

You all know my Mamma. Stella Loved You all.  
So there isn't a lot for me to tell You, about her.

As a mother, as a woman, an aunt, a grandmother, and a human being,  
She gets all "Fs." Here's how....

Her first F is in Faith. She lived her faith deeply, profoundly, it wasn't just something she believed. Faith was as much a part of who she was, as her heart or her face. Perhaps that is why in her last weeks, and days, and hours of her life, she suffered no fear or doubt, not a moment's hesitation, no pain or any signs of distress. She passed peacefully into her eternity.

Stella also gets an F for Family (Famiglia). Most of us in this church are part of her family, and we know or remember how much she loved her Family. The happiest times of her life were when she was with her family. For many years, here in Uniontown, in early March, she threw an annual party to celebrate the birthdays of the brothers, who were closest to her in age: Pat (March 5th) and Tony (March 7th). These were festive occasions, often attended by most or all of the other brothers and sisters, their spouses and some of their children. These were high decibel affairs, eating drinking, talking, so much talking. The house was full of Dagos. I called these yearly parties "the Italian 500." Stella was everywhere, all at once, being the hostess with the mostest. She loved those parties. After moving away from her beloved Uniontown, and resettling in Illinois, she would look forward to any opportunities to be with family. While large, reunion-type events became rare, she always enjoyed seeing a brother here, a sister there, a nephew or two, or a niece, passing through. She was so happy to see family, and really, she lived her lived her life, visit to visit. And the goodbyes always made her cry.

Another F is in Friends. She had many cherished friends, like Mrs. Bozek, who is with us here, today. Stella was friendly, loyal, and trustworthy. When You were a friend of Stella's, You were a friend for life. After she left Uniontown in 1978, she kept in touch with her friends "back home," while making new friends in her new home. One of her best new friends was Joyce Rucker, a Special Education teacher. Mamma was her teaching assistant, and together, they were a great teaching team. They remained close friends after they retired, and they frequently got together with some of their former students. One of the most difficult phone calls I had to make, after Mamma's passing, was to one of these students. She was so sad, and at the end of the phone call, through tears, she exclaimed, "Miss Stella was the best teacher I ever had."

I'm sure she was, and that had a lot to do with her final F.

Stella's final F is in Freedom. Everyone was always completely free to be exactly who they were, with Stella. A lot of people, maybe most people, have a stronger relationship with their own judgements, comparisons, and opinions, than they do with the people in their lives. Not my Mamma. You were always free to be you around Mamma, and she would accept You, just that way. I may have tested her willingness to accept, more than anyone. She passed that test: A+. And now she is free of temporal, earthly concerns. And I am free to do whatever I want to do. But all I want to do is sing 'Mamma' to my Mamma, one more time.

<b>MAMMA</b>	
Mamma	Mama, I miss the days
Solo per te la mia canzone vola	when you were near to guide me,
Mamma	Mama, those happy days
Sarai con me, tu non sarai piu sola!	when you were here beside me.
Quanto ti voglio bene	Safe in the glow of your love,
Questo parole d'amore	Sent from the heavens above,
Che ti sospira il mio cuore	Nothing can ever replace
Forse non s'usano piu	The warmth of your tender embrace.
Oh Mamma	Oh Mamma
Ma la canzone mia piu bella sei, tu!	Ma la canzone mia piu bella sei, tu!
Sei, tu, la vita	Sei, tu, la vita
per la vita non ti lascio mai più!	per la vita non ti lascio mai più!
	Mamma
	Mamma
	Mai piu!