

# EULOGY FOR ED CISKOWSKI

*by Terri Wilson Williams*

All My Beloved Friends,

My Step-Dad, Edmund L. Ciskowski, passed from this earth into eternal life on September 26, 2013, 7:23pm after a long illness.

Thank you all so much for your prayers through Dad's great suffering. Even though things were good from Dad leaving the hospital on September 11, 2013, no cancer in the bones, from the prostate cancer he dealt with since 1991 off and on--I still praise God for that miracle and how good God has been to Dad throughout Dad's life.

I thank God, since he became my step-father in 1963--when he married my mother, I was 11 yrs. old. He has stood steadfast like a rock, never wishy-washy in any way--he lived Christ's moral truth which he learned through his Roman Catholic Faith since childhood. When my mother was diagnosed with liver cancer in 1995--she was given 6 months to live--he took great good care of her at home till her death on February 14, 1996 but she had to go to the nursing care facility for the last 3 days of her life, because Dad was not physically able to give her care due to the type medicine she needed.

My mother told him before she was too far advanced in her cancer, to take care of me--even though I lived in Kansas City, Missouri at the time--he wondered how he could bring this about--he called his youngest brother, Marvin in Houston, Texas, and asked for suggestions--Marvin told him to buy me a car--I worked 24 miles from Kansas City, MO downtown one way from Grain Valley, Missouri--so about 50 miles each day on I-70--this was in 1996--so he bought me a new car every two years, and always traded them in--so he did this from 1996 through 2007--and he never asked for a penny for me to pay him back--so I never had a car payment for all those years.

After mom passed, I'd drive to Joplin to visit once a month and talk to him on the phone every weekend. His name Edmund means "Protector" and he certainly was true to the meaning of his name when he became my step-Dad. He and mom weren't able to have children together, so they just had to deal with me, and boy, I was a hand-full. My step-Dad was a man of action and few words. He "lived out his Faith and mom told me early on he was the type of man who would "ive his shirt off his back to help anyone.

Since March 2009, I moved from Kansas City, MO after retiring from AT&T for 30 yrs., and Dad invited to come to Joplin to live with him rent free (and at the same time I moved down here the cancer showed up again in his body from the prostate cell that had broken loose before prostate removal surgery in 1991. My mother, Vivian Ciskowski, had passed in 1996. I couldn't find a job after retiring in Kansas City with AT&T for 30 years. He had taken at least 39 radiation treatments since 1991 whenever his PSA level would always go back up — he also was receiving chemo shots off and on since the last radiation treatment in 2010 and last chemo shot was in 2012 — any more radiation treatments would literally kill him per the Oncologist at St. John's in 2010.

Then in 2010 the cancer cells showed in his bones.

Dad loved St. John's Catholic Hospital here in Joplin because he had great doctors and nurses and received such great loving care from all involved (Now called Mercy Medical Center—since the tornado had destroyed the previous St. John's Hospital). Dad loved St.

John's Catholic Hospital and the treatment he always received from the staff of nurses and doctors there through all the years--this is the hospital which was destroyed in the tornado in 2011, here in Joplin. He had great specialists there connected with St. John's, now called St. John's Mercy Medical Center.

Dad of course, never re-married. We became good friends since Mom's passing.

Dad could always read people really well, too--he knew for the longest, that I was very gullible since I was a kid--Mom and Dad always were very protective of me.

After this last trip to Mercy Hospital, he got out and no longer had the will within himself to do therapy and get better.

He was so ready to leave this old world--he'd pretty much given up fighting--he did not want to ever go back to the hospital or any nursing facility--he wanted to die at home and I thank God that the Lord answered that prayer for him.

I'm just so glad Dad is over his suffering--a good lady friend of mine from church down here talked with Dad today as I was gone 1 1/2 hrs. to a doctor appointment to Carthage, Missouri--he was awake that morning and still hanging on to life-- and when I was gone, he asked for some confirmation from my friend who was at the house staying with him till I returned: "Is Terri going to be all right", "Is it okay to God if I want to go leave here (earth), "Does Terri really enjoy taking care of me." She said "yes" to all three questions.

He needed a Catholic source other than just myself, to confirm everything; then she left around 3:30pm; he did not share anything with me on their conversation but she shared his questions to me outside the door as she was leaving--and she said as her eyes filled with tears, he's a very sweet man--deep inside, I knew he really was--he could be tough and be consistent--never wishy washy--he was a Korean War veteran--and he finally completed his Confirmation of his Catholic Faith, to be a Soldier for Christ and endure till the end as Jesus said--just as he was taught as a child in Catholic Catechism--his Christian foundation stayed with him through his life.

I am so thankful I found out my real mission and purpose at this time of my life was to have the privilege of caring for my Dad. This has been a great Grace from the Holy Spirit to be able to live with him and to finally, at my age, "to grow up" by taking responsibility for my Dad and not just "myself" for once in my life.

I recommend everyone to take into your home and care for an elderly parent, no matter the trials and tribulations that may come--we cannot do this all on our own strength--because Christ alone will give us His own strength—"I can do ALL things through Christ who strengthens me,"—St. Paul in the New Testament declares. God will bestow great Graces on us, even though our parents may be cranky, hard to deal with at times—God's purpose is to make us all Saints through His purifying fire of love of others and suffering—as Our Lord Jesus experienced by enduring until the end.

God Bless you all. Pax et Bonum (Peace and Blessings)

Terri OFS