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Saying goodbye is always tough

Columnist's mother loved gardening

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Contributing writer

I had to say goodbye to someone I love very much recently. My mother, Emelda "Tuddie" Mooty, passed away peacefully in her sleep on March 30. She was 95 and left behind me; Ann Hays, her oldest daughter; a dear daughter–in–law, Shirley Mooty; two great sons–in–law, Dave Hays and Steve Mattison; and a host of other family members.

She lived with me for the past 13 years and remained pretty self–sufficient until a terrible fall almost two years ago, after which she declined little by little. She loved gardening and had many plants and flowers she took care of until that fall, when she no longer could do it.

She was born one of nine children who lived on an island that was located behind Lake Salvador and is no longer in existence. They lived a happy but humble life, living off the land as they trapped, fished and hunted. They only went to the market about once every two weeks and the only means of transportation was by boat. School was out of the question because of location. Their mother taught them some, but this was very limited.

A devoted wife, mother and grandmother, her family was her life. She was the hub that kept the family together. I hope she will still do that from above.

I battled with why she was left in misery for so long. It really bothered me until my daughter, Dena, said, "I know why God kept her here so long. He was saving her for Holy Week."

This was the best explanation I have heard. She spent Easter with Jesus. Though saying goodbye is never easy, I know she is no longer in misery or pain. She is at peace forever.

As a catechism student many years ago, I remember a teacher describing what Heaven must be like: "Heaven is a place where you have everything you need and want. There is no pain or suffering. Only love and peace." Well, if you have everything you want, I think Mama is with Daddy, my brother and my sister and all of her siblings. And if Daddy and Bubba, my brother, are not watching wrestling, they are all having the biggest card game ever.

Thanks to *Hospice Compassus* and all the private sitters who helped take care of her. I will always be grateful for the fantastic care you provided. I never worried when I had to leave to run errands because I knew Mama was in the best of hands. On a scale of 1 to 10, I give all of you an 11. You are the greatest.

Mama, you will be missed greatly. Goodbye, until we meet again.

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