



My Granny and Birdie

Respect Life Month is not only about the vulnerable unborn, but also the elderly and infirm. While you follow and pray for the **40 Days for Life** movement, please pray for, and assist or visit our elders, who deserve to be treated with dignity and integrity as they are no longer able to care for themselves.

The **best column I've read** reminding us to care and visit the elderly and infirm came from Deacon Tom Fox, now a podcaster with **Catholic Vitamins**, writing as a guest columnist for **Catholic Mom**. He reminds us,

"visiting the sick, the elderly, the confined – and showing them the dignity inherent in each human being – that's a part of respect for life... whether the recipient knows or understands or not."

What an important statement for each of us involved and praying during this Respect Life Month. How do we show Respect for Life to the elderly and infirm in our lives? Do we treat them with the dignity they deserve even if they do not remember or understand our actions?

This topic is very personal for Shelly and I because we have a grandmother who suffers from Dementia. It has been extremely difficult for our family to watch this once vibrant woman slip away from us while still in good physical health. Granny was moved last year to "The Village", which is the name for the Dementia Care Unit at her facility. She has made a marked decline these last few years, with it seeming to speed up over the last several months.

It is not unusual to arrive for a visit and find her sitting on the couch waiting for her Daddy to take her home, or to find her without much emotion or things to talk about. While it is difficult to see her living in the past, I think the days where she is very quiet are more difficult to experience. The dementia has robbed her of that spark that made her uniquely her.

Granny always had such a zest for life, so happy, always singing or humming a song - well, when she wasn't talking about the Astros or some other sports team. It is still amazing to me how much she knew about sports - specific stats about so many players and teams. And not just the Astros. She loved the Oilers, the New Orleans Saints and of course my own Houston Cougars.

This last Sunday, I was surprised to find her in a pleasant, dare I say, happy mood when my youngest daughter and I visited with her. She laughed as my Birdie crawled all over her trying to find the best place to give her lots of kisses and hugs. If she didn't know who we were, she didn't show it for a moment. It amazes me how she and the other men and women in her unit react to my children. Their faces brighten with an amused look the moment they see us come down the hallway. The days Granny is unable to hold a conversation, I simply let the kids dance around in front of her.

Deacon Tom inspired me to think about the benefits Granny receives from each person who visits her, whether she remembers them or not. She, as do the other elderly men and women in her unit, deserve being treated with dignity no matter if they remember us, a visit or their treatment. **Respect Life Month** is a great time to make a commitment to remembering and supporting our elderly and infirm with the dignity and respect they so richly deserve.

Thursday, October 30th—6:00 PM



What is C.A.F.E?

Catholic Adult Formation Evening is an evening of food, fellowship and learning.

What is the schedule?

- 6:00 pm—6:45 pm—Enjoy food (**please bring** a side dish, appetizer or dessert to share, fried chicken will be provided)
- 6:45 pm—Prayer and Introduction to the speaker/topic
- 6:50 pm—Speaker/Topic
- 7:30 pm—Break
- 7:40 pm—Discussion/Questions Time
- 8:15 pm—Closing Prayer

When is the next C.A.F.E?

Thursday, October 30, 2014

What is the topic?

“Catholic Funeral Planning” - A final act of love for those we leave behind.

What do I need to do to attend?

Please RSVP by Wednesday, October 29th (so we can have enough fried chicken) by calling the Faith Formation & Youth Ministry Office—515-232-3514 & bring a side dish, appetizer or dessert to share.

Is there anything I can do to help?

Yes, help will be needed with set up beginning at 5:30pm and clean up after 8:15.