

The Eulogy of Rose Vivilacqua

Read by: Grandson Michael Peppers

I would like to thank you all for joining us here today to celebrate the life, legacy, and lasting memory of Rose Vivilacqua. For those of you whom I haven't yet had the pleasure of meeting, my name is Michael, and it is an honor for me to say that I was lucky enough to have Rose as my grandmother.

It isn't often in our lives that we come across someone so special that that person stays with you forever. Rose was that kind of person.

Rose was born on Valentine's Day 1925 in Brooklyn New York, she was the fifth out of fourteen children had by her parents Antonio and Lucy. Rose got married at the age of 23 to Joseph Vivilacqua, and 2 years later they had their first and only child, a baby girl they named Marie, my mother. Rose and Joe were together right up until my grandfather passed away in 2013, in fact, this year marked their 70th Wedding Anniversary.

I've learned the only way to get hurt in this life is to care. Rose cared more than most, loved more than most and suffered more than most because of just how much she cared. She may not have approved of everything we did, occasionally we would make her furious with the decisions we made, but her love always endured. We always knew that we could count on Rose if we ever needed her, anytime of the night or day she'd be there to welcome us with a big hug and an even bigger plate of food.

To Rose food was an extension of her, when she served you a plate of pasta it wasn't just pasta---it was a big plate of love. Her doors were always open to her family, and she'd always be so happy just because you stopped by to see her.

For me it's the little things that seem to stand out the most – the way she'd call my name, the intoxicating aroma of her kitchen, how much she loved shopping at the 99cent store, or how badly she wanted us to appear on the “Family Feud” gameshow.

I'll always remember her tapping her foot and dancing whenever a song that she liked came on, or how she'd watch the Dodger games with my grandfather and myself and would be the loudest one cheering them on when they were up or admonishing them when they weren't doing well which was quite often. There are so many things that I can see, taste, and feel as if they had just happened.

I'm sure everyone here has memories much like mine. They are great memories, something we'll always have to cherish. It never took much to make Rose happy—a simple phone call, a visit to her house, or a kiss before saying goodbye. Her daughter, her grandchildren and her great grandchildren were the most important people in the world to her. She lived to make our lives better and was proud of us.

To think that someone like Rose felt that way about us should make us all feel more than just a little good. We must never forget that there is a part of her in each of us, something that she gave us without asking for anything in return.

Money can be squandered and property can be ruined, but what we inherited from her cannot be damaged, destroyed or lost. It is permanent, and it keeps her from becoming just another wonderful memory. It allows her in so many ways to remain just as alive as always—alive through us.

There have been and will be times in our lives when situations arise where we'll want so much to talk to her, be with her, eat some of her delicious cooking, or just ask her what we should do. I hope that, when those times come, we can begin to look to each other and find that part of her that she gave to each of us.

Maybe we can learn to lean on each other and rely on each other the way we always knew that we could with her. Maybe then she won't seem quite so far away.

So, for your strength, your wisdom, your humor, tenderness and compassion, your understanding, your thoughtfulness, and the cooking that was a labor of love; thank you Nana. Because after you Nana, the mold was indeed broken. Thank you so much, I love you.