

Edward Joseph Bell Jr. Obituary

Ed always had the heart of a gentleman soldier. If you knew Ed, you knew his dedication to God, family, country, service, and love.

Edward Joseph Bell Jr, age 84 of Cumming, GA, passed away on November 22, 2023 at home. His COPD and Emphysema finally caught up to him.

Ed was born on January 16, 1939 in Philadelphia, PA where he grew up and lived until he joined the Army at 17 in 1956. His first station was at Ft Bragg in Fayetteville, NC. At 19, city-boy Ed met a southern-country-girl Helen in a store and within a few days, that was it. The third time they met he asked and she accepted his proposal to get married. They went to Philadelphia for the wedding...and then onto Atlanta for their honeymoon and to meet Helen's family before they began to raise a family during his 20-year Army career and their 53-year marriage. Ed was awarded a Purple Heart and two Bronze Stars for heroic service in a combat zone.

Be comforted knowing that God brought us here, He created us and what a joy it is knowing that we will return to be with Him one day...and our loved ones...for eternity. Ed is in Heaven with his parents Ellen and Edward Sr., wife Helen, daughter Tammy, son Edward III, and sister Rosemary.

Survivors include sons Tom of Montgomery, AL, David of Cumming, GA, and Jeff of Cumming, GA. He is also survived by 10 grandchildren, and 12 great grandchildren, and 22 nieces and nephews.

A wake will be held on Monday November 27, 2023 from 3:00PM to 8:00PM at Ingram Funeral Home at 210 Ingram Ave, Cumming, GA 30040. Funeral services will be held on Tuesday November 28, 2023 at 1:00PM at St. Brendan's Catholic Church, Cumming, GA. Ed will be buried with military honors next to Helen at The Georgia National Cemetery, 2025 Mount Carmel Church Ln, Canton, GA.

In lieu of flowers, Ed would appreciate you contributing to the Military Alliance.

Hellen and Ed Bell Funeral Readings

First Reading, Isaiah 25: 6-9

On this mountain the Lord of Hosts will provide for all peoples a feast of rich food and choice wines, juicy, rich food and pure, choice wines. On this mountain he will destroy the veil that veils all peoples, The web that is woven over all nations. He will destroy death forever. The Lord God will wipe away the tears from all faces; The reproach of his people he will remove from the whole earth; for the Lord has spoken. On that day it will be said: "Indeed, this is our God; we looked to him, and he saved us! This is the Lord to whom we looked; let us rejoice and be glad that he has saved us!"

Second Reading, Romans 8:35, 37-39

What will separate us from the love of Christ? Will anguish, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or the sword? No, in all these things we conquer overwhelmingly through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor present things, nor future things, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Gospel, John 14:1-6

"Do not let your hearts be troubled. You have faith in God; have faith also in me. In my Father's house there are many dwelling places. If there were not, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back again and take you to myself, so that where I am you also may be. Where [I] am going you know the way." Thomas said to him, "Master, we do not know where you are going; how can we know the way?" Jesus said to him, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

Edward Joseph Bell Jr. Funeral

Deacon Roger Fraser, November 28, 2023

11 years ago Deacon Bill Monahan gave a special homily at Ed's beloved wife Helen's funeral. Ed, Bill and I sat down several months ago and discussed reading the same Scriptures today and using her homily as a guide for Ed's homily today...with their input and permission, here's how we wove these two homilies together.

Saint Mother Teresa once said that we are born into this world for two purposes, to love and to be loved. This morning we gather to celebrate the life of our father, grandpa, great-grandpa, uncle and dear friend, Edward Joseph Bell Jr., husband of Helen, father of Edward, Tammy, Jeffrey, Thomas and David, grandfather of 10, great-grandfather to 12, brother to Rosemary, uncle to 22 nieces and nephews, and friend to countless others! Ed loved much and was much loved as so many of Ed's family and friends have shared. I think we can say with confidence that Ed fulfilled these purposes in his life. Ed was a giving person who loved God, his family, his country and his friends without reservation. Even Helen's family recognized how city-boy-gentleman-soldier Ed always took loving care of his southern-country-girl Helen.

For those of us who knew Ed and Helen, it is impossible to speak about one without the other, even years after Helen passed. Over the years, we couldn't help but see the dedication they had to our men and women in uniform. It all started when 19-year-old city-boy-gentleman-soldier Ed met a southern-country-girl Helen Euveela in a store and within a few days, that was it. The third time they met he asked and she accepted his proposal to be married. They went to Philadelphia for the wedding...and then onto Atlanta for their honeymoon and to meet Helen's family before they began to raise a family.

Throughout his 20-year Army career and their 53-year marriage, Ed and Helen sacrificed for our country. Multiple tours in Europe and two in Viet Nam meant that their family traveled far and wide, and was separated from Ed while he was deployed for extended periods. Ed was a hero. He was awarded a Purple Heart for being wounded

while serving, and two Bronze Stars, one with the Oak Leaf Cluster for heroic service in a combat zone and the second with the "V" device which is worn solely to denote "participation in acts of heroism involving conflict with an armed enemy." Ed also received 4 Overseas bars, and was awarded 8 other medals including the Army Commendation Medal, the Combat Infantry Badge, the Good Conduct medal, the National Defense Service medal, the Vietnam Service medal, the Republic of Vietnam Campaign medal, the Republic of Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with Palm unit citation, and the Meritorious Service medal.

In more recent years we could sense Ed's never-wavering dedication to serve as we realized he frequently wore his Army uniform not only as a Veterans Alliance honor guard at numerous funerals and events, but also for his 25th and 50th wedding anniversaries... and now at his funeral. God bless you Ed for your service.

Since the year 2000, many of us saw how Ed and Helen fully participated in the early days of St. Brendan's...how they were active ministers in the rosary society, as eucharistic ministers, and they led the Stephen's Ministry for people struggling with life. And, you could always count them adding a lot of, let's say, "zest" to the bible study discussions. His friends at Coal Mountain Baptist said the same thing!

Today's Scriptures all speak of God's love and faithfulness. They call us to put our trust not in our often-flawed human ways to love, but rather to put our trust in God's mercy and forgiveness, for we are all loved unconditionally by God. While Ed and Helen not only loved well and were loved, they also knew suffering in this life...it's an inescapable part of our faith in God. They struggled with alcoholism, and deaths of two children, Edward who died as an infant, and Tammy. They endured major health issues of cancer, of debilitating lung problems, and of so many in their family with health problems. But all the while, they didn't complain, rather they handled it with dignity, grace and love, leaning on God and family and friends.

I would be remiss if I didn't mention another person who had a special place in Ed's life in recent years, his dear friend Miss Anne. It was so obvious that they held a special bond between them.

Today's first reading from the prophet Isaiah says that it is God who will destroy the veil of death forever, it is God who will save us, and it is the Lord God who wipes away our tears. We may have tears this morning but there are no more tears for Ed, no more suffering, no more pain. He now has only joy and peace as he rests in the eternal embrace of our loving God.

Our second reading from Paul's letter to the Romans tells us that nothing "*will separate us from the love Christ.*" Ed was a person of quiet and tremendous faith who put his trust in the Lord Jesus. For those of us who were able to talk to or visit Ed during these last months and weeks, we have to say that other than Helen, we have never met anyone who was less afraid to die...as he told us "it's time to face reality." Ed was ready because he knew that God, his family and many others loved him.

In today's Gospel, Jesus tells his disciples that, "*in my father's house there are many dwelling places. If there were not, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you?*" The Gospel speaks to us of God's desire for us to be with Him for all eternity, and that God is much more generous accepting our gifts and our faults than we may be with each other. We should be comforted knowing that God brought us here, He created us and what a joy it is knowing that we will return to be with Him one day...and our loved ones...for eternity.

For us, Ed's death, even at 84 years young, reminds us that Ed knew very well that every breath we take is a gift from God. May we use the precious time that we are given here on earth to love and be loved.

Ed, we will miss you. You have graced our lives with your life and your love. We love you. Rest in Peace brother...Live in Peace!

Helen Euveela Bell Funeral

Deacon Bill Monahan, March 28, 2012

Mother Teresa once said that we are born into this world for two purposes, to love and to be loved. This morning we gather to celebrate the life of our friend Helen Euveela Bell, wife of Ed, mother of Tammy, David, Jeff, Thomas and Edward, grandmother of 14, great grandmother to 3.

From my own experience of Helen and what many shared at the funeral home last night, I think we can say with confidence that Helen fulfilled these purposes in her life; she loved much and was much loved. Helen was a giving person who loved her family, her faith and her faith family.

She fully participated in the life and growth of St. Brendan's. She was a member of the rosary society, a eucharistic minister as well as being a member of the welcoming committee. Helen and Ed headed up the Stephen's Ministry, a ministry of listening and compassionate companioning of another at a time of struggle or loss.

You could always count on Helen and Ed to be part of any bible study that my wife Marian offered at church, and from what I've heard, this always added a lot of zest to the discussion. Is that right Ed? But even as much as we loved Helen, she was and is more so loved by God.

Today's Scriptures all speak of God's love and faithfulness. They call us to put our trust not in our often-flawed human efforts to love, but rather to put our trust in God's mercy and forgiveness for we are all loved unconditionally by God.

Helen not only loved well but she also knew suffering in this life. Her suffering included not only the cancer that ultimately claimed her life but also the deaths of two of her children, Tammy and Edward, who died as an infant. She handled it all with dignity and grace.

Today's first reading from the prophet Isaiah says that it is God who will destroy the veil of death forever and it is God who will save us. and it is the Lord God who wipes away the tears from all faces. We may have tears this morning but there are no more tears for Helen, no more suffering, no more pain. She now has only joy and peace as she rests in the eternal embrace of her loving God.

Our second reading from Romans tells us that, nothing can separate us from the love of God that comes through and to us in Christ Jesus our lord. Helen was a person of quiet and tremendous faith who put her trust in her "sweet lord Jesus." When I think of Helen the word fearless comes to mind.

Like some of you, I had the privilege to visit Helen with my wife Marian during the last months. Others made many more visits than I. I have to say that I have never met anyone who was less afraid to die. She was ready and had absolutely no fear at all. The only fear she had was leaving Ed behind to fend for himself.

Ed, she loved you and helped you become the man that we all love and we all know how much you loved her. It was so obvious. Ed, you have been a great example to us what it means to love and care for another person.

In today's Gospel, Jesus tells his disciples that, *"in my father's house there are many dwelling places, if there were not, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you?"* The Gospel speaks to me of God's desire for us to be with Him for all eternity and that God is much more generous in his acceptance of us with our gifts and faults than we may be with each other.

For us, Helen's death, even at 72 years young, reminds us once again of how short and precious this life is, and that every breath we take is a gift from God. Therefore, may we use the time that each of us is given to love and be loved.

And so in closing, I think I speak for all of us when I say, Helen, we will miss you. you have graced our lives with your life and with your love. We love you. May you rest in peace.