



## Mr. Manuel DeWitt Thomas, Sr.

December 29, 1934 - November 7, 2013

### His Journey:

Manuel DeWitt Thomas, Sr. was born in Detroit, Michigan on December 29, 1934 to Mattie Lee Faulkner and Robert DeWitt Thomas. He was the third of seven children born of that union. He attended Claude J. Miller Elementary School in Ecorse and then Sampson Elementary in Detroit. Manuel went on to attend Cass Technical High School for blueprint reading and design. He later graduated from Chadsey High School in 1952 at the age of 18.

After graduating, he hired into Ford Motor Company in 1952, where he worked for five years before being drafted into the United States Army. Manuel Sr. served two years at Fort Knox when he left the military with an honorable discharge. Manuel returned to work at Ford Motor Company, where he remained until his retirement on November 1, 2003 after 50 years of exceptional service.

While working at Ford, Manuel met his future brother-in-law, Burl Vesey. It would take Manuel coming to the Vesey's house four different times for Friday prayer services before he met Christell Vesey. Eventually they married on August 30, 1958 after only knowing each other for three months. From this union was born five children: Jenean Marie (stillborn), Manuel Jr., Mark Anthony, Matthew Steven and Marlene Nicole.

Manuel's work ethic can only be described as strong. Over the years he held multiple jobs at the same time. While working at Ford Motor Company, he also worked at the United Parcel Service (UPS), the Fitzgerald Company (automotive supplier) and another unnamed company as a welder.

Manuel had many hobbies and interests over the years, but his first love -- was cars. He also took pride in maintaining the lawn of the family home, which he received many compliments from friends, family, neighbors and even strangers.

Manuel was quiet and kind but passionate about many things: his belief in the power of education, his faith in God and family are just some of the things he truly loved. He believed that education and knowledge were the keys to the future. Manuel continued his own education as he took classes at Wayne State University which allowed him to reach the highest position possible as a tool-cutter-grinder (Honorary Engineer) at Ford Transmission Plant in Livonia, Michigan. Church was also another big part of his life. He loved the word of God. He was baptized and filled with the Holy Ghost at the Bethlehem Temple of Inkster under Elder Oscar Hayes. He instilled in all his children a strong sense of spirituality. Manuel remained married to Christell for 42 years before ending in a divorce.

During his later years Manuel traveled and preached at different churches and, visited homes with a prayer partner helping others to read and understand the Bible. Manuel remarried later in his life to Irene Hickman. They were married for ten years before her passing on October 25, 2011.

Manuel's last journey in life would eventually bring him back full circle to the home he built with Christell in Inkster. There he found redemption and forgiveness. Manuel's family made his final years as comfortable as possible filled with laughter, tenderness, joy and finally togetherness.

Manuel DeWitt Thomas, Sr. made his transition on November 7, 2013 at Oakwood Annapolis Hospital in Wayne, Michigan in the comfort and love of his family.

# Cemetery Details

## United Memorial Gardens

4800 Curtis Road  
Plymouth, MI 48170

# Previous Events

## Visitation

Friday, Nov. **15**. 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, Nov. **16**. 9:30 AM - 10:00 AM (ET)

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

## Funeral Service

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Saturday, Nov. **16**. 10:00 AM (ET)

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

# Tribute Wall



“ *Mr. Manuel DeWitt Thomas, Sr.*

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January 21, 2023 at 09:34 PM

JR

“ Dear Ms. Thomas:

*It is with deep sadness that I write this note to you in regards to the loss of your father, Manuel Thomas.*

*You do not know me or my son, who is a dialysis patient at Fairlane. He started in February 2013, and as far as we can remember, your dad was one of the first patients that we met.*

*We remember walking in and he was always sitting in his chair waiting for someone to pick him up....at the time, I didn't know it was you.*

*After changing my son's run time, quite often they would change his time based on availability, we were in the same module as your father. We began to speak frequently and have conversations with him.*

*My son would look for him on Monday's, Wednesday's and Friday's and if he didn't see him, he would always say, I hope he's okay. My son became very fond of your dad, and so did I. I would go and get my son something to eat at lunch time and my son would always ask if he wanted me to bring him something back, or if he wanted ice, I would get it for him.*

*I enjoyed the conversations we had with your father and when I arrived and saw the notice on the glass by the entrance door, I was heartbroken, mainly, because I didn't know how I was going to tell my son that Mr. Thomas had made his transition.*

*He, your father had told us that he had surgery, and my son would say to him, that he would get stronger and that he would be okay. My son could tell that he was not feeling well.*

*I had not planned on writing you a letter, but just a note. Sometimes you never know what kind of impact others play in your life.*

*We just wanted you to know that your father touched my son's life in a real special way by confirming to him that everything would be okay and that he shouldn't give up but continue to come those three days a week. Your father was very encouraging to my son and for that I just wanted to thank you from both of us.*

*My condolences to you and your family and I hope that you will find peace in knowing that your father touched others that you may not even be aware of.*

*My sincere prayers are with you as you go through this bereavement moment.*

*God Bless You All,*

*Ellee Redding, III – Patient  
Juanita Redding – Mother  
November 15, 2013*

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**Juanita Redding** - November 15, 2013 at 06:23 PM