

A Celebration Of Life



DONNA MARIA TOLIVER GRIMES

SUNRISE: APRIL 5, 1956 | SUNSET: DECEMBER 10, 2024

Friday, January 3, 2025
Viewing 10:00 am | Funeral Mass 11:00 am

St. Teresa of Avila Catholic Church
1244 V St. SE
Washington, DC 20020

Reverend Monsignor Raymond Gerard East, Pastor

ORDER OF MASS

Funeral Mass for Ms. Donna Toliver Grimes
His Eminence Wilton Cardinal Gregory
Archbishop of Washington
Celebrant

INTRODUCTORY RITES

GREETING		Wilton Cardinal Gregory
Blessing of the Body		
Placing of the Pall	Ms. Nyle Grimes and Mrs. Charlene Howard	
Placing of the Crucifix		Ms. Anne Batiste
Placing of the Bible		Ms. Patricia Waddell
Placing of the Rosary		Ms. Sharon Daniel
PROCESSIONAL HYMN	"Praise Him"	St. Teresa (STA) Choir
OPENING PRAYER		Wilton Cardinal Gregory

LITURGY OF THE WORD

FIRST READING	Wisdom 3:1-6,9	Mr. Kamau Grimes
RESPONSORIAL PSALM 23:	"The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want."	
SECOND READING	1 Thessalonians 4:13-18	Mr. Michael Howard
GOSPEL ACCLAMATION		
GOSPEL	Matthew 25: 31-40, 45-46	Deacon William Hawkins
HOMILY		Msgr. Raymond G. East
INTERCESSORY PRAYERS		Sr. Dr. Oralisa Martin

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

PRESENTATION OF GIFTS	"I Give Myself Away"	STA Choir
PREFACE ACCLAMATION		
GREAT AMEN		
LORD'S PRAYER		
LAMB OF GOD		
COMMUNION HYMN	"One Bread, One Body"	STA Choir
COMMUNION MEDITATION	"We Shall Behold Him"	STA Liturgical Dance Ministry
REMARKS FROM FAMILY		Ms. Nyle Grimes Mr. Ayinde Grimes
PRAYER OF COMMENDATION		Wilton Cardinal Gregory
ANNOUNCEMENTS		
FINAL BLESSING & DISMISSAL		Wilton Cardinal Gregory
RECESSIONAL HYMN	"Goin' Up Yonder"	STA Choir

REMEMBERING DONNA



Donna Maria Toliver Grimes entered eternal rest on the morning of December 10, 2024. Born on April 5, 1956, in Washington, DC, she was the eldest child of James Matthew Toliver and Phyllis Campbell Toliver. Donna had an infectious smile, positive energy, and optimistic attitude, whenever Donna entered a room, people gravitated to her gentle, genuine spirit. She fully and immensely loved life, her immediate family, church family, and her community.

Donna will be remembered as the heartbeat and moral compass of her family. She grew up in a tight knit family where their Catholic faith was the foundation of their values. As the eldest child, Donna adopted an attitude of servant leadership early on. She was eager to lead, support, and watch over her younger siblings. She assisted her mother with administering religious education, guiding her siblings home from school on the metro, preparing dinner, and taking her sister for afternoon walks. These early experiences provided the foundation for her later accomplishments in the areas of social justice and community activism.

Donna Maria was a distinguished graduate of Elizabeth Seton High School and made history as their first Black class president (class of 1974). After high school, Donna attended the University of Virginia (UVA) where she obtained her Bachelor of Science in speech pathology-audiology. After graduating from UVA, Donna joined the Federal Service and quickly rose up the ranks becoming a contracting officer and supervisor for twenty years. She decided to make a major career shift after much prayer and reflection, left Federal Service, and joined the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) in 2000 as an Education Specialist for the Catholic Campaign for Human Development (CCHD). Later she was promoted to Assistant Director for the Secretariat of Cultural Diversity in the Catholic Church. She retired from that position in September 2023. Throughout her career at USCCB, she was respected and admired for being a “bright light” and a smiling fighter who always encouraged others to push for the issues that were important to them.

A clear and concise thinker, Donna's writing publications and speaking engagements inspired various audiences. A thoughtful author and gifted orator, Donna led workshops throughout the church and wrote numerous articles, newsletters, and reflections. She also taught for the Institute for Black Catholic Studies at Xavier University of Louisiana and for the University of Dayton's Virtual Learning Community for Faith Formation. Donna's commitment to her Catholic faith and her unwavering principles guided her every step and every work. Her written and spoken words are forever imprinted on the hearts of all who encountered her. One of the hallmarks of her character was that if she had something on her mind, she did not hesitate to tell the truth.

Donna was an active member of St. Teresa of Avila Catholic Church (STA), where she and her late husband Herb served as pillars in the Black Catholic Community. At STA, Donna served on

numerous ministries: the Sodality, Religious Education, Lectors, Life in the Spirit, Social Justice Ministry, Eucharistic Ministry, and Health Ministry. In addition to her STA ministries, she served the community through several social justice initiatives such as a Pax Christi USA Ambassador of Peace, the Washington Interfaith Network (W.I.N.), a founding member of Sisters in the Spirit (S.I.S.), and an integral participant in the Elizabeth Seton Alumni Association (Class of 1974). She also served on the Local Station Board (LSB) for Pacifica's WPFW 89.3 FM radio station.

Donna Toliver Grimes was preceded in death by her beloved husband, Herbert "Herb" Nelvin Grimes, on November 7, 2008. She leaves behind: her father James Toliver; three children Nyle Ayana, Kamau Malik, and Ayinde Sekou; two brothers Mark (Barbara) and Dwayne (Gina) and one sister Victoria "AusetSaRaQeti" Whaley; a nephew Mark II, two nieces Elise and Menkhu-tA MenAb, and a great niece Alayah. Many cousins, other family members, and many many friends. Lastly, one fur child (Naomi) and one grandpup (Koda).



F O R E V E R I N O U R H E A R T S



COME WITH ME

by Rhonda Braswell

The Lord saw you getting tired
And a cure was not to be,
So He put his arms around you
And whispered, "Come with me."

With tearful eyes, we watched you suffer
And saw you fade away,
Although we loved you dearly,
We could not make you stay.

A golden heart stopped beating,
A beautiful smile at rest,
God broke our hearts to prove
He only takes the best.

It's lonesome here without you
We miss you so each day,
Our lives aren't the same
Since you went away.

When days are sad and lonely,
And everything goes wrong,
We seem to hear you whisper,
"Cheer up and carry on."

Each time we see your picture,
You seem to smile and say,
"Don't cry, I'm in God's keeping,
We'll meet again someday."





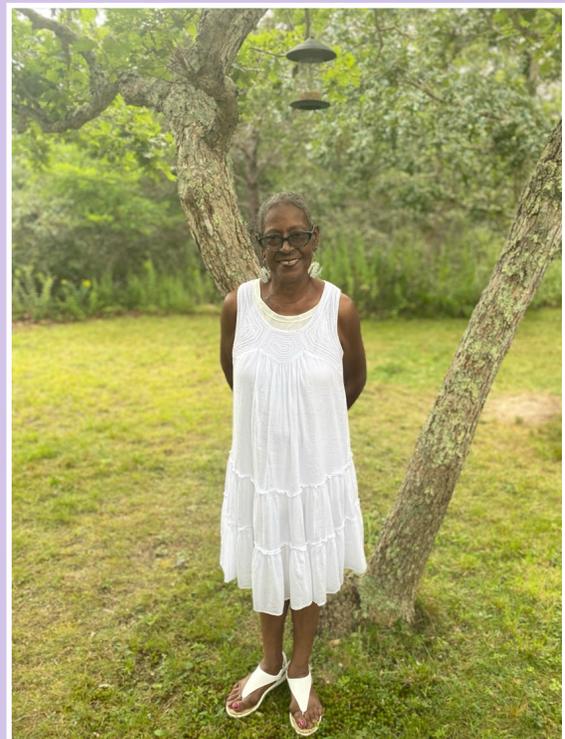
YOU CAN ONLY HAVE ONE MOTHER

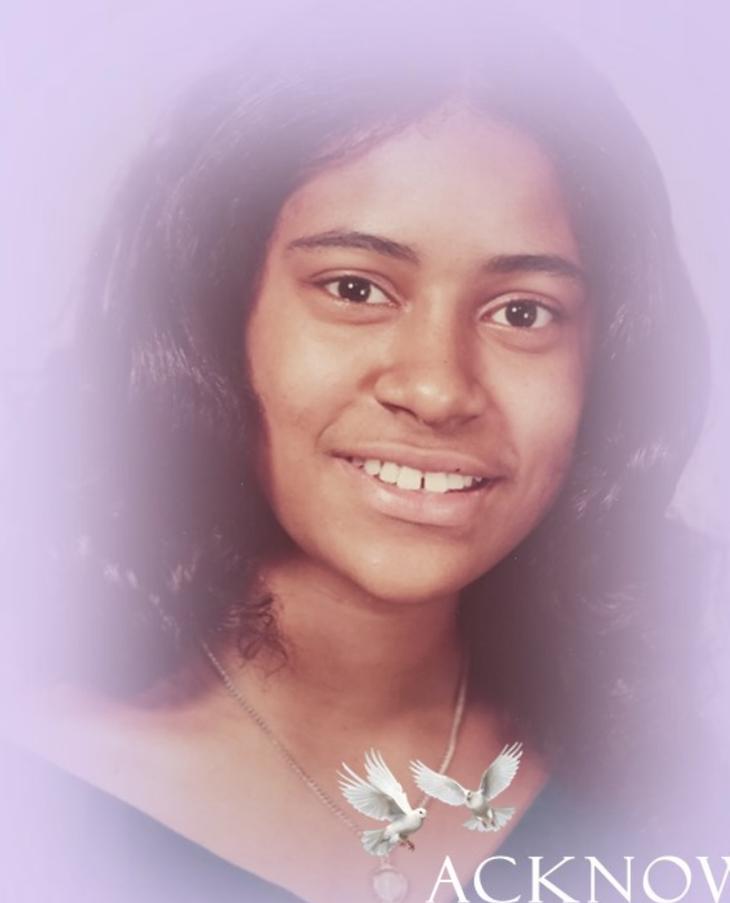
You can only have one mother
Patient kind and true;
No other friend in all the world,
Will be the same to you.

When other friends forsake you,
To mother you will return,
For all her loving kindness,
She asks nothing in return.

As we look upon her picture,
Sweet memories we recall,
Of a face so full of sunshine,
And a smile for one and all.

Sweet Jesus, take this message,
To our dear mother up above;
Tell her how we miss her,
And give her all our love.





PALLBEARERS

Samuel Jarreau Daniel
James Jones
Michael Jachuku Howard
Mark Toliver II
Ayinde Grimes
Kamau Grimes



INTERMENT

Cedar Hill Cemetery
4111 Pennsylvania Ave.
Suitland-Silver Hill, MD 20746

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Grimes-Toliver Family acknowledges with sincere appreciation the outpouring of love and support through your many generous expressions of kindness and concern. May God richly bless you now and forever.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations be sent to the Religious Education Ministry at St. Teresa of Avila Catholic Church.

Please send via check or Pushpay at <https://stachurchdc.org/stewardship> and select eGiving.

Dr. Jesse Williams, Director of Music,
St. Teresa of Avila Catholic Church

REPAST

Panorama Room
Our Lady of Perpetual Help Roman Catholic Church
1600 Morris Road SE
Washington, DC 20020

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