



## Paula A. Ervin

October 9, 2006

Paula Anne Dillon Ervin was born a citizen of Chicago to immigrant parents, in the cultural hub of the Irish Catholic South Side. Paula's father Tim was a decorated Battalion Chief in the Chicago Fire Department while her mother Anne, kept house in the family's three flat. Her early years found her surrounded by the humor and wisdom of numerous uncles, aunts and cousins who, in turn, found Paula to be a live wire and absolutely nobody's pushover. She took ballet, spoke French and played Chopin on the piano, but it was the lyrical nature and gentleness of "her people" that was the foundation that would sustain her all her life. Paula's parents knew the value of an education and sent their daughter to the University of Chicago, where she would cross paths with a young English professor, Norman MacLean, author of *A River Runs Through It*. He would inspire and encourage Paula thus instilling an appreciation for literature that would remain her constant companion for the rest of her years.

When Paula was just 20, her father died of stomach cancer, and his death was the source of Paula's Great Regret. She had not told him that she loved him dearly. After coming home every day and crying on her bed, she made herself a promise that she would never again keep her love a secret from those she held dear, a promise that she kept unto her death. Upon graduating, Paula became secretary to the Marshall Field of Field's Department Store. Although she would see great and powerful of the city walk past her from that position, she was "wholly unimpressed." However, she was immediately

smitten with a skinny guy from South Bend having met on a blind date. A breathless romance ensued with Bob Marrying Paula in Sacred Heart Chapel on Notre Dame Campus. Bob turned to Paula and said "This is the happiest day of my life!" and her response was "Get your foot off my veil!" Bob and Paula immediately set out to build a family of five boys and a daughter. This would mark the advent of Paula's lifelong devotion to St. Jude (patron of hopeless cases.) The kids were hard on the furniture, but the bond of Paula's obvious love for Bob and for each one of her children individually was the glue for her family that will long survive her.

In 1967 Paula was a founding member of Right to Life-LIFESPAN in Western Wayne County. She and Bob would spend the rest of their lives helping to raise a chorus of voices in defense of the least desirable members of society, the unborn, the imperfectly born, and the elderly.

From this passion was born Paula's first book, *Women Exploited*. She would go on to author hundreds of articles, letters to the editor, position papers and attend thousands of meetings, marches and any sort of gathering that might somehow protect our most helpless citizens. Along the way, all the kids married and went into the baby business. The active grandparenting that Paula and Bob pursued made for an even stronger stock of the next generation. Paula never abandoned her passion for writing, eventually penning two novels, *Mentioned in the Will* and *Without Strangers*, the second being autobiographical about Bob and Paula's life associated with the University of Notre Dame.

After 62 years of marriage, Bob's death in October of 2002 broke Paula's heart of hearts. However she taught us all that life is never about quitting or throwing in the towel, and she remained a vital part of the family for the next four years. Her health turned and she came to live with her son Bob and Barbara Ervin's home, where Barbara's loving care gladdened Paula's days. She passed amidst a family that shall always hold her as a most stunning example of faith and love in action. Paula is survived by her six children and their spouses, her 32 grandchildren and 32 great-grandchildren, all of whom

were tenderly loved by her.

# Tribute Wall



“ *Paula A. Ervin*

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December 07, 2023 at 05:11 AM



“ *Dear Cathy and family,  
I was so sorry to hear of the passing of your mother. She was always one of my favorite car pool driver. I always looked up to her, admiring her intellect and strength.  
I speak for my entire family when I say we really regret missing our opportunity to pay our respects. Our deepest sympathy.*

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**Margaret (Maly) Landis** - December 12, 2014 at 10:34 AM



“ *Dear Ervin Family,  
Paula has always been an inspiration for me and will continue to be. Her dedication, zeal, and tirelessness for the cause of LIFE will be sending ripples of energy to those who care until victory is accomplished. Our prayers are with you at this time. Maureen and Rich*

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**Maureen Dreslinski** - December 12, 2014 at 10:34 AM

BM

“ *Dave, Cathy, Mike, Tom, Joe, Bob and the entire extended Ervin family:*

*I have such fond memories of my very frequent visits to your home growing up. Your mother always made me feel so welcome and her love for all of you was always there to see. I know how much you miss her and that so many other people whose lives she touched will miss her as well. I am sorry I can't be with you but know that you and your mother are in my thoughts and prayers.*

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**Bill Moehle** - December 12, 2014 at 10:34 AM

DT

“ *A great lady, a wonderful mom and wife, my mentor. Not only was Paula greeted by dearest Bob but by a choir of tiny voices---those of the little ones she championed with such eloquence and love. A life well lived, a reward well deserved. Please let your grief be tempered by the knowledge that Paula is home, with Bob, comfortable and praying for us all.*

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**Diane Trombley** - December 12, 2014 at 10:34 AM

TV

“ *Dear Tom and family,  
Our sincerest condolences on the death of your mother. Our thoughts and prayers are with you always. A donation has been made to Right to Life-Lifespan in your mother's name.  
The crew of VENOM, Doug, Tom, Tom jr., Dennis, and Jim*

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**The crew of VENOM** - December 12, 2014 at 10:34 AM

TM

“ Joe, please accept my condolences on the loss of your mother. I imagine that you are not looking at this as your loss, but as a celebration of a wonderfully long life, and what a positive impact and difference she made in those she touched. God Bless.

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**Tina McLaughlin** - December 12, 2014 at 10:34 AM

FO

“ What a grand lady, and what joy there must be in the kingdom now that Bob and Paula are together again! Know that my prayers are with you as you bid farewell. We will remember all of you here at Romeo as you give Paula back to the Lord.

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**Father Doc Ortman** - December 12, 2014 at 10:34 AM