

CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF

May-Ellen Colón



June 14, 1949 – August 3, 2022

Life Sketch

May-Ellen Netten Colón

May-Ellen Marian Netten was born in Hartford, Connecticut on June 14, 1949 to Marian Delice Norton Netten and Reginald Wallace Netten. She, her mother, and brother (Victor Netten) attended the Hartford Seventh-day Adventist church. May-Ellen and Victor attended the Hartford church school for all 8 grades. She went on to graduate from Pioneer Valley Academy in New Braintree, Massachusetts (1968) and Atlantic Union College in South Lancaster, Massachusetts (1972). In the fall of 1969, May-Ellen met Gaspar Colón at Atlantic Union College, where she earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Elementary Education.

In subsequent years May-Ellen completed her Master of Arts degree in Elementary Curriculum and Instruction with emphasis in reading, taught in various elementary schools, and partnered with Gaspar in various pastoral and administrative roles in ministry. Parenthood then struck with the birth of Ivan Christopher in 1981 and Sara-May Julia in 1984. Motherhood became the center of May-Ellen's life, and she cherished every opportunity to nurture and mold those two treasures to adulthood.

May-Ellen and Gaspar shared in ministry as a pastoral couple. They ventured with their children into mission service in the Africa-Indian Ocean Division where she served as Director of the Family Ministries Department and later in the Euro-Asia Division where she also served as founding Director of the Family Ministries Department.

Returning to North America, May-Ellen distinguished herself in General Conference leadership roles, such as Assistant Director of the Sabbath School Personal Ministries Department and Director of Adventist Community Services International. Starting in 2015, she was also concurrently appointed by ADRA International, as Special Liaison to the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists Community Services International and Director of Church and Community Engagement. During all of this, May-Ellen managed to complete her Ph.D. in Religious Education from Andrews University, donate a kidney to her husband, and author several books and articles of value to the church.

May-Ellen collapsed on June 11, 2022 from a cardiac arrest due to ventricular fibrillation while serving as a volunteer at the General Conference Session in St. Louis, Missouri and passed away on August 3, 2022. She is survived by her husband Gaspar; her son Ivan and his wife Crystal, and their three daughters Ava, Zoe, and London; her daughter Sara-May; her brother Victor Netten and his wife Doreen and children (Ashley and Jason); Gaspar's stepmother Fiordalza, stepsisters (Julissa and Julia), and stepbrother Luis.

Order of Service

October 9, 2022 – 7:00 p.m.

Spencerville Seventh-day Adventist Church

Musical Prelude	"Little" Prelude and Fugue in F Major <i>Johann Sebastian Bach</i>	Mark Willey, organ
Introduction and Opening Remarks		Kandace Zollman Lerone Carson
Invocation		Ramon Canals
Hymn No. 530	"It is Well with My Soul"	
Scripture Reading		Bill Knott
Life Sketch		Ted & Nancy Wilson
Homily		Chad Stuart
Musical Meditation	Jesu Meine Freude (Jesus My Joy) <i>J.S. Bach</i>	Mark Willey
Memories		Coordinator, Bill Knott
Hymn No. 93	"All Things Bright and Beautiful"	
Benediction		Michael Kruger
Postlude	Fugue in D minor <i>J.S. Bach</i>	Mark Willey, organ

Honorary Pall Bearers:

Claude Richli, Ramon Canals, Victor Netten,
Karen Porter, Bonita Shields, and Lerone Carson

About the Music:

Among her talents and developed skills, May-Ellen was an organist. She played for worship services, weddings, and funerals in the various churches where she and Gaspar served. In planning the music for this service, Gaspar looked through her collection of music books for the organ and related to me some of the titles he found. Among them were several collections of pieces by J.S. Bach and several other baroque composers. One of those, the "Little" Preludes and Fugues, is a collection that is threaded through the DNA of almost every organist. It is from that book that the prelude for this service is taken. The music meditation is based on the Lutheran hymn "Jesu Meine Freude." J.S. Bach was clearly fond of this tune and text, as he set it several times, including the version played today from the "Orgelbüchlein," another or the collections that was threaded through May-Ellen's musical DNA. She would have agreed with, and lived by the text of this beautiful Lutheran hymn, written in 1650 by Johann Franck: "Jesus, my joy, my heart's pasture, Jesus, my adornment! Oh, how long! How long has this anxious heart yearned for you! Lamb of God, my bridegroom, apart from you, nothing other on Earth shall become more dear to me."

Among the pieces Gaspar distinctly remembers May-Ellen playing on the organ is the Toccata and Fugue in D minor. While it might sound like an unusual choice for a memorial service postlude, it is played this evening in honor and in memory of May-Ellen and in the bright hope that she will play it one day soon in a heavenly concert.



The Colón family wishes to thank you for sharing your time with us this evening, as we celebrate the life of May-Ellen. Thank you for your love and support as we navigate the days ahead.

A special thanks to the Spencerville Church leaders and members for their generous support and encouragement during this extraordinary time.