# Mass of Thanksgiving for the Life of



# Mavis Hennings

July 2, 1933-May 25, 2025

St. Ignatius Catholic Church Walkers Road, Grand Cayman Friday May 30, 2025 10:00 AM

Celebrant: Fr. Anthony Fernandes, SAC Organist: Mr. McAllister Fernandes

**Cantor: Denise Tibbetts** 

# **Order of Liturgy**

Prelude: Medley...... Mr. McAllister Fernandes

Processional Hymn: #303 O The Love of My Lord......Congregation

# **The Introductory Rites**

Priest: The Lord be with you

All: And also with you

Sprinkling of Holy Water
Placing of Pall
Placing of Bible, Crucifix and Rosary

# **Opening Prayer**

# Liturgy of the Word

First Reading:	Revelation 14:13	Luke Hennings	
Responsorial P	Salm: #27 The Lord is My Light and Salvation	Denise Tibbetts	
Second Readin	g: Philippians 3:17 - 21	Angela Miller	
Gospel Acclam	ation: John 3:16	Denise Tibbetts	
Gospel: Matth	ew 5:1-12aFr. Anthony	Fernandes, SAC	
Fr. Anthony: The Lord be with you. All: And with your spirit. Fr. Anthony: A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew The Gospel of the Lord. All: Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.			
Homily:	Fr. Anthony	Fernandes, SAC	
Prayers of the Faithful			

# **Liturgy of the Eucharist**

#### **Presentation of the Gifts**

Offertory Hymn #174 Here I am Lord ...... Congregation

**Sanctus (Sung)**: Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of Host. Heaven and earth are full of your Glory. Hosanna in the Highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

### **Eucharistic Prayer**

**Memorial Acclamation (sung)** When we eat this Bread and drink this Cup, we Proclaim your Death O Lord until you come again

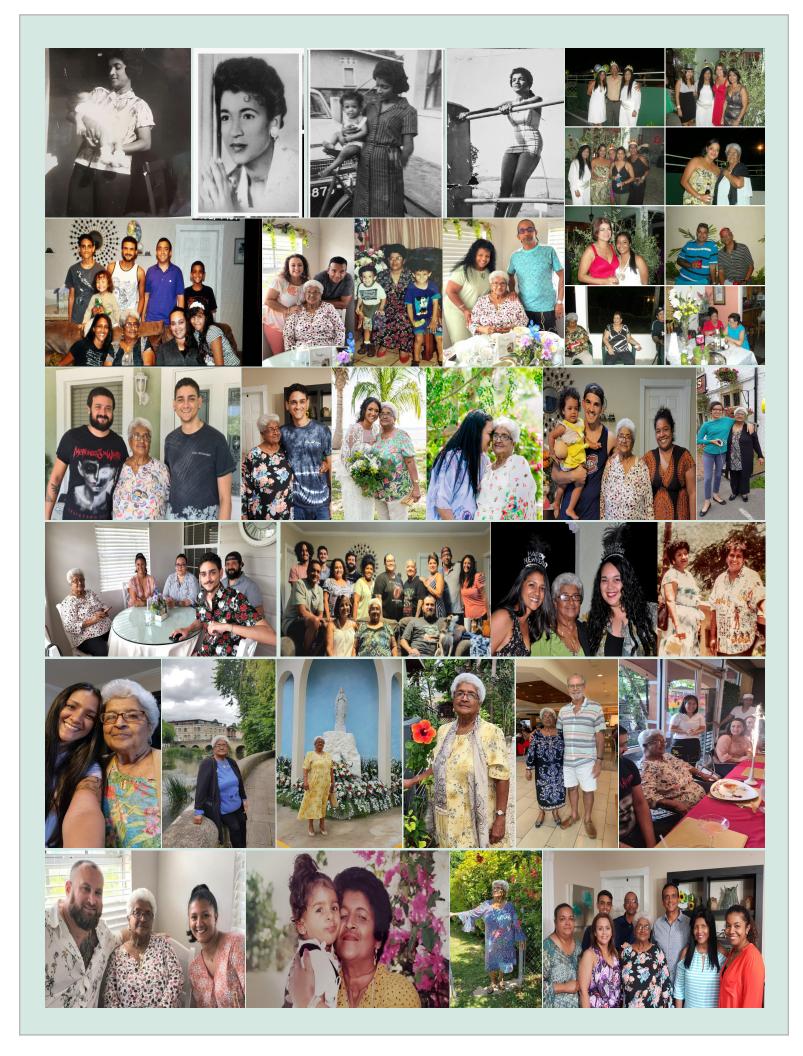
# **The Communion Rite**

**Our Father** 

**Sign of Peace** 

#### Communion

Communion Hymn: #503 Gift of Finest Wheat	Congregation		
Prayer after Communion	Fr. Anthony Fernandes, SAC		
Meditation Hymn: Ava Maria	Denise Tibbetts		
Mavis' Life Story	O'Neil Miller		
Final Commendation	Fr. Anthony Fernandes, SAC		
Song of Farewell			
Recessional Hymn: #505 On Eagle's Wings Congregation			





## **Mavis' Life Story**

On the 2nd July 1933, a small but perfectly formed rose unfurled in Biche, Trinidad, and into this life was born Mavis Lela (Hennings)- daughter to Wilfred Lela and Priscilla Bideshi.

Mavis spent her early childhood, until the age of 12, in her father's home- largely raised by the formidable Miss Ivy. Miss Ivy was a major influence, leading Mavis to the Catholic Church, to which she remained steadfastly faithful, for her entire life.

Following elementary school, Mavis was enrolled at an all girls boarding school, Naparima Girls High School. Upon leaving Secretarial School followed and onwards to her working life, her first employment at Mouttet, Horne & Company. In the late 1950's early 1960's Mavis took employment at McDonagh Construction Company in Port of Spain Trinidad, and progressed. It was during this period that she was to meet Basil Hennings and they married in November 1961. Basil, like many of his generation "went down to the sea in ships" and consequently, Mavis was often both mother and father to their young growing family.

In 1971, the decision was taken to relocate to the Cayman Islands and so the family now consisting of 2 adults: Basil and Mavis and 4 children: Marisa, Trisha, Sean and Crystal made the move and put down permanent roots. The culture shock from 1970's Trinidad to Cayman must have been immense, after all time had forgotten Cayman at that point. With no family except her in-laws, the support system was tenuous at best- not least as they were on the Brac, whilst Basil, Mavis and the Children, settled on Grand. Ever resilient and resourceful, Mavis forged the best possible life she could for her family, taking up employment with the CIG as part of the team at the Public Works Department. Conscientious and diligent in her work and caring as a colleague and friend, Mavis forged links and a support network from her work-mates, and whilst it would never replace her family ties in Trinidad, it certainly bridged the gap and made for life long bonds, for example Mr. George Anderson Sr. and the Nuns at St. Ignatius who had an equal part in helping her learn to drive and getting her drivers license. She always acknowledged these gestures with gratitude.

It would be remiss, not to mention Mr. Douglas Wint, who believed in her capabilities at work, and nudged her outside her comfort zone so she could blossom; Mr. Donovon Ebanks- a true friend and mentor, for whom she had boundless respect. Delia, Carol-Anne, Agnes, May and Elsa: she greatly cared for and respected you all and your friendship and companionship throughout the years has been invaluable. There are also the many PWD colleagues for whom she was a work mama: Eddie, Gucci, Crosby and so many, many others; PWD held a special space in her heart, and will forever. She spoke fondly of you all and considered her 35 years there her most memorable years.

This garden of life, is not without its painful thorns and rocky paths, some of which were writ large. A lesser person would have buckled under half of what she endured, but with her strong faith and resilience coupled with those steadfast ones who remained by her side through some fairly dark days, she came out the other side. Teaching her children the true meaning of strength, mercy and forgiveness. To those who weathered the storms alongside you were always remembered in her prayers and held in her heart. Despite it all, she remained faithful to her God, and kept her family centered, grounded and together.

It was always Mavis' deepest wish that her family would remain a close unit. She led by example of kindness, integrity and generosity of spirit. She opened the doors to her home (it was not uncommon to have a houseful of teenagers at any given point on any given weekend) shared her food (her Curry and roti: stuff of legend) and her wisdom freely.

You could ask her anything- but you might have to steel yourself for the answer; the truth was sometimes unvarnished.

Mavis took a hands on and very present approach to motherhood and latterly grandmotherhood. She certainly taught her children and grands the importance of resilience and self respect, but also the wisdom of knowing when and how to ask for help.

Following her retirement, Mavis' life centered around her Church and her family. She enjoyed special fellowship with 'Aunty Carmen' Hennings whose loss she felt keenly. Mavis set about enjoying a quiet life of books, family time especially helping out with grandkids and reflection. Covid times were challenging, but made more so by the loss of her son-in-law, Bill with whom she shared a great bond; it was again her faith and resilience during this time that held the family in place.

When Mavis became ill, she made sure to put her affairs in order and spelled out the little details and decisions that were rightfully hers and thus avoiding the need for any second guessing and potentially fraught family discussions. Family first- as always.

On 25 May 2025, Mavis slipped the bonds of earth.

She was preceded in death by Sisters: Beryl, Lenore, Mary and Sylvia; Brother, Francis; Son-in-Law Bill Jackson and Husband Basil.

Left to feel her absence:

Children: Marisa; Trisha; Sean and Crystal Children in Law: Stephen, Mindy and Nicholas

Grand Children: Erin, Monique (Mike Myers); William; Aidan; Alicia (Paul Westin); Alex

(Danielle Hennings); Luke; Antonia and Wregan.

Great Grands: Savannah; Sebastian; Madeline and Charles

Many more family and friends.

Whilst the Heavens got so much richer, we are that much more bereft.

"The moving finger writes;
And having writ moves on:
Nor all your piety and wit Shall
Lure it back to cancel half a line
Nor all your tears wash out a word of it."
The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam



#### A Tribute to Our Beloved Mother

Today we remember and honor a woman whose life was a blessing to all who knew her. Our dear mother, grandmother, great-grandmother and matriarch, Mavis Lela Hennings.

She was a woman of unshakable faith. Faithful to God in every season of her life. This wasn't just something she spoke of, but something she lived daily. In joy and in hardship she leaned on God's word, prayed without ceasing, and reminded all of us to do the same. Her faith was her compass, and it guided our family through the storms and sunshine alike.

Born of rich Trini roots, she brought the warmth and flavor of her heritage to Cayman. Especially to the kitchen. No one could match her Saturday bake (fritter) and salt fish or shank soup, and the Sunday special that friends still talk about, her roti and curry chicken or beef. On Super Bowl Sunday or World Cup Final Sunday friends from far and wide gathered at our house, and whether the team we were supporting won or lost, we all won that day with a good roti and great fellowship. Her food brought people together. It nourished more than our bodies. It fed our souls.

But what truly defined her was her heart. A mother who gave everything for her family. She made countless sacrifices — many unseen, many unspoken — to ensure her children had more, did better and felt loved. She was our provider, our prayer warrior. She poured her strength into every one of us, and now we all carry a piece of her love and legacy.

She taught us the value of hard work, the meaning of unconditional love and the power of quiet perseverance. Her life was not easy but she met every challenge with grace, courage and dignity.

Though she is no longer with us in body, her spirit lives on in our memories, in our meals, in our laughter, and in every act of love we share.

A favourite memory from your children:

Marisa: As a child growing up in Trinidad, I always remember my mom waking me up early on Sunday morning to go to church as mass started at 6am. Mom had me dressed in frilly dresses which I hated. However I remember after church there were always treats which I loved. Mom said "Marisa you come to church to pray, not for treats," which at the time I did not understand. As an adult I still attend mass every Sunday and also during the week.

Trisha: As a child I never listened or behaved, you called me your "why child" or "hard headed" whenever I got hurt or in trouble you'd say, "you can't listen, you will feel," this made me a stronger and better adult. I will miss our neverending chats.

Sean: When asked from friends or neighbours "How do you put up with that drumming noise every day?" her answer was always, "I know where he is."

**Crystal:** There are countless memories to hold on to; shared poems and big talks, but a real gem for me was watching Ma (not so patiently by the end of the lesson) trying to teach Nick, not only how to say some real Trini phrases, but getting him to understand them too; yes, Ma, it's true - egg have no place in rock stone dance!

Rest well dear Mother. You have run your race faithfully.

Your legacy will live on through all of us.

We love you always.

#### To Granny,

You were the tree that found root in iron shore, the flower that blossomed on the windy side of a mountain face. You were the life in this world that always found a way and a testament to the fact that small can be mighty. Without your tireless labour of love, endless sacrifices and constant guidance our family would not have grown to where it is today. We are eternally grateful for your unwavering faith and teachings that have been a beacon on many journeys through the darkness for us all. We love you, Granny, and will miss you more than we can express. Until we meet again, we hold you in our hearts.

With all our love,

Erin, Monique, William and Aidan

Dear Granny, (Great gran)

I love you and miss you very much . I loved coming in your room for our little chats. I will continue to pray for you and our family. I am very sad you had to leave us.

-Savannah

#### **Granny Mavis**

I will miss you and I have so much to thank you for. Your sacrifices, your caring nature, your prayers for everyone around you. I came across this quote that made me think of you ....

"Grandma's gone to heaven, one quiet day the angels came and took grandma far away but in the stillness of the night I could almost hear her say ... dear grandchild I will miss you, you mean so much to me, but Jesus called me to be by His side, in heaven I will be. If you trust in Jesus I can promise you this and more, you will get a hug from grandma on heaven's golden shore." By J. Morse -Alicia

I'll miss your bakes that we all scrambled for and seeing you happily watch bold and the beautiful while I sat with you as you brushed my hair. And I'll never be able to thank you enough for spending time with me on school time afternoons

- Antonia

I'll miss you caring for me, all the hugs and cuddles and calling me dumpling a soup!

- Wregan

Thank you for accepting me into your family and treating me like a son. Your love and kindness will never be forgotten.

-Nick

I have always considered myself lucky to come from a large family, one that has provided me with a strong support system on both sides. And from my father's side, Granny was, without question, our foundation.

Growing up, I always looked forward to going to Granny's house. It felt like a second home to me, especially on days when she cooked. I loved her fresh bread, bakes, pelau, and of course, roti and curry chicken. But one of my earliest and fondest memories is the excitement of her pouring me a cup of juice from the famous yellow jar.

I was raised to always be respectful, especially to those older than me. And before I was old enough to understand why, I knew that when Granny entered the room, I had to be on my very best behavior. It was never out of fear; her presence simply commanded a level of respect that was different from anyone else. She may have been the smallest family member in height, but to me, she stood ten feet tall.

As I grew older, it became clear why. Granny did not have an easy life, but no matter what challenges came her way, she earned the admiration and respect of everyone around her. She was unwavering in her commitment to both her family and her faith. While I may not share in her faith exactly as she would have liked, I have always tried to follow her example of commitment. In my studies, in my career, in my friendships, and most importantly, in how I care for my family. I am eternally grateful for the example she set, and I'm thankful I can see glimpses of her in the principles I try to live by today.

Granny always wanted the best for me and from very early on, she decided that Danielle was exactly that. I treasure two compliments she gave Danielle, that will likely never be topped: "Your smile is as beautiful as your soul" and "You are an angel who just doesn't have her wings yet". During our summer internships while at university, Danielle and I would have lunch at Granny's house a couple of times a week. We cherished those chats at the kitchen table, and we always found comfort in knowing she prayed for us every single day, especially when we were far from home at Penn State.

As much as she loved all her grandchildren, I feel a special pride in knowing that I was joyfully "replaced" by her great-grandchildren. Madeline and Charles loved their visits with Granny. They were always excited to show her their progress with their ABCs, counting, and vocabulary. One photo that's especially dear to me shows them sitting on the bed with Granny as she shares a picture from her prayer book that includes all her grandchildren. She made sure they also knew that she prayed for each one of us, and the entire family, every single day.

Granny gave everything she could, for as long as she could to her family. And even as the years passed when she retired, cooked less, and slowed down, I know she never stopped praying and wishing the very best for each of us. And though she is no longer physically with us, I have no doubt that her prayers and love will always continue. I pray that she knows just how much we appreciated who she was and the strength she showed as our family's rock.

Rest in peace, Granny.

With love always,

Alex, Danielle, Madeline, and Charles

#### Tribute to Granny

From my earliest memories, Granny has always been the proponent of faith and servitude to our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, within our family. When I was younger, I never fully grasped, or truly respected, the power of prayer in one's life. I saw it as simply another form of meditation or a thoughtful gesture towards others. I remember Granny telling me about her prayer book, where she had dedicated pages for each of her children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. At the time, it just seemed like a sweet and thoughtful thing any granny might do. I thought, That's good for her peace of mind—but I'll find my own way to that peace.

As I have grown in maturity and in faith, I now understand that her prayers were far more than words on a page, or thoughts spoken into an empty room. They were heartfelt cries to God Himself for His leadership, guidance, and protection over each of us, individually. I experienced the depth of this during my time overseas at university, one of the most challenging periods of my life. Being far from home, in a completely foreign environment, I found myself in a storm. But it was in that storm that I drew closest to God, seeking refuge, direction, and a renewed sense of purpose. I know, without a doubt, that it was Granny's prayers that helped lead me to finding the peace that only God can offer.

Granny's unwavering faith, particularly through her prayer life, serves as a powerful testimony to God's lovingkindness, reflecting the promise in Jeremiah 29:11–14:

"For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope. Then you will call upon Me and go and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart. I will be found by you, says the Lord, and I will bring you back from your captivity..."

Granny, your unwavering dedication to serving Jesus has positioned our family to receive His love and grace—both now, and in the life to come. Your wisdom in this reflects the words of Christ in Matthew 7:24–27:

"Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock. But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall."

Thank you, Granny, for building this family on the only foundation that offers everlasting love and eternal hope: the rock of Jesus Christ.

Love,

Luke.

#### TRIBUTE TO MA

When I got married to Marisa, I did not get to choose my mother-in-law, but a strong bond was created with you and all members of the family. Even though I am not a direct blood relative, you were such an important part of my life and I saw you as my own mother. I remember being asked to escort you to Trinidad for you to visit your family and I felt so honored to be chosen to do this. This was one of several elements as your son-in-law that made me realize how important you were to me.

You were not just my mother-in-law, but a true inspiration, giving me sound advice when I needed it, and shaped me in ways words can hardly express.

Though you have passed, your spirit remains a guiding force in my life, a cherished reminder of your enduring love and the indelible mark you have left in my heart. Your memory is a treasure I will always hold dear.

Thank you for welcoming me into the family with open arms and a heart full of warmth. Your legacy of love, understanding, and acceptance will continue to live with me.

Rest in Peace, Ma. Love Always, Stephen

#### TRIBUTE TO MY MOM

Mom, you were a prayer champion and you loved God. There are days when I heard your voice at midnight praying for everyone but yourself. You made me understand the importance of prayer, you taught me the Bible in a way even a layman would understand, and you dissected the word of God and made it pleasing to my hearing.

You were a sweet and loving mother, like a dove, pure and calm. I learned patience, endurance, and humility from you. You were humble to a fault; your humility baffled me because you were always respectful even to those who did not deserve it. I am glad you were the one who brought me to this world. You were a brave and hardworking woman, I learned how to be independent from you. You brought up four kids into adulthood. Your strength was incomparable. You were not just a mother but also like a father to us, I will forever be indebted to you. You were a blessing to me, and the whole family for that matter. It is hard to accept the reality that you are truly gone forever, but I will continue to have you in my thoughts and prayers every day.

I will always love you, Mom and appreciate you for impacting my life. You will be greatly missed.

Farewell, Mom, and rest in peace.

Love Always,

Marisa

Today, I honor the life and legacy of a remarkable woman—Ms. Mavis, my beloved mother-in-law. For almost 40 years, I had the privilege of knowing her, learning from her, and being embraced by her enduring love.

Ms. Mavis was a woman of quiet strength, independence, deep faith, and unshakable determination. A faithful servant of God, she walked through life's many trials with grace, resilience, and an open heart. Her story was one of perseverance—of overcoming, of forgiving, and of holding tightly to faith when life gave her every reason not to.

She loved her family fiercely and unconditionally. Her love was not loud, but it was constant—a steady presence that grounded us all. She held us together with her wisdom, her prayers, and the comfort of her presence.

Ms. Mavis was a magician in the kitchen. Her roti was like no other—soft, warm and always made with love. Her salt fish and bakes and her pelau were unmatched. She taught me how to make her famous, flavorful pepper sauce—though not with a whole lot of patience! But that was Ms. Mavis—direct, passionate, and always full of life in the kitchen. I was honored to learn from her, to stand beside her as she passed on that recipe/technique. Her food wasn't just delicious; it was her love, poured into every bite. I admired her deeply. I respected her more than words can say. I will miss our talks about her youth, her joys, her struggles and the lessons life taught her. There was so much strength, richness and history in her voice.

Our hearts now carry the weight of her absence but we also carry her spirit—her strength, her faith, her love. Ms. Mavis may no longer be with us in body, but her legacy lives on in each of us who were fortunate enough to love her.

Rest well, Ms. Mavis. You were, and always will be, cherished.

All my love,

Mindy

A Tribute to Our Beloved Aunty Mavis
\*From Sylvia's Children\*

Though we are far away and cannot be there in person, our hearts are with you all as we honor the memory of our beloved Aunty Mavis.

Growing up, the news of Aunty Mavis visiting felt like Christmas. Our home would fill with excitement—our mom, Sylvia, would be overjoyed. She'd start planning what she would cook, where they would go, and how they'd spend their time together. Their bond was so special.

We remember the joy of receiving birthday and Christmas cards from Aunty Mavis. The excitement we felt waiting for the postman to deliver her thoughtful messages remains one of our fondest childhood memories.

And when she visited—always so graceful and elegant—she'd be dressed to perfection, stockings, makeup, and hair done just right. She and Mom would head to Arima for a full day of shopping and laughter. We remember her relaxing afterward, reading novels or working on her word sleuth puzzles.

She loved her ole time calypso, going to look at kiddies carnival in port of spain and spoke often of her school days at Naparima College. One memory that always brings a smile is hearing our dad fondly call her "Rock and Roll." We may never know the full story behind that nickname, but it always made everyone laugh.

Aunty Mavis brought warmth, joy, and style into every space she entered. Her presence will always be cherished in our hearts. Rest peacefully, Aunty Mavis. Thank you for the memories. You will always be deeply loved and remembered.

With love.

Rhonda, Charlotte, Gary, Sterling, Heidi and Ryan.

# BE STILL AND KNOW THAT I AM GOD; I WILL BE EXALTED AMONG THE NATIONS, I WILL BE EXALTED IN THE EARTH!

Psalm 46: 10-11



The family of the late Mavis Hennings wish to express their sincere and heartfelt thanks to the many relatives and friends whose support has meant so much during this difficult time.

Special thanks to Dr. Sophia Rado of Cayman Clinic, Dr. Lauren Goodman, Nurses Catherine, Edward & Ruth, Caregivers Sylvia, Gloria and Donette (affectionately known as Donut) of Jasmine during her brief time there. To her dearest and devoted friend Delia Vera and our helper Jenice for their unwavering and compassionate assistance during her illness.

Thank you to the staff of Bodden Funeral Service.