

in a
WordTM

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**In heaven a noble work was done
When God gave us a Mother.**



I DO NOT REMEMBER MY MOTHER.....

by Cathy Green Miner

Happy Mother's Day to all of you beautiful mothers, grandmothers, aunts, cousins and teachers! You are truly a blessing to your children, other people's children and to especially those children who are motherless.

I was that kid. I do not remember my mother. I have no pictures of my mother holding me as an infant or with my siblings at Christmas time. I have no memory of her face, her gentle touch or the smell of her favorite perfume. She is as elusive to me as Christ Himself. I know she existed, never seen her, but my soul knows her and my faith tells me she is real.

I am from a Creole family from New Orleans whose culture is steeped in Catholicism, music, food and close family ties. My parents had nine children - six boys and three girls. I am Child Number Eight and the Baby Sister. Everything I know about my mother comes from my oldest brothers, my oldest sister and extended family members. The youngest four children have no recollection of her.

My father didn't speak too much about our mother but I've come to realize that he silently grieved her unexpected passing as he managed work and raising his children during the turbulent Civil Rights movement.

I remember my dad. I miss his kisses, his unshaved chin brushed against my face, the giggles and screams that followed, dancing on his feet, watching the Brat Pack with him, playfully fighting my sisters to take his boots off after a long day in the sun and his Forrest Gump ping pong skills. I miss his Friday night happy hours and sipping the rest of his vodka shots with my favorite cousin. I miss watching him dance at the house parties the adults attended on weekends. I don't miss the dimes he used to give me when I swept the floor because he still leaves dimes

for me to this day. My dad left a legacy of love, truth, generosity, work ethics, fun and family to us.

My older siblings' memories of my mother are often shared when we're visiting each other or celebrating our children's accomplishments. Listening to their stories of my mom is like listening to the Gospel According to The Green Children and believing, without having any existential experience with her, everything they said. Memories from Delachaise Street to Debore Drive in the famous Pontchartrain Park neighborhood to Hope Street in the Seventh Ward and all the way to Wilson Avenue where my dad settled us after her death, their stories kept me intrigued and stirred my imagination of the kind of woman and mother I wanted to become.

They said she was beautiful, calm and prayerful. They said she would wake them up at 3am and fix them peanut butter and jelly sandwiches. They said she would warn them about jumping from the roof of the house like superheroes. They did it anyway, capes and all. They said she yelled at them for burying Brother Number Four who subsequently acquired his own superhero gift of disappearing in a blink of an eye. They called him Casper because after that unceremonious funeral, Brother Number Four knew he was outnumbered by Brothers One, Two and Three.

They said she taught them how to sew and to change diapers. They said she was a good cook and even cooked on Sundays when even our parish priest came by for a meal. They said she was her family's leader. They said she stood up for her own mother during one of her father's drunken rages. They said she hit him with a broom. I like that story. They said she was responsible and compassionate. They said she was a woman of faith. All in all, they described a Proverbs 31 woman. And that's bingo for me.

.....But Earth Angels took her place

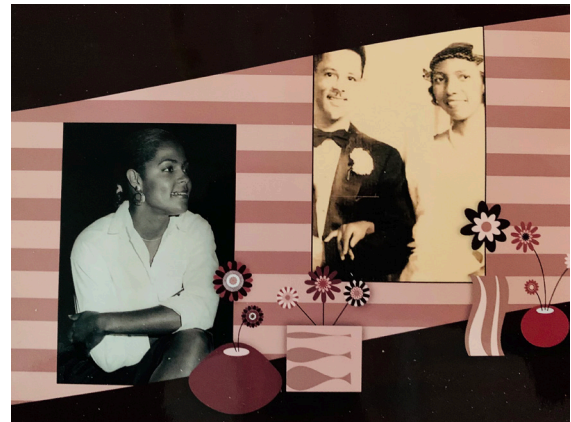
Like the P. D. Eastman book, *Are You My Mother?*, I had this desire to find my mother in every woman I met. I had aunts who were good to me and aunts who were not - the same for older cousins. I had neighbors who were like mothers to me and teachers as well. I began to get really good at discerning character in these women the older I got.

I am so grateful to my aunt, Big Nanny, who helped my dad raise us and to my aunts who pitched in to supply our needs. I am grateful to my friends' mothers who treated me with kindness and love. The women in our neighborhood knew my mom and so many of them looked out for us. The Sisters of the Holy Family were instrumental in educating us at St. Paul the Apostle and St. Mary's Academy and they showed us love without making a fuss. Many of the Sisters knew my mom and knew the family. They were Jesus to me.

I am grateful to women like Sr. Joan Marie, Sr. Joann, Sr. Mary Demetria, Theresa Favors, Sr. Thea Bowman, Sr. Francesca, Sr. Jamie Phelps, Sr. Eva Regina, Sr. Richard Francis and Sr. Leona – all powerful and inspiring Black women who showed me the love of a mother.

My sisters, Monica and Melanie, my sister-in-law, Debbie, have been my rocks. They have shown by example how to love and work and laugh and comfort and feed and love again. We three are so blessed to have strong women, our Earth Angels, surrounding us every day. It was surely my mother's prayers and God's Grace that have sustained us from the very beginning.

So Happy Mother's Day to each of you and special blessings to the Earth Angels out there holding it down for motherless children.



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The only photo Cathy has of her mother is a wedding day photo as seen at top right of collage.

There is but one and only one,
Whose love will fail you never.

One who lives from sun to sun,
With constant fond endeavor.

There is but one and only one
On earth there is no other.

In heaven a noble work was done
When God gave us a Mother.

-

- Author Unknown

Cathy Green-Miner is a licensed professional counselor and owner of Talk Therapy LLC, a private practice dedicated to changing the stigma of mental health in the African American community. She is the recipient of the Humane and Caring Award and the Best of Show Award by the Louisiana Counseling Association. Mrs. Green-Miner is also the recipient of the University of New Orleans Best Internship Award for training practicum and internship students at St. Mary's Academy in New Orleans. Cathy was videographer for Media Production Center and served on the editorial staff of In a Word for over twenty years.

in a word or two

PLEASE NOTE



Patricia and Basil Eze, left, the parents of the quintuplets baptized at St. Matthias the Apostle Catholic Church in Lanham, Md., are joined by their babies and godparents April 25, 2021. (CNS photo/Andrew Biraj, Catholic Standard)

Quintuplets' parents rely on Catholic faith in daily challenges

By Mark Zimmermann, Catholic News Service

LANHAM, Md. (CNS) -- When Patricia Eze jokes, "I have a full house," she is not talking about a poker hand. On June 25, 2020, she delivered quintuplets at Holy Cross Hospital in Silver Spring, Maryland. Those five babies -- Chimdi Louisa, Chimezie Lauren, Chinanu Lisa, Sopulu Basil (the only boy) and Chisom Leslie -- are believed to be the first set of quintuplets born in the hospital's 58-year history, according to Holy Cross Health.

Patricia and her husband Basil Eze, both originally from Nigeria, are also the parents of a 5-year-old daughter, Chinna. Their family marked a special milestone April 25 when the quintuplets were baptized at St. Matthias the Apostle Catholic Church in Lanham, exactly 10 months from the day they were born.

Father Canice Enyiaka, also from Nigeria, baptized the babies as they were held by five godmothers, most of whom wore head-dresses and colorful traditional African dresses.

"Today it is my pleasure to present to you the newest members of this Catholic community, the quintuplets," said the priest, who repeated their names, as the congregation clapped and cheered.

About 15 minutes before the Mass, Basil Eze pushed the babies down the church's main aisle in a stroller for six, with big sister Chinna sitting in a back seat. In accord with safety protocols for Masses during the COVID-19 pandemic, members of the congregation wore face masks and sat at social distances.

"Today it's a very special day. I'm overjoyed," Patricia Eze said after the Mass. "I'm just so happy. I didn't expect this large a number of people to celebrate with us." And noting that the babies didn't cry at all as they were being baptized, she added, "The kids are happy, too!"

To: NBCC Constituents
From: Most Rev. Roy E. Campbell, Jr.
Subject: Congress 13 Update

After a recent meeting with the U.S. Black Bishops, **it has been decided that the National Black Catholic Congress 13, originally scheduled for 2022, should be postponed to 2023.**

This decision was made to ensure that the event could be held in person, as the safety of our constituents – especially in light of the necessity for travel and accommodations – is of the highest concern.

I send all the best to you, and I include prayers that God blesses you abundantly.

Most Rev. Roy E. Campbell, Jr.
President



Divine Word Missionaries is an international missionary community of over 7,000 brothers and priests. In 1905 the SVDs began working among African Americans in the Southern United States. Today, Divine Word Missionaries work in over 35 parishes in Louisiana, Mississippi, Texas, Florida and Arkansas.

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