

Memorial Service & Committal in Celebration of the Life of

MARIA THERESA SANDERS

1962— 2021



St. Dunstan's Episcopal Church

May 21, 2022

11:30 am

*Give rest, O Christ, to your servant with your saints,
where sorrow and pain are no more,
neither sighing, but life everlasting.*

THE GATHERING OF GOD'S PEOPLE

Scripture Anthem

Priest I am Resurrection and I am Life, says the Lord.
Whoever has faith in me shall have life, even though he die.
And everyone who has life, and has committed himself to me in faith,
shall not die for ever.

As for me, I know that my Redeemer lives
and that at the last he will stand upon the earth.
After my awaking, he will raise me up; and in my body I shall see God.
I myself shall see, and my eyes behold him who is my friend and not a stranger.

For none of us has life in ourselves,
and none becomes their own master when they die.
For if we have life, we are alive in the Lord, and if we die, we die in the Lord.
So, then, whether we live or die, we are the Lord's possession.

Happy from now on are those who die in the Lord!
So it is, says the Spirit, for they rest from their labors.

The Collect

Priest The Lord be with you.

People And also with you.

Priest Let us pray.

Welcoming God: You call your Church to love and serve all people and to honor the image of you, our Creator, in them: In our several faiths, we gather to give thanks for the life of Maria, whose departure we grieve, whose good works and heritage we remember, whose memories are woven into our hearts. Holding the future in hope, and the past in compassion and gratitude, we join our various prayers with those of God's people of every time and place, through Jesus Christ and your Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

First Reading:

Prayer of Saint Francis of Assisi

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.
Where there is hatred let me sow love;
Where there is injury, pardon;
Where there is doubt, faith;
Where there is despair, hope;
Where there is darkness, light;
Where there is sadness, joy.

O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek
To be consoled as to console;
To be understood as to understand;
To be loved as to love.
For it is in giving that we receive;
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned;
And it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

Second Reading:

Starlings in Winter

Chunky and noisy,
but with stars in their black feathers,
they spring from the telephone wire
and instantly
they are acrobats
in the freezing wind.
And now, in the theater of air,
they swing over buildings,
dipping and rising;
they float like one stippled star
that opens,
becomes for a moment fragmented,
then closes again;
and you watch
and you try
but you simply can't imagine

how they do it
with no articulated instruction, no pause,
only the silent confirmation
that they are this notable thing,
this wheel of many parts, that can rise and spin
over and over again,
full of gorgeous life.

Ah, world, what lessons you prepare for us,
even in the leafless winter,
even in the ashy city.

I am thinking now
of grief, and of getting past it;

I feel my boots
trying to leave the ground,
I feel my heart
pumping hard. I want

to think again of dangerous and noble things.

I want to be light and frolicsome.

I want to be improbable beautiful and afraid of nothing,
as though I had wings.

—Mary Oliver

Third Reading:

Psalm 8 *Domine, Dominus noster*

O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!

You have set your glory in the heavens. Through the praise of children and infants you have established a stronghold against your enemies, to silence the foe and the avenger. When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, what is mankind that you are mindful of them, human beings that you care for them? You have made them a little lower than the angels and crowned them with glory and honor.

You made them rulers over the works of your hands; you put everything under their feet: all flocks and herds, and the animals of the wild, the birds in the sky, and the fish in the sea, all that swim the paths of the seas. Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!

Reader The Word of the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God.**

Reflections

The Prayers

Leader God, your will for us is abundant life;
receive Maria now into the fullness of life in your presence.

People Hear our prayer

Leader You know the thoughts of our hearts and our search for faith;
shed the brightness of your light upon Maria, who also sought understanding.

People Hear our prayer

Leader You are greater than all our ideas and images of you;
draw Maria into the mystery of your being.

People Hear our prayer

Leader We know you as perfect Mercy and Love;
welcome Maria into the grace of that love and mercy.

People Hear our prayer

Leader We praise you as the giver of life;
gather all who mourn into the hope of renewed life.

People Hear our prayer

Leader The church commends all who die to the care of Christ, the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit; and so we commend Maria to you,
giving thanks for the gift of her life.

People Hear our prayer

Priest **M**ay the Holy One, to whom all the desires of our hearts are known
before we ask, hear our prayers for Maria, and for all who mourn,
and grant us newness of life, and peace. **Amen.**

The Commendation

Priest Let us commend Maria to the mercy of her Creator,

Silence may be kept

God, our Creator and Redeemer; by your power Christ conquered death and entered into glory. Confident of his victory and claiming his promises, we entrust Maria to your mercy in the name of Jesus, who died and is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, now and forever. **Amen.**

Priest Merciful Savior, we commend Maria to you.

Receive her as a sheep of your own fold, a lamb of your own flock, a sinner of your own redeeming. Accept her into your merciful arms, into everlasting peace, and into the company of saints. **Amen.**

The Committal

Priest God of power and mercy,

you hold the universe in your hands
and all that breathes has life from you.

We commend to you, Maria, whose faith is known to you
and whose heart's prayers you have heard in life.

We give honor to her body, which was marvelously made,
to all the relationships that held her, and to those who mourn her.
We trust that all whom you have created will never be lost to you,

God whose names are many,
whose mystery is vast, and whose love endures forever,
keep Maria, who we now lay to rest, in the company of your saints,
and at the last, raise her up to share with all the faithful
the endless joy and peace that comes from you and you alone. **Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer

Priest May God be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Priest Let us pray

People **O**ur Father who art in Heaven,

Hallowed by thy name.

Thy kingdom come, **T**hy will be done,

On earth as it is in heaven.

Gives us today our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation,

But deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

The Dismissal

Priest **G**o forth in the name of the Holy One, the giver of Life.

People **T**hanks be to God.

St. Dunstan's Episcopal Church

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