

# *The Spirit of Char*

## I. Opening:

- Thank you to all who came today --- God Bless You for Honoring Mom by being here. She was one great lady who will be deeply missed.
- And special thanks also to Mom's dear twin brother Charles and his wife Alta. They flew in like angels from heaven on new years day for our final visit with Mom.
- I would like to start with a word about Mom's new home from our holy scriptures.

## II. Heaven:

- The Bible tells us that heaven will be so great and glorious that our minds cannot comprehend the blessings and riches to come. In heaven our sin and sickness will be removed and we will experience love, peace and joy the way they were meant to be, without trouble or grieving. CS Lewis was quoted as saying that "Joy is the business of heaven."
- In Revelation Chapter 21, verses 1-4 – the Apostle John gives a glorious picture of heaven, the New Jerusalem, as follows:
- "Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and earth passed away, and there was no longer any sea. I saw the Holy City, the New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the Throne saying, "Now the dwelling of God is with men, and He will live with them. They will be his people, and God Himself will be with them and be their God. He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away. He who was seated on the Throne said, "I am making everything new!"

## III. I MISS MOM

- I miss Mom! I had no idea of the void I would feel once she left. NO IDEA!! It seemed the time was right to end her suffering with Emphysema. She was just plain running out of oxygen. Our family held a 24 hour fast and prayer just two days before she died. We prayed that the Holy Spirit would indwell in Mom the truth of scripture, that Jesus came to earth to die for us, so that we might live a perfect life in eternity through faith in him alone. We prayed that God's will be done with Mom's life and that she might be set free from the pain and suffering she was enduring. My cousin Steve warned me that both his Mom and Dad had passed within 24 hours of this prayer vigil in the past. So I thought, well, God's will be done.
- I am here in part to testify to you that we have a loving and merciful and faithful God who took Mom home just over 48 hours later after a wonderful visit by her family over the New Years holiday. We were able to take pictures & videos with Mom, share laughs, blow new years horns, look at old pictures, eat pizza and drink her favorite Diet A&W Root Beer while USC destroyed Michigan in the Rose Bowl. We even talked about who should get her oriental furnishings. Mom seemed very happy to have us all there --- and the night after our leaving she was greeted in her sleep by our Heavenly Father to bring her home. And I believe that his first words to her were from our Holy Bible in the gospel of Matthew, Chapter 25, verse 23:

*"Well done, good and faithful servant."*

## IV. Mom's Life:

- When I look back at Mom's life I am just amazed at what she accomplished. There are stories after stories of Mom overcoming the odds, from her early

## *The Spirit of Char*

youth all the way to her final years with Emphysema. She always kept her perk and cheer in spite of tremendous challenges at times.

- I have soooooo many wonderful memories of Mom. So many things I would like to say. She was truly the perfect Mom ~~~~ always so accepting and supportive of who I was and what I wanted to be in life. My friends all loved her. She allowed me to be exactly who I wanted to be in life. I can hardly remember her ever criticizing me or telling me not to do something. Well, maybe a time or two... But what a great gift that was ~~~ a gift I hope I can pass at least part of on to my children.
- Mom left quite a legacy, no doubt about that. One thing I have to mention was her absolute joy with the color RED. Mom loved Red like I have never known anyone to love a color. She made Santa Claus look like he was dressed in black and white. Red is now my favorite color! Now go figure that?! But Mom had red everywhere ~~~~ red carpet, red shoes (remember those red clogs?), red eye glasses, red apples on her Christmas tree (100 of them to be exact!), red pants, red toe nails, red blouses, red sweaters, Red socks, red robes, red buttons, red table mats, red candles, red dish cloths, red everything! I think the incense even had red smoke!!! Did anyone ever see her not wearing RED??? one of her final obstacles with Emphysema was a broken wrist from a fall in she had in her kitchen. Well, I had seen the cast right after it happened, and it was white. But when we came down over new years I thought the cast was off, because she had a red sweater on, and would'nt you know that cast was a bright fire engine red!!!
- One could not help but admire Mom's grit and determination to be independent. It was very important to her! I can never remember her borrowing money from anyone. She was always so concerned about paying her own way. There were several years where she worked two jobs ~~~ cooking breakfast at Hoag Hospital in the early morning, and then doing housekeeping for people in the afternoon for extra money. And she continued to write checks to pay her bills right up to the very day she died.
- There are so many more stories and memories to tell. But rather than go through more now, I want to read you a poem I wrote Mom 10 years ago while at her bedside for 7 days while she was in a comma state on a respirator from a pulmonary attack and stroke. Her Doctors had given her very little chance of surviving, and even after our Lord miraculously answered our prayers and woke her up on the 8<sup>th</sup> day (we were told she could only be on a respirator for 7 days) doctors were saying that her memory was impaired and she would not be able to live on her own again. Well, no surprise here, as this story goes, not only did she live, but she lived 10 good years, eventually moving from Costa Mesa up to Santa Barbara to Pilgrim Terrace to be close to Terry and her family. I think this poem encapsulates some of those stories I would like to tell you about the Spirit of Char.

### *V. The Spirit of Char*

*A gift from the heavens, you & Charles were.*

*Born into the land of Zion, to a widowed mother with young Norma,  
It was tough on her.*

*The Lord blessed you with a spirit, flourishing with love.*

*A spirit cheerful and happy, that embraced forgiveness from above.*

*Your life took a big turn, with an accident to the head.*

*Everyone had an opinion, but you knew your spirit was not dead.*

*You carried on with great passion, determination, and will.*

*Yes, your spirit was alive! You would not stand still.*

## *The Spirit of Char*

*School was more difficult, language came back slow.  
You were self-conscious about your bandage,  
And what you seemed to know.  
But your spirit carried you forward,  
It was still there! That was for sure.  
You had no fear of hurdles, for each one your spirit led the cure.*

*School continued to be hard, but your progress was clear,  
You stepped way beyond your boundaries, year after year.  
Your parents had you tutored, and watched you very close.  
But what you wanted was freedom, freedom to make of life the most.*

*You went off to Sun Valley, the Grand Canyon and more...  
It was a time to experience life away, life different from before.  
Then off to California, at Malibu on the beach,  
Your spirit caught fire, and surfing he would teach...  
You fell in love and married in Las Vegas, it all happened so quick!  
But it was right, your spirit told you, he truly was the right pick.*

*Then two kids, Terry & Mike, your dreams realized and more!  
A move to Corona del Mar, the perfect beach with a house you adore.  
This life in California, tell the family, "Zion has moved West!"  
Riding your bike to work at the school cafeteria, you must have felt that this is the best!*

*You made Christmas so special, not one will I ever forget.  
All the many things that you did, you out-performed Santa I'll bet!  
Your tree was outrageous! Year after year.  
You decorated it to perfection, and filled it with cheer.  
One year you had a hundred red apples hanging from that tree,  
Each tied with an ironed red ribbon, it truly was a site to see....*

*Your Christmas breakfast magnificent! You must have spent days to prepare.  
But we were too anxious to get those presents, so the credit just was not there.  
Only now do I see all the work you went to,  
Your whole Christmas show was quite an amazing to-do.  
Starting with fresh coffee and fruit, then that special Ortega chili dish,  
To English muffins with preserves, and fresh OJ if you wish.  
Then came the stockings with eggnog, and Sees candy after that,  
Topped off with tangerines and nuts, and all this right where we sat.  
The presents of course, were all wrapped to perfection,  
The Christmas colors and scenes were just the right selection.  
With ribbons and bows that were ironed and tied,  
You did it all yourself, with nothing to hide...  
Yes your spirit Mom was Christmas, that goes without saying.  
You gave us special traditions, that will always keep playing.  
Traditions that will carry forward to the Grand kids you know,  
Traditions that will always remind us, of Charlene and her great Christmas show.*

*Life took a turn when you and Dad split up,  
Your challenges were many, but your spirit held tough.  
You learned to drive a car, "which pedal is the gas"?...  
To balance the checkbook, and to make sure in school we pass.*

## *The Spirit of Char*

*But your spirit was strong and your will power even stronger.  
You stayed cheerful and happy, even though your days were much longer.  
You enjoyed my friends and our parties, which probably never seemed to end.  
Everyone looked forward to seeing CHAR, she was like having another friend.*

*Selling your dream house by the beach must have been very hard on you.  
But you had your job at Hoag and now some money, that was new!...  
You bought a mobile home, at a place called Seacliff by the Sea.  
You put in orange carpet and new green siding, it was now the place to be.  
You had more Japanese decorations, than the restaurants down the street.  
And the stereo with those speakers, your neighbors could all dance to Sinatra's beat.*

*I can taste your Lamb dinners with fresh mint sauce on the top.  
Those roasted vegetables with potatoes, always cooked to perfection, even though  
you'd argue that they're not.  
And your special spinach salad, with those yummy dinner rolls,  
All on your matching orange oriental china, down to the saucers and bowls.  
Then your German chocolate cake, baked from scratch and weighing 10 pounds.  
My friends would argue that it is the best, even better than it sounds.*

*Mom, my memories of you are endless,  
But it is always your spirit that stands out.  
And now as I have my own children to reflect upon,  
I realize what your spirit is really about.  
Your life has been hard, and your challenges more than seems fair.  
But your attitude is ALWAYS positive, and a smile you ALWAYS do wear.  
As a kid I did not have a lot to compare to, I just knew you were the best.  
But as an adult I got smarter, and put you above the rest.  
Now as a parent I realize, it's your spirit that really stands out!  
God truly has blessed me, there is no doubt.*

*And now that you are in heaven, rejoicing with Charles, Oa, Norma and Paul,  
I really do miss you Mom, and just want to give you a call.  
But it was time, I now realize, our Lord God made the call.  
His plan is a perfect one, a plan for us all.  
So I bid you farewell, while your spirit remains here with me,  
On to the new Jerusalem, where you are now set free.*

*Well done, good and faithful servant.*

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