



Ms. Grace Blanks

May 28, 1946 - December 18, 2013

Grace Blanks was born to the late Mary Lee and Calvin Blanks on May 28, 1946 in Crawfordsville, Arkansas. Grace passed away in her sleep on December 18, 2013. She was preceded in death by her parents, her brothers, Leon and Lee Van; her sisters, Marie and Elener; and her youngest son, Anthony, known to his family as "Mark."

Grace was educated in Marion, Arkansas at J.S. Phelix High School. She was baptized at Friendship Baptist Church in James Mill, Arkansas, and remained a member there until she left Arkansas. She moved to Detroit, Michigan, along with her son Michael in 1964. Soon after, she began her career as a health care worker at Parks Geriatrics Village in Highland Park, Michigan. This was the beginning of a career that allowed her to help countless others. She was an exceptional worker and soon advanced to steward on the night shift at Parks. Her abilities were recognized by Paul Policicchio, who was the President of SEIU Local 79 at the time. After graduating from The Wayne State School of Labor, Grace became a member of the SEIU, Local 79 Executive Board, where she served under four presidents—Policicchio, Willie Hampton, Rickman Jackson and Marge Faville. Her service provided opportunities for her to travel all over the United States organizing health care workers.

In a recent conversation with one of her children, Grace described how she

would want to be remembered in such a way that it seemed as though she was writing her own epitaph:

"An eighteen year old girl moved to Detroit and hung with the best of them. [She] made a way when 'in some cases' there was no way. [She] had her share of ups and downs [but she] found a passion and made it a career. From Sergeant-at-Arms in an industry, not necessarily liked by all, but certainly respected by all, certainly one of the Titans in the industry. Later on, [she] led activist-like duties in her field. [She was] committed to helping others who could not speak for or help themselves."

Grace had a personality that reached out to embrace you the moment she entered a room, or even called you on the phone. She was bold and teasing with a touch of mischief thrown in. Grace never met a stranger. As soon as she saw you, first time or not, she brought you into her world of fun and merriment. You knew that you were in the presence of "the Queen."

Cemetery Details

Detroit Memorial Park West

25200 Plymouth Road
Redford Twp., MI 48239

Previous Events

Visitation

Friday, Dec. **27**. 3:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

O. H. Pye, III Funeral Home
17600 Plymouth Road
Detroit, MI 48227
(313) 838-9770
info@pyefuneralhome.com

Family Hour

Saturday, Dec. **28**. 12:00 PM - 12:30 PM (ET)

O. H. Pye, III Funeral Home
17600 Plymouth Road
Detroit, MI 48227
(313) 838-9770
info@pyefuneralhome.com

Funeral Service

Saturday, Dec. **28**. 12:30 PM (ET)

O. H. Pye, III Funeral Home
17600 Plymouth Road
Detroit, MI 48227
(313) 838-9770
info@pyefuneralhome.com

Tribute Wall



“ *Ms. Grace Blanks*

January 21, 2023 at 09:34 PM



“ *I am sending my condolences to the entire Blanks family! Your mother and spirit will be dearly missed and will continue to live on in all of her family! May god be with you in this time and moving forward. Love, Tara Wurtz*

Tara Wurtz - December 27, 2013 at 09:55 PM



I am just reviewing this post in 2025. Whomever wrote this obituary was spot on. I loved Ms. Grace (The Queen). She was a beautiful spirit. ❤️

Kim Lightfoot - June 16, 2025 at 10:29 AM