
Words for Emile Fisher

A homily at the funeral for Emile Fisher by the Very Rev. Sam Candler

Yes, I remember those famous usher dinners, too. Back in the day, many ushers would wonder if they might be wasting their time. They would wonder if maybe they could be back home, watching the latest comedy series on television. But, then they would realize that no television show could ever beat the comedy of Emile Fisher.

Sometimes he knew he was being funny. And he enjoyed it! Sometimes, he did not know he was being funny. And he enjoyed that, too.

Emile Fisher enjoyed this church. With his meticulous attire, and his gallons of cologne, and his crooked smile, he enjoyed this place. In particular, he enjoyed it when people gathered here.

He enjoyed it so much that he wanted others to join us and enjoy it, too. He was on the phone weekly, telephoning our visitors list and newcomers list and new members list, inviting each and every one of them to be an usher. He was an evangelist that way.

His role grew and grew here. From being a straightforward usher, escorting newcomers to a good pew, he started escorting others. He escorted other ushers to their proper places. He escorted the clergy. Back in the day when I taught at the Dean's Forums regularly, some years ago, there would actually be 150, sometimes 200 or so people attending, and it was hard to maneuver through the hallways. He took it upon himself to escort me back and forth. It's time to stop the class, he would indicate, and then he would escort me to the sacristy. He was loyal that way, generously designating his contribution, in our capital campaign, to the dean's office.

Emile is escorting us today, too. Emile is ushering us today, too, showing us the way to peace and to glory. Emile Fisher ushers us to a vision of heaven, today.

Yes, Emile enjoyed this parish, and this parish's people. And he escorted this parish, and this parish's people. But, most important of all, Emile Fisher loved this parish, and this parish's people. Emile Fisher loved.

His way of loving was not always the way some of us would love. He could be pushy and stubborn. He could get things wrong. Like the way ushers should dress. I told him time and time again, that, as far as I was concerned, ushers could dress any way they wanted; they need not follow the dress code of the 1950s. Emile would smile lovingly at me, and then continue to enforce his dress code.

The point is that Emile Fisher loved. Emile loved people. And when he loved people, people loved him back.

We gather today to love him back. Thank you Emile, for enjoying and for evangelizing. Thank you, Emile, for escorting and loving. Thank you for your generosity and kindness. Thank you for giving us a glimpse of heavenly care.

And we thank God, today. Thank you, Lord, for the presence of Emile Fisher in this community of faith. Thank you, Lord, for the love of Emile Fisher. Thank you for the heavenly love that gives us eternal life.

AMEN.

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