

The Life and Legacy of Florine Verdun...

Florine Verdun was adored by many. A nurturer by nature, she selflessly sacrificed for her church, husband, children, family and the many who sought her out in their times of need. Mother Verdun fed the hungry and homeless, wiped the brow of the sick, saved homes, befriended the lonely, comforted the heartbroken, chauffeured multitudes, advised amid confusion, listened into clarity and loved through it all. Through all her generosity, the thing that drew people to Mother Verdun, was that love; pure, unconditional and a seemingly infinite amount of it to spread around. Her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren are rich in the legacy of our Mother's unconditional love.

One of Florine Verdun's mantras was "If you don't have anything good to say, it is best to say nothing." Florine Verdun's word was impeccable. Her speech was filled with the reliable truth and her promises were fulfilled. Her voice smiled and was full of her heart. She spoke with laughter, joy, strength and power. So people listened and came back to hear more.

Florine's family was second only to God. Her parents, Bessie and Joseph McGowan were sharecroppers in the Mississippi Delta. Florine and her sisters, Annie (Henry) Fielder, and Carrie (Dargan) McNair prepared meals and did housework while her brothers Ray (Jessie), Charles (Fannie), Lewis James and Sonny Boy planted and harvested cotton. The entire family eventually left Mississippi and settled in Flint, Michigan in the 1940s. We pray that Florine rejoices in Heaven at the feet of our Savior with her parents and siblings.

When Florine moved to Flint, she just happened to live around the corner from Vincent Verdun. She met him on the bus stop, they married and Florine's legacy emerged. First there were 8 children: Frankie Mae Pascoe, Douglas Pascoe, Velberia (Leon) Woods, Aubrey (Pat) Verdun, Daniel Verdun, Vincene (Art) Verdun Cox, Joseph Criss (Harriett) Verdun and Roslyn (Curtis) Freeman. That would only tell a part of the story since not only did Florine raise her children in the fear and admonition of the Lord in Harris Temple Church of God in Christ, but she was a hands on grandmother, devoted to her 15 grandchildren (and their spouses): Monifa Yvonne, Douglas Pascoe Jr., Latefa (James) Duhart, Shaune Anderson Verdun, Aubrey (Nicole) Verdun Jr., Rea (Christopher) Woods Yates, Joshua Ingram, Corie Latimer Verdun, Vincent Ingram, Vinnece Verdun, Jasen Freeman, Leah Verdun, Joseph Verdun Jr., Clarence Verdun and Langston Freeman. From the youngest to the oldest, Florine had a special relationship to each and every grandchild. All lived comfortably in their relationship with her, loving her, respecting her and always excited about spending time at 1405 Lippincott Blvd. Florine also has 15 great-grandchildren: DeQuan Woods, David Little, Halle Little, Cruz Duhart, Christian Verdun, Madison Ingram, Eden Yates, Paige Ingram, Anais Yates, Hope Ingram, Solomon Yates, Aubrey Verdun III, Ava Verdun, Monroe Verdun and Addison Verdun. Of her 7 siblings only she and Ray had children. Florine

adored the son of her brother, Ray (Johann) MacGowans and their daughters. Florine mourned the passing of her husband and three of her children, baby Frankie Mae, Douglas, Daniel, and one grandchild, Shaune, and we pray that she rejoices in heaven with them now.

In addition to her immediate family, Florine Verdun was a matriarch in the huge Verdun clan. Her nieces and nephews are numerous and they gravitated to Aunt Florine for advice, guidance, acceptance and love. They called and visited often and they prayed for her as she prayed for them.

Florine Verdun loved Harris Temple, COGIC and was a founding member of the church serving under Elder T.R.Harris. Florine worked tirelessly preparing dinners weekly for lunch breaks for factory workers and Sunday dinner for church members and the community. She was also active in Young Women's Christian Council and later served in the Food Bank. To say Harris Memorial Church of God in Christ and the many friends and extended family she had there were a significant part of Mother Verdun's life is an understatement. From 17 years old when she joined the church to 86 years old when God called her home, the Harris Memorial family loved Mother Verdun. She spent a lifetime praising the Lord, serving the community, living and loving with them.

In the midst of all this Florine Verdun had a career. When she first came to Flint she worked for a small family business, the Davis Food Center. After the birth of her seventh child, Florine began working for Hurley Hospital in the laundry. After successfully passing several civil service exams, continuing her education to get her high school diploma and becoming certified as a Dietician at Mott community College, Florine became a supervisor in the kitchen at Hurley Hospital (back then the food was really good). While Florine never fulfilled her dream of becoming a nurse, she did get the education she always wanted and retired from Hurley Hospital after working 25 years.