

May 23, 2020

My husband's grandmother, Marge, turned 90 this January. She had lived a long and fulfilling life and was ready to 'go' at any time. She knew her kids and grandkids were all doing well and she seemed to be at peace with life and death. She had moved into a senior living facility in the fall of 2019, until that point she had been living on her own for the last ten years after losing her husband. She was fiercely independent but recognized that it was maybe time to move. That move proved to be rather detrimental when COVID-19 went roaring into the United States. She and my husband's family are located in South Dakota. South Dakota was exceptionally fortunate to see a delay in the arrival of COVID-19. For the most part her life continued as normal within the senior living center. However, as nearby states began to impose restrictions the senior living center began to restrict visitors. Her isolation began mid-March after her hairdresser had tested positive for COVID-19 just 4 days after doing her hair. It is fairly well known that the older population does not do well with full isolation. So, her daughters made the decision to move her out of the facility in April. The events that occurred after that were a bit of a domino effect. She fell and injured herself and shortly after had a heart attack. It was a matter of time before she passed.

Marge had spent much of her life giving back to her faith community. She was often found helping serve lunch to funeral attendees at her church. She made sure everyone felt welcome, loved, and fed. Since Marge died during the middle of the pandemic her funeral was very small and there was no lunch served after the service. COVID-19 created this irony that engulfed the end of Marge's life, while Marge worked hard to give to those in need, especially after a funeral. Marge's funeral was full of her immediate family who were all socially distanced though there weren't many others in attendance. There was no lunch served afterwards and the priest did not join the family for a meal. We were fortunate to have a funeral service for her but it was certainly not the service and celebration she deserved.