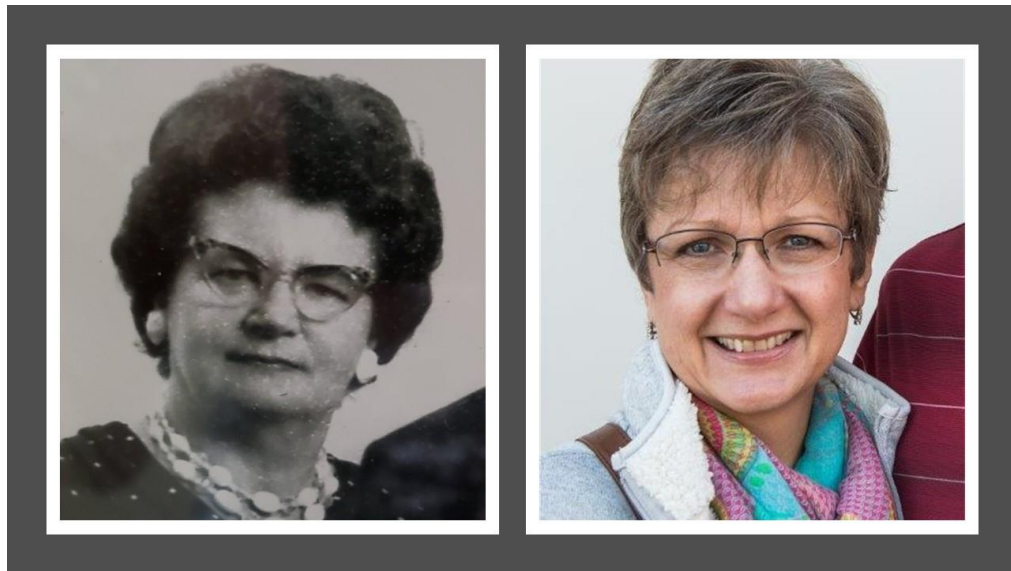


FaithBIT



Grandma Prayers

By Janell Weum

I recently shared the homily at my aunt's funeral. It was an awesome honor and responsibility to care for my family.

While we were at the cemetery for her burial, my cousin Danny asked me, "What do you remember about Grandma Mabel?" I replied, "I remember her sugar cookies and that she was always in the kitchen." He probed further. "But what do you remember of her?"

I realized I didn't get to know my Grandma Mabel. I saw her about twice a year and then it was within a large gathering of aunts/uncles/cousins. I was mainly interested in playing with my cousins, Marcy and Susan. I think I was 12 years old when grandma died.

Danny shared, "I remember her telling me several times that she prayed that one of her grandkids would become a pastor. You're an answer to her prayer."

I was totally shocked. I never knew this. I'm not a pastor in the technical sense. (I'm an ELCA Deacon-retired). But I am pastoral and I served as a chaplain for 10 years.

My gratitude to God and to Grandma's faith swells within me. Her prayers were answered, but she didn't get to see how; and yet she believed. Back then, women were not serving in professional ministries and so her prayer reached across known possibilities.

This insight encourages me in my own prayer life. It invites me to offer my prayers, especially for my family, and then to let go and trust God will answer. It encourages me to see that God works through prayer. The mystery and power of prayer are both strong forces. It reminds me that some answers to prayer may take decades to realize the answer and that we may die without seeing the full picture.

Sometimes we may perceive the answer as "no" when it might be "not yet". Sometimes we may have it all mapped out how we think God should answer our prayers and then we are surprised into a new way of being/thinking.

I grew in gratitude for my Grandma Mabel – my sugar cookie Grandma - who prayed for her family. She prayed and her family has been blessed through her prayers. She is truly an example to follow.