



Darnell Joseph Prejean

October 17, 2022

DARNELL JOSEPH PREJEAN

“A LIFE WELL LIVED AND WELL LOVED”

Sunrise: September 12, 1969

Sunset: October 17, 2022

Whoever said, “You don’t have to be famous to be remembered,” must have known that on September 12, 1969, Darnell Joseph Prejean would be born. Without fanfare, he would redefine human kindness, service and caring for the needs of others. As the second child born to Peter and Patricia Prejean, it was evident at an early age that God had given Darnell many gifts. His talents would take him from Lafayette, Louisiana to places around the world. With a singing voice that could have easily been among the top secular singing artists, Darnell chose to use his voice and gift of playing the piano in reverence to GOD as a gospel singer. It was at 11 a.m. Mass on Sundays at Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic Church in Lafayette where the congregation would experience his talents along with the rest of the voices of the church’s well known “People’s Choir.”

After graduating from Northside High School in 1987, Darnell moved to New Orleans and registered as a nursing student at the highly-acclaimed Dillard University School of Nursing. Upon graduating from Dillard, he utilized his

superior nursing skills at Touro Infirmary and Charity Hospital. He also worked as an on-campus registered nurse at several Orleans Parish Public Schools for students who required healthcare during the school day.

As a first responder and nurse in 2005 when Hurricane Katrina flooded the region, Darnell was on duty at Charity Hospital. He and several other nurses kept six of seven elderly patients alive until Federal Assistance arrived with boats and helicopters to rescue them.

As a highly decorated nurse, Darnell returned to school in Funeral Service Education at Delgado Community College earning his Mortuary Science Certification. That certification led to one of the highlights of his career. He assisted his longtime friend Linda Swanson, of Swanson Funeral Home in Detroit, Michigan, as a pallbearer at the Queen of Soul Aretha Franklin's funeral service which was broadcast around the world. He also assisted in the funeral services of Civil Rights Leader Mrs. Rosa Parks and the Queen of Creole Cuisine, Mrs. Leah Chase, who loved Darnell like family.

Darnell grew up in a close-knit family. His family was everything to him. After his father's death, his mother and her three children relied on each other and their faith in GOD as they did during his illness. Those of us who truly knew Darnell can tell you, he was a man of order and protocol. As we sit here today, his celebration of life is unfolding with his oversight from his detailed written instructions handled by a select committee of his family, close friends and Alpha Phi Alpha Brothers with his mother having the last word.

Darnell was preceded in death by his father, Peter Prejean, his father's parents, Albert "Col-tah" Prejean Sr. and his beloved grandmother Eva Prejean better known as "MawMaw."

He was also preceded in death by his mother's parents, Curtis and Helen

Pierre; his mother's two sisters-Dorothy Pierre and Mary Helen Stamps; Godmother Bernita Phillips; Aunts-Geneva Laxey; Rosa Mae Anderson and Edna Roy; Uncles-John Laxey; Peter Laxey; and Anthony Pierre Sr.

Darnell is survived by his mother Patricia Prejean, who lovingly cared for her son the entire duration of his illness; his sister Helena, who was his stem cell match; his brother Everette Prejean (Stacy), Uncle Albert Prejean Jr. (Yvonne); Godfather George Phillips Sr.; Nieces-Courtnie Benjamin; Adrienne Prejean, Ashley Prejean; Nephews-Everette Prejean Jr.; Chadwick Benjamin Jr.; Coby Benjamin; his Aunt Jeanette Harris, Uncle Willis Prejean (Janice) and a host of cousins, Godchildren, relatives, friends and Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Brothers from around the world.

Although Darnell passed away October 17th, his spirit of sharing with others will live on through his adoring family and friends. He was a caring and loving person who throughout his life, devoted himself to his religion, his faith in GOD and the people around him. He was a member of the National Funeral Directors Association, Louisiana Funeral Directors and Mortician Association, Sigma Theta Tau International Nursing Society, American Nurses Association (ANA), Louisiana State Nurses Association, Dillard University National Alumni Association, Dillard University Professional Organization of Nurses (DUPON), NAACP (New Orleans Chapter), Urban League of Louisiana, Friends of Longue Vue and Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. – Sigma Lambda Chapter.

He will also be remembered for looking at the brighter side of life and distancing himself from those who spoke unfavorably of others.

In death, as in life, Darnell is still reaching out to help others with the formation of the Darnell Prejean Endowed Nursing Scholarship at Dillard University. He financially began funding the endowment before his death. The public can contribute to the endowment at <https://dillarduniversity.networkforgood.com/projects/173145-darnell-prejean-endowed-nursing-scholarship-fund> . Darnell will be sorely missed by those of us left behind, but we know GOD is pleased to have one of his generous angels back in HIS arms where he belongs.

With Darnell's work now done on the stage of life, we echo the words of famed English play-write William Shakespeare's farewell to his notable character, Hamlet, "Goodnight Sweet Prince and flights of angels sing thee to thy rest."

Relatives, Family and friends are invited to attend a funeral service at Dillard University Lawless Memorial Chapel, 2601 Gentilly Blvd New Orleans, LA 70122 on Sunday, October 30, 2022 at 3:00 pm. Visitation will be held from 1:00 pm-2:45 pm. Service will be available to view livestream by visiting <https://youtu.be/Z3WBKmVYSzA>.

Darnell Prejean will continue to be celebrated at Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic Church, 818 12th Street Lafayette, LA 70501, on Monday, October 31, 2022 at 1:00 pm. Visitation will begin at 11:30 am. Interment: Calvary Cemetery, 355 Teurlings Dr. Lafayette, LA 70501.

Arrangements by D.W. Rhodes Funeral Home, 3933 Washington Ave. New Orleans, LA 70125. Please visit www.rhodesfuneral.com to sign the online guestbook.

Previous Events

Visitation

OCT **30**. 1:00 PM - 2:45 PM (CT)

Lawless Memorial Chapel (Dillard University)
2601 Gentilly Blvd
New Orleans, LA 70122

Funeral

OCT **30**. 3:00 PM (CT)

Lawless Memorial Chapel (Dillard University)
2601 Gentilly Blvd
New Orleans, LA 70122

Visitation

OCT **31**. 11:30 AM - 12:45 PM (CT)

Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic Church
818 12th Street
Lafayette, LA 70501

Funeral

OCT **31**. 1:00 PM (CT)

Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic Church
818 12th Street
Lafayette, LA 70501

Tribute Wall

SJ

“ With deepest sympathy. So sorry for your loss. May Darnell rest in God’s love and peace.

Sandra Jolivette - October 31, 2022 at 12:39 AM

BB

“ To Darnell’s family, you have my deepest condolences. I did not know Darnell personally but my son, Chad Broussard, spoke highly of Darnell. Chad is in New Orleans to pay his last respects for his friend. 🙏

Betty Gorddon Broussard - October 30, 2022 at 08:37 PM

BJ

“ Bro. Charles Kennedy, Jr. purchased the Garden Accent Stone - "Wherever a Beautiful Soul..." for the family of Darnell Joseph Prejean.



Bro. Charles Kennedy, Jr. - October 30, 2022 at 06:10 PM

CJ

“ Darnell, had a beautiful spirit - always smiling and gracious in his greetings. Bro. Charles Kennedy, Jr.

Charles Kennedy, Jr. - October 30, 2022 at 05:56 PM

CF

“ *In loving memory of a wonderful person. Darnell will truly be missed. My deepest sympathy is extended to the family during this difficult time. May you all find comfort in prayer, strength in God, and in knowing that friends care.*

~Dr. Chu Jun Fryson

Chu Jun Fryson - October 30, 2022 at 04:21 PM

AG

“ *Our dear Knight of Nursing!!! We love you! We thank God for You! Your life has been a testament of the goodness of God! Ever person you've touched! God has touched! Your smile have given others an opportunity to smile, and your voice will speak volumes for years to come. You are now in the safety of the Father and He is well pleased* ❤️❤️❤️

Adriene J Gill - October 30, 2022 at 02:29 PM

HR

“ *Darnell was one of the finest humans and nurses I ever had the pleasure of knowing. His passing breaks my heart. But, he made a difference in this world in his short time - a REAL difference - that to me is comforting. Fly high, precious man, fly high!*

helen Ruiz - October 30, 2022 at 11:40 AM

SW

“ Sympathies to the Prejean family, he will be greatly missed! He was a man of many talents. Always humble and very loving and passionate about everything he pursued! Your work is done, take your rest, we will one day meet again! The Washington Family.



Suzanne Broussard Washington - October 29, 2022 at 09:23 AM

AG

“ Annette Garner lit a candle in memory of Darnell Prejean



Annette Blankenship Garner - October 28, 2022 at 01:41 PM