

Fundraiser planned in memory of parishioner Angela Wanpen Anderson



Paul and Wanpen Anderson, members of St Patrick Parish since they were married there in 1976, will have a fundraiser at St Patrick's parish center the evening of June 8 from 5 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. The chicken dinner, catered by Nelson's, will also feature a Silent Auction to raise funds for Stevens-Johnson Syndrome Awareness and Research. Proceeds will go the SJS/TEN Research Fund at Vanderbilt University Medical Center, in memory of parishioner Angela Anderson.

Three and a half years ago, on Christmas Eve, 2015, Paul and Wanpen's daughter Angela had an eye infection. She went to Convenient Care for treatment and then went home to rest. Through the night, the infection spread to her face, neck, the inside of her mouth, and her throat. By Christmas morning it had spread to her chest and arms.

Paul took her to the Emergency Room that morning and she was admitted to ICU with this unknown infection that continued to spread throughout her body, causing her outer layer of skin to slough off in sheets. By 5 a.m. the next morning, the doctor told Paul that they would have to put her on life support because her lungs were full of fluid. He said, "She's burning from the inside out."

Angela's condition continued to worsen over the next two days, and she finally died at 6 p.m. on Dec. 28, just four days after the eye infection began. The doctors said that she had succumbed to a very rare disease called Stevens-Johnson syndrome/Toxic Epidermal Necrolysis. SJS/TEN is usually triggered by medication; Angela's was Ibuprofen.

At her visitation and funeral at St Patrick Church, Paul and Wanpen asked for donations for research in lieu of flowers. At that time, they received \$10,000 in donations. When Paul went to look for a place to send the money, he found no such research being done in the U.S. After many months of searching, Paul was contacted by a doctor at Vanderbilt University Medical Center, where they wanted to start a research program for this disease.

After much scrutiny of the proposal, the doctors, and their facilities, Paul and Wanpen decided to donate the money to their program, "The SJS/TEN Research Fund in Memory of Angela Anderson." By that time, nearly a year after her death, the Andersons had accumulated \$22,000 in donations and presented Vanderbilt with a check. The fund has since received over \$50,000.

If you would like to learn more about Angela, the disease SJS/TEN, and the Andersons' advocacy for awareness and research, visit www.AngelaWanpenAnderson.com. The Andersons hope to see many at the June 8 chicken dinner, helping to put an end to the devastating disease that took Angela's life.