

Remarks on Behalf of the Lavezzi Family

Mass of Christian Burial of Lynn Lavezzi, January 20, 2026

The medieval theologian Meister Eckhart wrote that “If the only prayer you say in your entire life is ‘Thank You,’ that would suffice.” So let me start by thanking all of you on behalf of our family for being here today. The outpouring of love and support that we have received has been overwhelming.

It is my task today to tell you a few things about my wife—and brother—Lynn. Lynn was proud to be an honorary member of Beta Tau Sigma, the fraternal name of the John Carroll University Glee Club, and we have brothers here today.

Lynn was the English Department secretary when Carroll was still a men’s university and almost the only women on campus were staff members. Word got around: in my first month there I learned that the English office had this cute, sassy secretary, and I found an excuse to visit. We started dating about the time I joined the Betas, and Lynn became a regular at our concerts and events. She had terrific clerical skills: she knew shorthand; she wrote better than most of us; and in those days before word processors, she typed better than any of us. If she was asked nicely, she prepared programs and correspondence for the Betas, and eventually she was named an honorary brother.

In fact, when we were married at the Church of the Gesu in University Heights, the brothers sobered up long enough to serve as the choir. At that point, although we had been dating for four years, I didn’t yet appreciate her contrasts and contradictions. She related primarily to people, not organizations. She didn’t generally volunteer for organizations; but if an individual asked for a favor, she would usually say yes; and if she accepted a responsibility, she would do it wholeheartedly and well. She disliked crowds, but she loved to entertain. And although she simply would not get up in front of people, she enjoyed talking with individuals. PhDs relied on her, and she took some college classes—one with my sister Judy and one with me—but she wasn’t interested in getting a degree. After she took time off for Heather’s birth, the university tried to get her back, but she chose a career at home raising children and running the household—and me.

I knew early on that Lynn was independent and fearless, but may not have realized how much. Our lawn mower was picked out by her because she was the one mowing the lawn. We have two snow blowers because mine was too big and she wouldn’t wait for me to clear our driveway and the sidewalks of our neighbors. If we needed to make a repair around the house, she researched how to do it, assembled the materials, and bought or rented the tools. She decided we needed a deck, and I came home one day to find her digging postholes. When a fire displaced us for four months, she commuted from our temporary housing to its unheated shell and coordinated the rebuilding.

But the projects she was proudest of are our three children; and then, first three grandchildren, and finally one more—Callan—who will not remember this day

but will hear about it for years. She couldn't express it toward the end, but it was always clear that those children and grandchildren were the loves of her life.

Lynn's determination continued into these later years. As her disorder took her voice and mobility, she worked hard with her therapists to keep both as long as she could. Although she was indoors virtually all of the time, TV brought the world to her: she monitored the weather and news, and since sports are based on action, not words, she could enjoy Cleveland and Notre Dame sports teams. Although she couldn't voice opinions, she had them, and she continued to vote by mail. And although she couldn't articulate her preferences for care, I believe she appreciated the choices we made and the care she received from her medical team, Sherri, and all the caregivers who helped keep her comfortable.

Lynn and I didn't talk much about religion, but she valued our faith, and she practiced it. She answered phones at Gesu as a teenager. Throughout her life, she made and valued religious friends, including priests and vowed brothers and sisters.

She treasured the Resurrection faith community. The last time she drove, she drove here. One weekend a few years ago, I was late coming back from a meeting; and even though she had not driven in months, she shocked me and scared our friends by driving herself here for Mass. More recently, after she became too frail to attend, she relied on the livestream feature to connect to this community and to hear the word of God. Even toward the end, when she was sleeping through most of each day, her eyes would usually open for Mass. Although she couldn't express it, I know that her several anointings by Father Tom—one just hours before she died—comforted her.

There are people here who know me but never met Lynn. I would have them know that she made possible everything I have been able to do. She was my chief advocate, my consoler, and my anchor.

To all of us who knew her, she was a loyal friend, a fierce supporter, and a devoted sister, mother, and grandmother.

I have been sad for her for years, but I am joyful today, because I believe that she is talking with her parents, brother, and friends, and she is dancing with better partners than me.

[Sung: from "Longer," by Dan Fogelberg]
Through the years, as the fire starts to mellow,
Burning lines in the book of our lives,
Though the binding cracks,
And the pages start to yellow,
I'll be in love with you.
I am in love with you.

(Remarks delivered by Bill Lavezzi on behalf of Lynn's family)