

Kathy Blanchard Funeral

Homily

March 26, 2021

Paula Cooney, IHM

How good it is to be here together! Although there are very few of us physically present in this sacred space, we know that we are deeply connected with all who are joining us from your rooms here in the Motherhouse or your homes near and far.

We have come because we love – and because we love, we grieve.

As we gather this morning, I believe that we are being invited to enter into two stories –

The first – the reason this **particular group of people** are gathered – is the story that is Kathy – her journey – her presence in each of our lives.

The second – is the reason we gather in this **particular place** – a chapel – a place where the Catholic Christian community comes together at times like this to connect our story with THE Story – that of God revealed to us in a particular way through the Scriptures.

The gathering last evening at Marygrove, the stories shared there and the Remembering Mary Agnes shared with us this morning gave us a glimpse of Kathy's rich and blessed life ... one that has been woven in small and larger ways into our stories.

But how was Kathy's life woven into **God's Story**?

The Scriptures that were chosen for our celebration today I believe speak to us of how Kathy experienced God in her life ... a story of the deep and abiding love of God promised to her and to each of us ... the place, as the cover of our program shows us so clearly – where she was rooted.

In our first reading, the prophet Isaiah invites his listeners and us to
HEAR the word of God.

I wondered what Kathy would want us to hear? I think it might be this:

Fear not ... I have called you by name ... you are mine ...
you are precious in my eyes and glorious and ... **I love you.**

What an incredible mantra! What if each of us – in these days as we grieve and remember – in these days of a pandemic that has kept us a part – of challenges all around – what if we allowed **these** words to penetrate our minds and hearts.

Fear not ... I have called you by name ... you are mine ...
you are precious in my eyes and glorious and ... I love you.

What if these were the words that we had taped to our mirror and read each morning as we brushed our teeth and combed our hair – our morning offering ...

That no matter what seas – or rivers – or fire or flame
or illness – or loss of a job – or broken relationship or death itself ... we would not let fear
overwhelm us ... because we knew that
we have been called by name...that we are precious to God and
are held in that love ... **no matter what.**

Jesus heard and believed and lived this truth as well. He tells us in our Gospel today:

As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you. **Live in my love.**

Just like Kathy – just like every one of us – Jesus grew to understand how much he was loved
– and chose to live that love to the fullest. And he turned to Kathy and he turns to us and calls
us friends and asks us to do the same.

To be for one another – to freely and generously share the gifts that we have been given, the
gift of who we are – a precious and loved child of God.

That is Kathy's story – the one we remember today – the one we will continue to
re-member – the one forever woven with our stories.

And this is God's story lived out in Jesus

Fear not ... I have called you by name ... you are mine...
you are precious in my eyes and glorious and ... I love you.

I think that might be what Kathy wants us to hear – and to live.