

A Eulogy Written In Honor of Rita Barney

Those we love are with the Lord and the Lord has promised to be with us.

If they are with Him, and He is with us, they cannot be far away. (Peter Marshall)

I didn't meet Rita Barney until Sunday night. Given that she was in ICU, unable to speak and barely conscious you would think that it would be impossible to understand what kind of woman she was. But you would be wrong because you – family and friends – are a clear reflection of the woman that Rita Barney is.

Each and every one of you, whether you are family or friend, helped me know Rita, giving me a vivid glimpse of how precious she is to all of you. I heard the **love** in Kenny's voice when he took me to her bedside and said, "This is my mom." I saw it in the deep **concern** of the people that lined the hospital hallways and occupied the chairs in the waiting areas. I felt the **caring** that filled her ICU room as we all held hands and prayed. I witnessed the **comfort** of Rita's loved ones who committed to hold her hand throughout the long night. I felt it in the **gracious appreciation** of the many, many people who thanked me for my heartfelt prayer at her bedside. I saw the **strength** of family in the eyes of those who desperately didn't want her to leave them so soon. Rita's legacy of **love, concern, caring, comfort, gracious appreciation and strength** was evident in the family and friends who surrounded her. You reflect that and help me appreciate the woman that Rita Barney is.

I also know that Rita is a **woman of faith**. How? Well, great effort was made to get a minister to her bedside on Sunday. Through the efforts of friends and family Rita was visited by not one, not two, but three faith based strangers. Despite being Janine's cousin, I was one of those strangers. It was an honor and a privilege to be there on Sunday and it is an honor and a privilege to be here with you today. I don't believe for one minute that it is a random occurrence that I am standing here before you today.

Our entire life is part of our personal and unique faith journey. Did you know that "Faith" means to believe in something that can't be proven? What we each believe is a

personal choice that we decide to make deep in our hearts. I can't tell you very much about Rita's faith journey, but I can tell you what I believe with every fiber of my being.

Death is a terrifying thing for many of us. We don't understand it and cannot control it. It makes us ask questions that nothing but faith can answer. What happens next? Will I see Rita again? Is heaven real? What's the truth and what's not? Where do I go from here? How do make sure I'm going to get to heaven? Jesus got asked those kind of questions all the time; even his own disciples worried about it. Jesus said, "*Don't let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God and trust also in me. There is more than enough room in my Father's home in heaven. If this weren't so, I wouldn't have told you.*" (John 14:2) I have chosen to trust in Jesus and believe that He is God's son. In making that simple choice, I step out on a faith journey that promises me more than I could hope for or imagine.

I believe that there is a place called Heaven. It's a place where the Bible tells us God *will wipe every tear from our eyes, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. All these things will be gone forever.* (Revelations 21:4)

I believe that Jesus is *the way* to get there, that His words are *truth* and that only through Him will I truly *live* (John 14:6)

I believe that God wants a relationship with all of us but He wants us to come to Him of our own free will. He promises love, guidance, and protection. "*Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Try it my way. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls.*" (Matthew 11:28-29)

I believe God doesn't keep score and this life we live is not a pass or fail test. **He wants us** and there is nothing we have done in our past that will ever change that. *Though we are overwhelmed by our sins, He forgives them all.* (Psalm 65:3)

Just because Rita's time here with us has ended doesn't mean that her faith journey is over. We are promised in our next life joy, health, and purpose. The most wonderful times of Rita's life here with us were just tiny, tiny glimpses of what is in store for her in heaven: the joy of being with her beloved husband, the pride of watching her children and

grandchildren grow and flourish, the comfort and camaraderie of time well spent with friends and family...

Love and faith: the very essence of what I learned about Rita Barney in the brief few minutes I spent with her by her hospital bed are never influenced by sickness or death. Rita Barney's life, which is reflected in the faces of the people I see before me, is undeniable proof of that. I am privileged to have met Rita. You are blessed to be her family and friends.

Prayer: Dear Lord, thank You for the life of Rita Barney. Thank you for her family and friends who are committed to carrying forward her legacy of love and faith. Please comfort them in their times of grief as they miss their mother, their sister, their grandmother, their aunt, and their friend. Let them look toward the future with a growing faith rooted in the wonderful hope Your love and promises assure us. Let them feel Your presence in their most desperate times and let that presence give them strength. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Now may our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father, who loved us and by His grace gave us eternal comfort and a wonderful hope, comfort you and strengthen you in every good thing you do and say. 2 Thessalonians 2:16

Rita's Legacy:

- 42 years of marriage to James
- Four sons: Jimmy, Kenny, Richard & David
- One daughter: Lisa
- 13 Grandchildren: Kyle, Kirsten, Brianne, Michaela, Melissa, Kenny (KJ), Rachael, Jessica, Meagan, Amanda, Zack, Gavin, and Deegan.

Quotes About Rita From Her Family and Friends:

She loved her husband James very much and spoke of him and told me how much she missed him almost every day.

She always told people they were beautiful.

She was a good mom.

She was always there for us and making us laugh.

She had a heart of gold and was always sweet and kind to everyone.

She had a way of making you feel good about yourself.

Every day she would tell me how proud she was of me.

She saw people for their beauty never seeing their flaws.

She was a loving grandma. She read books, played and shared everything she had with the kids. She'd sneak them junk food.

She loved animals, especially cats. She fed all the strays outside and they never went hungry.

She was a simple woman who didn't have much and she never asked for anything.

Being with her kids made her happy and she was proud of us all.

Every year for Halloween she was either a kitty cat or a cowgirl.

She was helpful.

She didn't have a mean bone in her body.

She only had nice things to say about everybody.

She was my biggest fan.

She was one of the nicest people I have ever had the pleasure to know and be loved by.

She was a quirky, lovely lady.

She loved

- Boston Cream donuts,
- Chocolate milk,
- Candy,
- Elvis,
- Bubblewrap,
- Game shows,