

Dr. Margaret C. Berry Eulogy
by Katherine Tally
April 23, 2017

My relationship with Dr. Berry, and she will always be Dr. Berry to me, began in the late 70's when I became head of a student organization where she was the faculty sponsor. I went to see her one day in her U.T. Tower office to discuss a club project with her. She told me, "Don't do anything that would attract the attention of the campus police," adding with a twinkle in her eye, "And if you do, "Don't get caught!" I knew right then and there I was going to like this woman.

Over the next 40 years, our relationship grew from teacher to mentor to dear friend to her being like a second mother to me. We were often "partners in crime" as I escorted her to some of the many events she was constantly invited to attend. She knew how to work a handicap sticker like nobody's business. The first thing I would ask her when she got into my car is "you got the sticker?" "Yep, right here, let's go." One time she told me to drive down a street on campus and I said, "Dr. Berry, it's one way". And she replied matter of factly, "Well, drive fast".

Her increasing age and the physical disabilities that naturally go along with living forever, as she did, did not stop her enthusiasm to go out and do things --to keep busy, be productive, and to always have fun. She didn't know how to say NO to an invitation even when many of us were begging her to slow down. She had a rule once she turned 100 that she would only do one outing a day, but I personally saw her break her rule many times. It was not unusual for her to have a long lunch out with a former student, come home, quickly change clothes, be picked up and attend a dinner where she was speaking, and then be one of the last to leave the event! She was never a big drinker but after not being able to find our car one night (in the close by handicapped parking space), we decided we had to both slow down our alcohol consumption at future events.

She had so many old friends who would come up to talk to her everywhere she went, but what was even more pleasing to her were the many current student leaders who would flock to her side having heard about "THE LEGEND THAT WAS DR. BERRY" to be graced by her presence and keen interest in them. She remained approachable, kind, and interested in others right up until the end of her life.

The last time I saw her on this earth was three weeks ago today at exactly this time. I stopped by to check on her -- went up to her corner room on the 4th floor

of Westminster, knocked on her door, and went in. I found her sitting in her wingback chair in her pretty long pink nightgown in her small study lined with

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shelves and shelves of books. She was intently focused on her laptop working on a speech for the 50th anniversary of Westminster. When she saw me, she looked up and said, "Oh Kathy, I'm ok, just very busy trying to get this done." After chatting for a few minutes, we exchanged "I love yous" and I left.

I got to speak to her very briefly one more time a couple of days before she passed. I am grieving and will continue to grieve her passing. But my heart is full of gratitude to God for the remarkable Dr. Berry who lived nearby me my entire adult life thus far....and always with a kind and wise word for me.

I saw a saying recently that I think sums up her life in six words:
"LOVE GOD. LOVE PEOPLE. THE END. SHE made it look easy. I believe we should all strive to follow her example every day.