

## Norma Rellihan

It's hard to think about Lexington Avenue without thinking about the Rellihans. The family has occupied that house on the corner for nearly 100 years. When Norma moved over here, she got a new husband, a new home, and a new church all at the same time. She totally invested herself into it all. She was devoted to Jim and to all of their eight children. She kept the house in order, and she kept the people inside the house in order too. She volunteered for almost everything you could do at church. For most of her life, this was known as Assumption Church, and her children attended Assumption school here - as her husband had. So she got active in the school and the various organizations her kids joined. Lexington and Benton became her world. She didn't need a car to get to the places that meant the most to her. She thrived, her kids thrived, and this parish thrived because of her complete devotion.

It wasn't that way before she met Jim Rellihan. When she was young, her family moved a lot, and her parents sent her to whatever church was on the corner. When she finally settled down, she really settled down. She spent the next 77 years in the same house. Now she's moving on.

At the Last Supper, Jesus was preparing to move on. He knew he was about to die, so he had one final meal with his followers. He gave a long talk at that meal, according to John's gospel. He challenged his disciples to love one another, and comforted them with a promise for the future. They had to be worried - not just about the death of their Lord, but about the violence that was approaching him and them.

Jesus said, "Do not let your hearts be troubled." Easier said than done when your life is about to turn upside down. But he gave them the key to an untroubled heart: "You have faith in God; have faith also in me." Jesus informed his disciples that he was going away, but he was going with a purpose - to prepare a place for them. He promised to return and take them with him - as long as between now and then they follow the right way.

In order to reassure them, Jesus used a concrete expression: "in my Father's house there are many dwelling places." It sounds like the Rellihan house on Lexington Avenue. The Father's house is a stable place. It doesn't move around. It has enough dwelling places for a large family. You know where it is. It's easy to find. You know how to get there. The way to the Rellihan house is the same way to Jesus' Father's house - Jesus is the way.

My brothers and sisters, we have lost a lady dear to this parish and irreplaceable in her family. She has done what she could to show us the way to the Father's house. We entrust her now to the loving care of that same heavenly Father. Together with the husband she loved, may Norma live at her new address forever in peace.