, there were wild blackberry bushes in the woods behind our house and along the side of the road. My mother would accompany my brother and me and we would pick buckets of blackberries for a delightful summer dessert. To this day, blackberry pie is still my favorite dessert.

One thing my family had, which is missing today in a lot of homes, was a traditional family dinner every evening and a special family meal on Sunday afternoons, where we all sat around the table and ate our meal together as a family. My mother was a good cook and I miss those delicious pork roasts and fried chicken dinners she used to prepare. Some of my fondest childhood memories are of coming home from Sunday school or church and entering a house filled with the delicious aroma of a pot roast cooking on the stove.

I was born during a time when our country was involved in World War II, and because my father was enlisted in the US Navy as a Seabee, he was away from home, defending his country, during most of my babyhood and toddlerhood. That left my mother alone with the full responsibility of raising me. She devoted all of her time caring for me, taking me for outings in my stroller, reading to me, and teaching me my ABC's. She would turn on the radio and we would sing along with the popular songs of the day, such as my favorite, "It's Been A Long, Long Time." I would mispronounce most of the words, but I really enjoyed singing that song as I rode in my stroller on one of our daily walks to the park. Even though my father

was not there for my first couple of Christmases, we would always celebrate with a decorated Christmas tree and gifts under it from "Santa."

My mother was very strict with my brother and me. She expected good grades on our report cards, and she would not put up with bad manners when we were out in public or visiting someone in their home. My mother taught us respect for other people's property. Friends and relatives did not have to move their knickknacks to a higher shelf when we came to visit, because we were taught to "look, but do not touch." If we misbehaved, my mother would give us that special warning look, that most mothers have learned to perfect, letting us know, in no uncertain terms, that if we did not shape up immediately, we would be very uncomfortable later on, after we arrived back home. I was raised in the days when spankings to discipline a child were not considered child abuse, as they are today. "Spare the rod and spoil the child" was the catch phrase for parents in the 40's and 50's, thanks to a man named Dr. Spock, who wrote the bible of childrearing. Parents nowadays seem afraid to discipline their children and that lack of discipline is apparent in the disrespect and violence demonstrated by some of today's youth.

My mother encouraged me to take dancing lessons to give me gracefulness and also to bring me out of my shell, as I have always tended to be a loner, and was quite shy as a child. She lovingly sewed every sequin on my dance costumes and then cheered me on from the front row of the audience at my dance recitals. Actually, my mother has always been my best audience, and I will miss her being the sounding board for the poetry and short stories I love to write. She always encouraged my creativity and supported any activities I was interested in pursuing.

I will remember fondly, the hot summer nights of my youth, when we would sit on the front porch, sip our iced tea, and gaze at the stars. I will miss sitting around watching television or playing cards or monopoly with my mother. I will miss watching her doing a crossword puzzle or reading an interesting book and how she would lecture me about how I should read more books and watch less television.

I will always remember how difficult it was for her to walk away on my first day of school. I could see the tears in her eyes as she said "Goodbye." My mother was very involved with my school, attending all the PTA meetings and school functions. When I was in Sunday school, she would attend all the pageants and potluck dinners, and accompany me on mother-daughter outings. She was totally involved in her children's lives. When I was a teenager, my mother had to know whom all my friends were, where I was going, and what I was doing. I even had a curfew! Of course, as a teenager, I thought I knew more than she did, and we certainly had our share of mother-daughter disagreements. Often I resented her

watchful eye and wished she wouldn't ask so many questions about what was going on in my life. Of course, now I realize she was just being a concerned parent.

As you can see, my mother taught us old-fashioned values, was always there for us, and did her best to raise my brother and me to become responsible adults.

The largest amount of personal growth in my mother's life occurred after my father had a stroke. I think it was then that she realized how much inner strength she had, as that strength certainly was put to the test. She was 80 years old and cared for my father in their home, with little outside assistance, for several years, until it became too much for her and he went to a nursing home. She moved him entirely by herself from the bed to the wheelchair and back to the bed again. She helped him perform his rehabilitation therapy, assisted the nurses who would come in for a few hours, cooked well-balanced meals every day, changed the bedding and washed several loads of heavy laundry every day. All this she did while she was in her 80's. Until recent months, my mother never had any major health problems that sometimes afflict us as we age.

After my father passed away, my mother moved to Langdon Place in Dover. It was there, that she experienced a tremendous amount of personal growth and was able to enjoy some of the best years of her life.

My mother always put her own needs last in order to see that the needs were met of others in her family. During the past few years, with the help of some of the wonderful friends she made at Langdon Place, she was finally able to learn to relax and let go, and not to worry so much about the things she could not change or control. She learned to enjoy herself, and to live in the present instead of worrying about the future or being stuck in the past.

She made many wonderful friends at Langdon Place, whom she really loved. She especially loved the get-togethers and activities such as bingo and trivial pursuit. I noticed a big change in her personality while she was at Langdon Place, and she seemed to exhibit a much more positive outlook on life than I remember her having previously. Both my brother and I are extremely proud of her and of the tremendous personal growth she experienced in just those few short years.

Most of you knew Ann as a friend who always took the time to listen when you needed to talk to somebody, and how she would always sympathize with you and try to comfort you and cheer you up if you were feeling depressed. Up until the last couple of months, her mind was sharp and she won quite a few bingo games and knew most of the answers in trivial pursuit. She always was an avid reader and

completing crossword puzzles was her favorite hobby, and I think that contributed to her having such a sharp mind that stayed with her well into her 80's.

Mom, I will miss hearing your laughter, seeing you smile and observing the love and caring that always shone through your eyes. I will miss the comforting hugs you used to give whenever I needed a hug.

Yet, I will not be sad, for I know that, although the body your spirit inhabited while you were here on earth grew old and weary and is laid to rest, your spirit lives eternal and will never die. You will always be as near to me as a thought of you away; for to live in hearts we leave behind, is not to die.

Surrounded by love, and reunited with my father and your other loved ones who have gone before you on this journey, may you go in peace toward the light as your soul makes the transition from this world of time and space restrictions, to a world of eternal freedom, and love, and light, and peace.

I love you.

I would like to close with a beautiful poem that expresses my philosophy. I do not know who wrote the poem, but it has always been one of my favorite poems, and has always brought me great comfort whenever I have had to say goodbye to a loved one. I would like to share it with you and I hope that you will also find some comfort in the poem I am about to read.







## I DID NOT DIE

*Do not stand at my grave and weep  
I am not there  
I do not sleep  
I am a thousand winds that blow  
I am the diamond glint on snow  
I am the sunlight on ripened grain  
I am the gentle autumn rain  
When you awake in the morning hush  
I am the swift, uplifting rush  
Of quiet birds in circling flight  
I am the soft starlight at night  
Do not stand at my grave and cry  
I am not there  
I did not die*

*...Author Unknown*