



*When I am gone, release me, let me go.
I have so many things to see and do,
You mustn't tie yourself to me with too
many tears,*

*But be thankful we had so many good years.
I gave you my love, and you can only guess
How much you've given me in happiness.*

*I thank you for the love that you have
shown,
but now it is time I travelled on alone.
So grieve for me a while, if grieve you must
Then let your grief be comforted by trust
that it is only for a while that we must part,
So treasure the memories within your heart.*

*I won't be far away for life goes on.
And if you need me, call and I will come.
Though you can't see or touch me, I will be
near*

*And if you listen with your heart, you'll
hear*

*All my love around you soft and clear
And then, when you come this way along,
I'll greet you with a smile and a*

“Welcome Home”.

Acknowledgement

Our family would like to take this opportunity to extend our sincere appreciation for the many kind expressions of sympathy, words of comfort, contributions and prayers extended during our time of bereavement.

May you forever be blessed.

*We especially thank Germantown Mennonite Church for their acts of kindness
and making sure that Rita was never alone in her final days.*



Professional Services Entrusted to:
G. CHOICE FUNERAL CHAPEL, INC
2530 North Broad Street, Philadelphia, PA 19132

Britni Choice, Supervisor

www.gchoicefc.com
Office: 215-227-0100

HOMEGOING *Celebration*



Rita

GONSALVES

February 11, 1932 ~ August 31, 2025

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 2025, 9:00AM

Germantown Mennonite Church

21 W Washington Lane, Philadelphia, PA 19144

Pastor Jay Bergen, Eulogist

FOREVER IN OUR HEARTS



Order of Service

Processional Clergy & Family

Inspirational Selection "The goodness of God"

Prayer of Comfort- Estie John

Scripture Reading:

Cora Wallace- Psalm 21

Velty Jolly- 1 Corinthians 13: 1-9

Solo: Elvis Mack

Cards & Resolutions: Lorna Thompson

Obituary: Janelle Fitzpatrick

Reflections

Dotty Baumgarten

Ken Cuffy

Joy Lawrence

Solo: New Beginnings Pentecostal Church

Message of Hope: Pastor Jay Bergen

Morticians Brief & Parting View

Benediction & Final Selection

Recessional

Interment

Cheltenham Hills Cemetery

1701 Washington Ln, Phila., PA 19138



“ SHARING IS CARING ”

“IT’S A GOOD LIFE WHILE YOU’RE LIVING”

THE LIFE OF TAUNTY RITA

Rita Vercella Rosemary Gonsalves or Taunty Rita, as she was known to many, was born on February 11, 1932 in St. Vincent, the West Indies. She was the third daughter of Francis Gonsalves and Samuel Young. *Rita* received her formal education at Union Methodist School in New Grounds, St Vincent, where she completed the highest standard, class six. She was a seamstress and created weaved baskets, placemats and other items for a living. Years later she relocated to Trinidad where she lived for approximately four years. In 1962, *Rita* migrated to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania where *Rita* worked as a shampooer at Balwyn Park Beauty Salon. She was gainfully employed as a shampooer over 40 years before retiring.

Rita was the mother to four daughters. Lynda (Dawn), Annalee, Daliah (Avril) and Cherri. She was an excellent provider and made sure her children were clothed and never hungry. She was an independent, progressive woman who helped her siblings and others obtain visas to the US. She often gave credit to Joy Lawrence and Arthur Cuffy, fellow Vincentians, for sharing their knowledge of the process.

Rita lived in the Germantown neighborhood her entire time in Philadelphia, PA. She was an active member of her community. Her loving heart and giving hands were visible to everyone. She touched many lives with her kindness and generosity. She sent many boxes to St Vincent, not only for her children but also for her nieces, nephews, siblings, friends and anyone in need. She participated in many fundraising activities such as Walk for Hunger, AIDS, Cancer Society and Pennies for Victims of Gun Violence. *Rita* was oftentimes the top fundraiser.

She was also active in the West Indian community and was a member of The Caribbean Association, an organization founded by fellow Vincentians. *Rita* was a member of Germantown Mennonite Church for over 30 years. The congregation was like a second family to her. *Rita* loved cooking for her church family and most of all, sharing any goods or services she could offer. During the time she needed them most, many members were at her side, coming to sit with her both at home and at the hospital and preparing meals for her and her family.

Rita was a friendly, vibrant individual. She loved cracking jokes and was the life of the party. She loved to dance, and many could not wait to see her bust a wine on the dance floor. *Rita* also enjoyed gardening and would share her tomatoes with anyone passing by her lovely garden on Washington lane. *Rita* was an excellent cook who was always cooking for her family, friends and associates. Her Mac and Cheese and her meatballs were unbeatable.

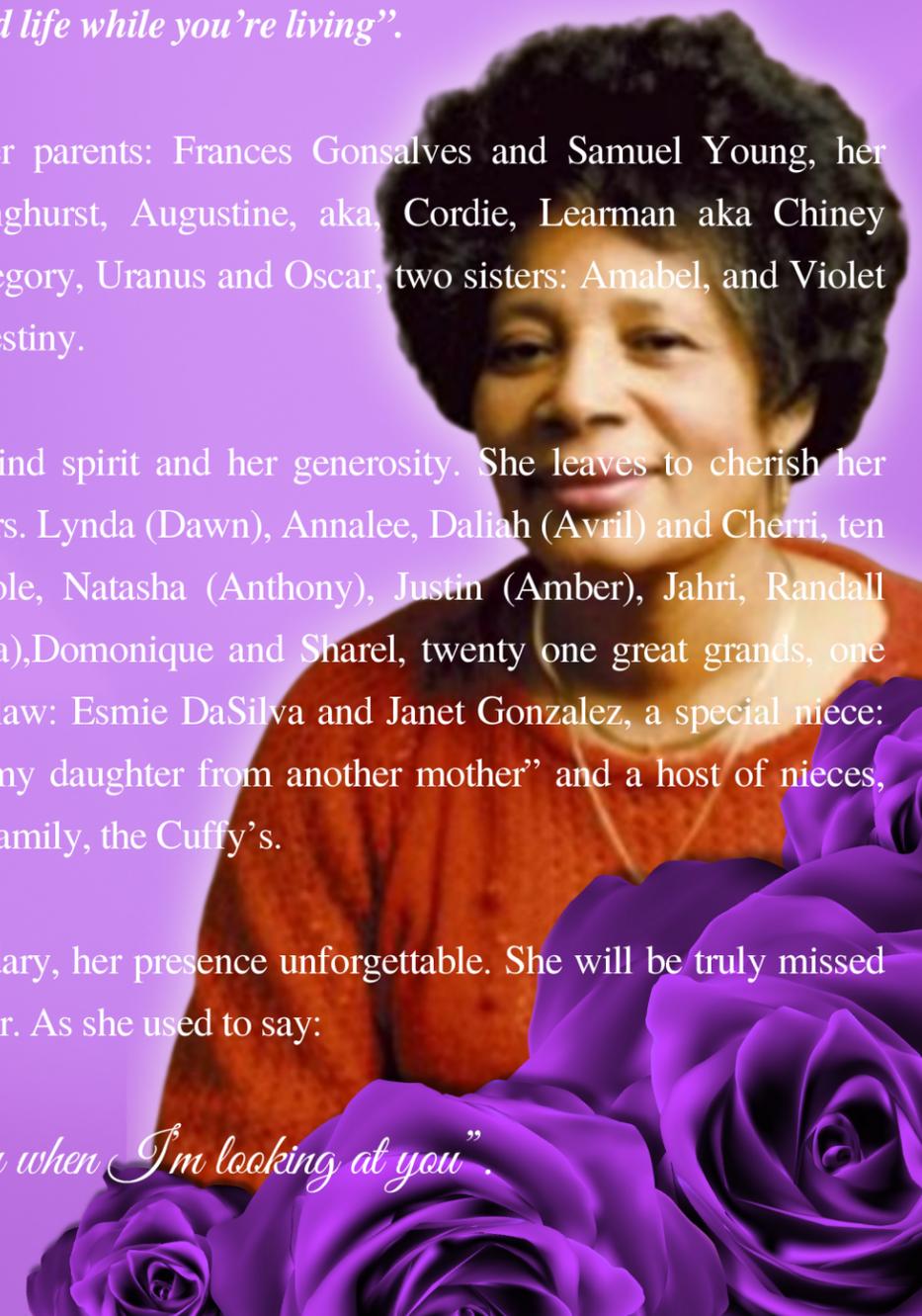
If you lived in Germantown you would see her strolling through the neighborhood at the wee hours in the morning or you might see her going to the local pantries to pick up food which she would then share with everyone or take to the local food refrigerators where people could come get free food. Some of her favorite sayings were, “*See you when I’m looking at you*”, “*Sharing is caring*” and “*It’s a good life while you’re living*”.

Rita was preceded in death by her parents: Frances Gonsalves and Samuel Young, her brothers, Lawrence (Esmie), Billingham, Augustine, aka, Cordie, Learman aka Chiney (Janet), Edgerton, Richard, Elias, Gregory, Uranus and Oscar, two sisters: Amabel, and Violet and two grandchildren: Nigel and Destiny.

Rita will be remembered for her kind spirit and her generosity. She leaves to cherish her memory: Her children: four daughters. Lynda (Dawn), Annalee, Daliah (Avril) and Cherri, ten grandchildren: Andre (Holly), Nicole, Natasha (Anthony), Justin (Amber), Jahri, Randall (Megan), Maria Demetrius (Kareema), Domonique and Sharel, twenty one great grands, one sister: Annie Melisa, two sisters in law: Esmie DaSilva and Janet Gonzalez, a special niece: Shirley, whom she referred to as “my daughter from another mother” and a host of nieces, nephews, cousins and her extended family, the Cuffy’s.

Taunty Rita’s generosity was legendary, her presence unforgettable. She will be truly missed and cherished by those who loved her. As she used to say:

“See you when I’m looking at you”.





MOTHER SISTER AUNT GRANDMOTHER

THIS IS OUR LEGACY