

**PASSING OF A CULTURAL ICON**

On May 28, the literary giant and cultural icon described by President Obama as “one of the brightest lights of our time,” Maya Angelou, passed away at age 86. A poet and dramatist who published more than 35 books, Ms. Angelou was best known for her memoirs, especially *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* (1969), which made her, in the words of the *Los Angeles Times*, an “interpreter of the black experience with a message of hope and transcendence that resonated with a vast, multiracial audience.”

Yet that first volume of Ms. Angelou’s autobiography ends on an ominous note. In its final chapter, 16-year-old Maya finds herself “suffocating in the nightmare” of an unwanted pregnancy and recognizes that “I had brought the new catastrophe on myself.”

**SOMEBODY INSIDE ME**

In a 2001 *Family Circle* essay, “The Decision That Changed My Life: Keeping My Baby,” Ms. Angelou recalled those teenage fears. “Back then, if you had money, there were some girls who got abortions,” she reflected, “but I couldn’t deal with that idea” because “I knew there was somebody inside me.” That “somebody” was her only child, Guy Johnson, and though she struggled mightily to support the two of them, she described their “hand-to-mouth” lifestyle as more of a “heart-to-hand” experience in which “my son brought out the best in me and enlarged my life.”

**A CONSISTENT ETHIC OF LIFE**

In 1994, Maya Angelou demonstrated the broad scope of her pro-life commitment when she added her name to this statement published in *Mother Jones* magazine:

We, the undersigned, are committed to the protection of life, which is threatened in today’s world by war, abortion, poverty, racism, the arms race, the death penalty and euthanasia. We believe these issues are linked under a consistent ethic of life. We challenge those working on all or some of these issues to maintain a cooperative spirit of peace, reconciliation, and respect in protecting the unprotected.

Though her cosigners included activists ranging from actor Martin Sheen to the Dalai Lama, Ms. Angelou’s stand was never a popular one. Those who might agree with her position on one of the life issues tended to be against her on others.

**“IF YOU’RE FOR THE RIGHT THING, YOU DO IT WITHOUT THINKING”**

Abortion remains one of our most contentious public issues, but Maya Angelou was always grateful she had chosen life for a child whose conception once terrified her. “Years later, when I was married,” she wrote in *Family Circle*, “I wanted to have more children, but I couldn’t conceive. Isn’t it wonderful that I had a child at 16?” Fittingly, then, *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* closes with the advice Maya’s mother offered her as she nestled her newborn baby in her arms: “See, you don’t have to think about doing the right thing. If you’re for the right thing, then you do it without thinking.”

*The Lourdes Life Issues Committee promotes a consistent ethic of respect for human life from conception until natural death. For information, email [lourdesforlife@gmail.com](mailto:lourdesforlife@gmail.com)*

*Our Lady of Lourdes Monthly Calendar*

**JULY 2014**

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1 Zumba Class 6:00P Baptismal Prep 7P Lector Prep 7P	2	3	4 Independence Day <i>Church Office Closed</i>	5 T-Shirt Weekend Rosary 4:30PM 5:00PM Eucharist
6 T-Shirt Sunday Social Action 12N	7	8 Zumba Class 6:00P	9 <i>Bible Study 7:00P</i>	10 Zumba Class 6:30P AGLD Rehearsal 7:30P	11	12 Lector Prep 10:30A Rosary 4:30PM 5:00PM Eucharist Our Lady of Perpetual Help Cancer Home Fundraiser
13 Live Stream 10A Mass Our Lady of Perpetual Help Cancer Home Fundraiser RCIA 9:30A KPC/RPCLA Meeting 12N Jr. Daughter Meeting 12N	14	15 Zumba Class 6:00P	16 <i>Bible Study 7:00P</i>	17 Zumba Class 6:30P AGLD Rehearsal 7:30P	18 <i>Men's Ministry Movie Night for Edgewood 7:30P</i>	19 T-Shirt Weekend SVDP Meeting 9A Life Issues 4P Rosary 4:30PM 5:00PM Eucharist
20 T-Shirt Sunday RCIA 9:30A Haiti Committee Meeting 12N	21	22 Zumba Class 6:00P	23 <i>Bible Study 7:00P</i>	24 Zumba Class 6:30P AGLD Rehearsal 7:30P	25	26 Rosary 4:30PM 5:00PM Eucharist
27 Live Stream 10A Mass RCIA 9:30A Lay Dominicans Meeting 2P Sunday Dinner & Beignets for sale in the cafeteria after all the services.	28	29 Zumba Class 6:00P	30 <i>Bible Study 7:00P</i>	31 Zumba Class 6:30P AGLD Rehearsal 7:30P		

**Lourdes Women's Council is sponsoring Our Lady of Perpetual Help Cancer Home Raffle Ticket Fundraiser on July 12/13**  
**You can purchase Sunday Dinner & Beignets in the cafeteria on the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of the month ~ July 27**  
**Save the Date – Lourdes Church Picnic ~ Sunday, September 14<sup>th</sup> ~ Grant Park ~ 1:30P**