

Dear Friends in the Diocese of Maine,

This past Sunday, February 28, was the first anniversary of Gretchen's death. My family gathered by Zoom, hosted by my parish priest, to mark the anniversary and tell stories. It was a good occasion and helpful to us, as we have not been able to gather for a service since Gretchen died. (I am very grateful that Gretchen was buried immediately after she died, a bit of God's grace, as things shut down by the end of the next week.)

I am acutely aware that Gretchen's many friends and colleagues in Maine and across the church have not had an opportunity to gather to remember her and, as time goes on, it is more difficult to imagine what sort of gathering would be helpful. My family continues to talk about possibilities, but no plans have been made. Perhaps some day we can have a picnic in Maine for all who wish to come!

I want to thank all of you for your care, your prayers, and your many cards and letters. Most of those arrived at a time when I was unable to answer, but they were deeply appreciated. (I still have them all.) I have emerged from the fog of grief, and I want you to know that your expressions of care lifted me through some difficult days.

Gretchen was a woman of deep faith. Her final days were spent in the quiet expectation of the next adventure God had in store for her. She was surrounded by family, including many of her grandchildren, and enjoyed their company til the end. The family has done well with the support of church and friends and one another - a good therapist or two.

So, thank you again for your love and care. I remain deeply grateful for all of you and for our time together in Maine.

Peace,

Steve