

# Commemorative eClarion



Serving The People Of The New Community Network

OUT OF THE ASHES  
GAME HOPE

## Remembering Monsignor William J. Linder

Those who knew Monsignor Linder well shared some of their memories of him and their thoughts about what he meant to them. The following are their tributes.

**RICHARD ROHRMAN**  
*NCC Chief Executive Officer*



Monsignor Linder many times saw more abilities in me than I did myself. I saw him do this with many others over the years too. He would drop me into a situation and leave me to figure it out on my own. He would ask, "How's it going?" and was never shy in telling me it was taking too long, but this was his way of pushing me to expand my horizons.

I will never forget the day in 1984 when Monsignor called and asked me to meet him at St. Joseph Plaza right away. St. Joseph Plaza was in the midst of renovations at the time. He pointed out the empty space at the back of the Plaza and said this is going to be the only fine dining restaurant in the Central Ward. He then pointed to the north side of the space and said this is going to be a sandwich shop with New York deli sandwiches. He then pointed to the South side of the space and said this is going to be a Health Spa with a whirlpool and sauna downstairs. I told him that it sounded wonderful and asked him if the same people who were doing the renovations were going to manage the work. "No, you are going to do it," he said. "After the design and construction is done, I want you to be in charge of opening and running the operations." In the space of five minutes, I became a restaurant and health spa renovator, equipment buyer and a business manager. Of course there were lots of others involved but it they became my projects that afternoon.

He always had a bigger picture in his head. He had great confidence in people and many of us will miss that.

**MADGE WILSON**  
*NCC Board Member and Outreach Coordinator*

Monsignor Linder, a great legend that we have loved all of these years, slipped away from us recently and it still saddens my heart. However, spending the last few days with him while on vacation really made me happy just to see how much he enjoyed and appreciated life. It meant everything to me. He was a great friend for the past 55 years. Our love and memories of him will bear witness to all of the blessings that he brought into our lives and we



have to preserve and honor that.

Having just celebrated and congratulated him on his 82nd birthday at a luncheon made him so happy and he remarked that it was the best birthday that he had ever had.

There have been so many great things said about Monsignor Linder and the wonderful things that he did to enrich and inspire the lives of others, especially the youth that are coming up in our society today. His scholarship program, for example. He was passionate about that because it gave the underprivileged youth the ability to learn and compete with others who were far more advanced. He knew education empowered the youth to lead successful lives and accomplish their goals in life.

Monsignor Linder was truly a visionary. It was after the 1967 civil disorders that occurred in Newark, when he was a young priest assigned to Queen of Angels living in the midst of the riot. He knew at that time after meeting with some of the people from the community that it became his responsibility to hear their concerns and attempt to try to improve the quality of their lives. This sparked a flame in his mind to research to build a new community for them and this is when the famous name "New Community" was born, because out of the ashes came hope and today he has built everything imaginable from day care to a one-stop shop to educate our families. Monsignor didn't just look around and see things that needed attention. He took action and made it happen, a man of action and not just words.

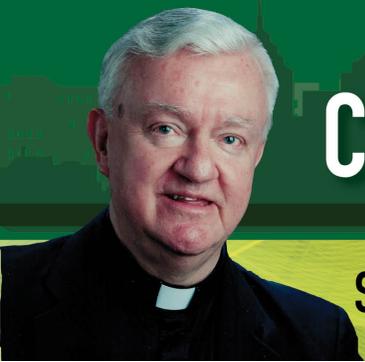
Monsignor Linder's mission of New Community is to help inner city residents improve the quality of their lives to reflect individual God-given dignity and personal achievement.

Monsignor Linder, rest in peace. We love you and will continue to carry out your dream.

**NEWTON RICHARDS**  
*NCC Board Member*

We mourn the passing of Monsignor Linder, our beloved founder, colleague and friend who successfully led NCC for 50 years. But he would remind us to keep our eyes on the future, expand and uplift the vision of prosperous and inclusive urban communities and make our mission serve as inspirations and demonstrations of what we can accomplish for the future.

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**DR. ZACHARY YAMBA**  
*NCC Board Member*



Monsignor Linder’s passing is not only a loss for his family and his church but also for the city of Newark and its people. His love and care for the residents of the city are prominently captured in the mission statement of New Community: “To help residents of inner cities improve the quality of their lives to reflect individual God-given dignity and personal achievement.” Monsignor Linder lived this mission statement.

I was privileged to have met Monsignor Linder in 1963 when he was newly assigned to the Queen of Angels Parish in Newark where I would come to worship on Sundays. Even from this early beginning, one could see in Monsignor Linder the social activist and a champion for justice and equity. His 55 years of untiring and unselfish work has, without a doubt, made a difference in the lives of people in Newark and neighboring cities. He will be sorely missed but his vision and legacy will continue to live in our city and in our hearts.

We are blessed and grateful to have known Monsignor William Linder, a man who lived his faith!

**EDGAR NEMORIN**  
*NCC Board Member*

I will share two of my fond memories of Monsignor Linder.

1) Fourteen years ago, my father passed away at his residence suddenly. My parents lived in an apartment on the fifth floor where the elevator was broken. When I arrived at their residence after the paramedics confirmed that there was nothing they could do, my first call was to Monsignor Linder. Monsignor Linder, at the age of 68, arrived and went up five flights of stairs to give my father the last blessing. He and Madge Wilson also suggested funeral homes to contact. My family was very grateful.

2) I had the pleasure and joy of Monsignor Linder to be the officiant at my wedding in Long Island. For my daughter’s baptism, Monsignor agreed to do a reenactment of the baptism for my church family at St. Rose because the official baptism was held in my Long Island parish. Therefore, I brought all my Long Island family to St. Rose, and my daughter had her baptismal clothing to receive a special blessing.

We are all disciples of Monsignor Linder. To honor his

legacy, I ask that we unconditionally volunteer, donate your time, God-given talent and treasure to help others.

**BARRY BAKER**  
*NCC Board Member*

I first met Monsignor when he was pastor at St. Rose of Lima. I had just gotten out of the military and I was looking for a parish to go to. And I ended up going to St. Rose of Lima. He was really nice, he was very welcoming and all of that. I was there for about six months when I read an article in New Jersey Magazine about him. I’m sitting there and I was almost stunned. I had been going to mass for six months and I hadn’t known anything about his activism. I knew about New Community but I didn’t know about his own personal activism. After mass we used to have this gathering downstairs in the church. I ended up talking to him about his activism. And one of the things that he consistently talked about during that day and subsequent years afterwards was that sometimes you’ve got to give truth to power, particularly with advocacy for the poor, because there’s nobody else who does that.

I remember he was talking about how he actually had protest against the archbishop of the Archdiocese. He told me, “He did not care about the poor. And if we don’t do that, then I’m sorry, I have to speak about it, I have to say something about it.”

If you’re not advocating for the people who can’t advocate for themselves, then why are you here? Why am I here? That was an overarching theme for his whole time at New Community. There were some times where he would get into conflicts and issues with city officials. If they’re not standing up for the most vulnerable in our community, then we have to call them out for it. And that included mayors, council persons, congresspeople. It did not matter. His thing was, “I have to advocate for the people who can’t advocate for themselves.”

And one of the other things he always said: “Your enemies define you in some ways much more than your friends.” There are people you’re supposed to have conflict with. If they’re not standing up for the people, then why don’t you have conflict?

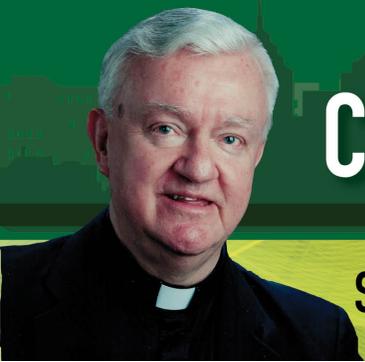
It’s not easy to stand up to people who have more authority or perceived power in the political structure. He was the kind of person that would do this in a way that was very courageous. He made you stronger. If there was a righteous fight to have, he was always saying, “It’s OK. You’ll get some backlash. You’re always going to get some backlash. At the end of the day the righteous will always win out.” And it did.

With his passing, of course we’re all going to miss him and we want him to be here, but for 50 years he gave us the blueprint. We don’t have an excuse to not do what is right. Our leader taught us that.

**MIGDALIA MARTINEZ**  
*NCC Board Member*

Father Linder and I first met when he was chosen to be the priest at St. Rose of Lima in 1977.

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## Serving The People Of The New Community Network

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Father Linder was an extraordinary person. He lived his life helping people in need, a true servant of God.

There are so many accomplishments I can mention, but I think Father Linder would want to be remembered as a kind, compassionate, humanitarian activist who was always there for his congregation and community.

Father Linder has entrusted his nephew, Rich, who no doubt will continue to do Father Linder's amazing work.

**KATHY SPIVEY**  
*NCC Chief of Staff*

As I reflect on my more than 28 years of sharing with Monsignor, the one consistent theme that comes to mind is the importance of serving the less fortunate. His whole life's history was centered around meeting the needs of others from infancy through the golden years. His commitment to service began in his early years while preparing to become a priest.

I met Monsignor at a State Employment Training Commission (SETC) meeting at Rutgers University in Piscataway. Little did we know that meeting would turn into a 28-year relationship. Riding together to SETC meetings we talked about the NCC mission, the first housing project after the riots (Homes Court) and the many projects to follow. Monsignor was convinced that housing alone did not address all the basic needs of inner city residents. They also lacked education, job training, employment opportunities, day care and other basics that one needs to have a sound existence in the community. Recognizing those needs, Monsignor sought to create an organization that would address them all.

He believed that youth and education was paramount. Starting with his first CYO group, he began to ensure that youth received a quality education through St. Rose of Lima Elementary School and the Monsignor Linder Scholarship Fund which provided scholarships to quality Catholic high schools. He believed that if given a sound foundation in elementary and high school, college and the funds needed would be easily attainable. As a result of his commitment to youth and education, there are hundreds of testimonials of the successes of the recipients!

I truly believe Monsignor's inspiration came in the middle of the night because over morning coffee he would share ideas for new projects that would address another need in the community. Harmony House was one of those ideas. He felt homeless families needed stable transitional housing rather than shelters that stripped individuals of their dignity.

Monsignor felt it was critical that we never lose sight of "our mission, our purpose" and had mission statements posted throughout the network as a constant reminder of why we are here. In addition, he created the Director of Mission position to keep us properly focused on the goals and not the obstacles. If there was a need, Monsignor never let the lack of money stop him. He knew if our purpose was right we could accomplish any goal.

In his later years, Monsignor couldn't continue his rigorous schedule but he did not believe in retirement. When asked when he would retire, Monsignor would

respond "when all the needs are met" knowing all the needs would never be met. Using the power of the pen, he crafted Clarion editorials that addressed local and world issues of injustice. In one of our last conversations, he discussed our country's appalling policy of separating immigrant children from their parents and was planning to write his next editorial on that dire situation. While we will never read his thoughts on that topic, we know he would be on the side of the weeping parents and children looking for a safe place to call home.

Monsignor lived a life of service that was grounded in the prayer of Saint Francis which was collectively recited at all NCC meetings and gatherings. As we honor his legacy we must continue to serve and pray. "Lord make me an instrument..."

**DIANE JOHNSON**  
*Retired HUD Field Office Director*

I've known Monsignor for a good portion of 30 years. As a director of the Department of Housing and Urban Development, I worked extensively with him in developing his housing, his senior citizen buildings, his family developments and his Extended Care Facility. He was a legend in his own way. Monsignor was a people's priest. He heard their cry, he heard their needs and he was determined to be of assistance to carry out those scriptures that talked about feeding the hungry and clothing the naked and housing those that needed housing. Monsignor transitioned the Central Ward and improved the quality of life for many residents. He dealt with the whole person, providing health care, workforce training and housing. It was just not bricks and mortar to him but it was to deal with the full complement of the person. His legend will live on forever. Newark not only lost a visionary, but they also lost a great friend. I too lost a friend.

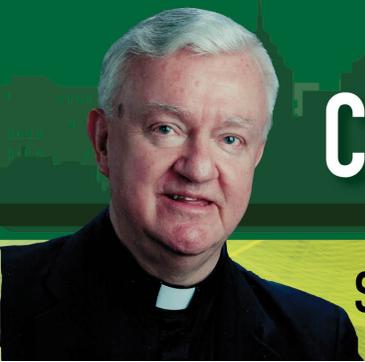
**ROSEMARY EIBELL**  
*Monsignor Linder's Aunt*

He always considered that New Community was his number one family and that we were number two. He always said that. But he was always there for us when we needed him. When I had my heart attack, he was there. I was in the hospital and all of a sudden this man was standing at the door. And it's him. That's the type of person that he was.

We spent a lot of time together when he was the pastor of St. Rose. We used to come up and spend Thanksgiving at the Priory. And then his sister and his brother-in-law and I would stay overnight. We would have time to talk to him. He would tell us some of the things he was doing, where he was traveling and so forth. But he was also interested in what we were doing. And then the next morning he would say mass downstairs and then we would come up and have coffee and bagels and juice. And then we would go to his favorite restaurant and we would have dinner there. Madge would join us. And then we would go home. And it went on for many, many years until he retired as pastor.

My sister, his mother, was the oldest of the nine of us. I spent a lot of time with them. I traveled a lot with them. Because my mother died when I was 16 and that was sort of like a second home to me. So it was just a loving relationship

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with them. And they were always there.

Just recently, within the last couple of years, he landed in the hospital. The phone rang and it was him. I asked him, “How are you doing?” He said, “I’m in the hospital.” I never knew when he was going to call. We kept in touch with one another. His passing leaves a void.

### **REGINA ADESANYA**

*Member of Queen of Angels Youth Group*

I still remember his first day in Newark when I was an impressionable 14-year-old, wondering who is this man joining the others digging the ditch. I knew then he would play a significant part in my life. From encouraging me and other youth to go to college, to that fateful phone call that started my career with Babyland Nursery and ultimately New Community Corporation as its first Education Director, Monsignor has influenced who I am as a person and how my career has gone. He always taught us the importance of “faith” and that “faith without works is useless.” I believe without his example, I would not believe so strongly that we are servants and as a servant, we must act with the humility by giving selflessly of ourselves to better the lives of others. My road has been to work within the field of early childhood education but I doubt this would have been my path without Monsignor playing a role in my life.

### **REV. FRANCES TEABOUT**

*NCC Director of Mission*

“The collar doesn’t make the priest, the priest makes the collar.”

Working in the St. Rose rectory I was privy to many conversations between Monsignor and Kathy, his Chief of Staff. A frequent discussion was what Monsignor would wear to an impending meeting. On many occasions Kathy, in her very diplomatic way would say, “You’re wearing your blacks, right?” She was referring to the black pants, black shirt and white clerical collar that once donned would declare to everyone that William Linder was a priest, a servant of the Lord. But what the collar could not reveal was the heart of the man who introduced himself as Bill despite his many honorifics. Monsignor had an earned doctorate from Fordham University, was the recipient of 10 honorary doctorates, the MacArthur Genius Award and many other honors, but these were not the things he was most proud of. The NCC LPN program that graduated hundreds of students; the countless youth who benefited from his scholarship program and went on to college; the NCC Early Learning Centers that provide affordable, quality care and education for young children while their parents work; and the first extended care facility in Newark to serve Medicaid patients — these were some of the things that were most gratifying to Monsignor.

On most occasions Monsignor gave in to Kathy’s wisdom and wore his “blacks” to important meetings but some of his most significant work was done in everyday clothes. Day after day in his khaki pants and plaid button up shirts, Monsignor listened to people’s problems, solved crises and fought many political battles on behalf of the disempowered. Whether wearing a collared shirt or a flowered shirt, Monsignor had the same priority — changing

people’s lives for the better. When I was young in ministry, Monsignor taught me how to put on my clerical collar but most importantly, he showed me how to live when I take it off.

### **GAYLE CHANEYFIELD JENKINS**

*Former Central Ward Councilwoman*

One of my fondest memories of Monsignor Linder was watching him work hand in hand with my father, Joe Chaneyfield, and community leaders to bring the first new supermarket in 25-plus years to the Central Ward with the opening of Pathmark, creating thousands of jobs and helping to stabilize our community.

The most important thing I learned from Monsignor was his ability to empower people. Empower people through jobs, empower people through faith and giving them the courage to transcend their present conditions. This has become the cornerstone of what I believe and what I truly believe New Community is about.

He will truly be missed.

### **BILLIE JEAN EASLEY-SUGGS**

Monsignor Linder was a true leader within this community and a great example of compassion, faith and selfless humanity. He gave of himself to God and whomever had a need. And one of his greatest gifts to me was his belief in something that I hadn’t even fully realized in myself. He provided me with an opportunity to truly execute and realize my creative talents. He reassured my vision for the remodeling of the Priory and New Community’s nursing home and gave me support every step of the way. He touched my family and has truly been an unforgettable figure within our lives.

There are moments that I will always hold dear in memory. Monsignor Linder has gone home now, led by the faith that guided his steps every day. He leaves behind a light and legacy of hope and love for all those that are still with us today and we will continue on in that same love and dedication to others.

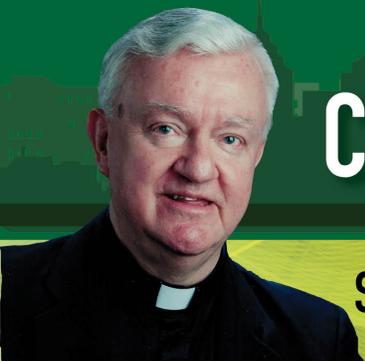
May God bless Monsignor and stand with him as he enjoys eternal peace with our Lord and Savior.

### **CECILIA M. FAULKS**

*NCC’s First Full-Time Employee*



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I met Monsignor Linder in 1968 when I was in need of some spiritual advice and my sister Mary, who was a member of the CYO at Queen of Angels Parish, suggested I speak to him. With his guidance, I resolved my issues. Shortly thereafter, I changed parishes and joined Queen of Angels, where all of my family attended.

By January 1969, Monsignor hired me to become secretary to Lewis Roland whom he hired the previous September to become principal of Queen of Angels School, making history as the first male, lay black principal of a parochial school in New Jersey.

During this same period, he was also spearheading the beginning of New Community Corporation. My duties not only included secretarial work for Mr. Roland, but work for New Community also. In 1973, when Monsignor Linder secured a grant from Victoria Foundation to open an office for New Community, he offered me the job of secretary. Being secretary and the only employee meant you did everything that needed to be done in a construction office. Hence, him encouraging me to attend Seton Hall University where I studied accounting and later attending Upsala College and receiving certification in Human Resources Administration.

There are many other instances I can recall of how he impacted my life, particularly about service to others. He always stressed that New Community is a service organization.

I thank him for the lessons of service and being a friend to my entire Moses Family from the beginning of his priesthood life.

### **ANNA SING-KING**

*NCC Human Resources Manager*

After the 45th Anniversary Gala, the next day when we had breakfast, my husband and I went downstairs and Monsignor was sitting there. And I was scared to go over. But my husband went over and he started talking. Monsignor really made us feel comfortable. He talked to us. He talked about my daughter, how great my daughter was. Monsignor being who he is but still made us feel comfortable.

One year during the Spring Festival, somebody fell or got hurt. My first reaction was to get up and go see what was going on and try to help. Monsignor said, "No, you're not at work. Sit down, enjoy yourself."

Another memory that comes to mind was at an Employee Recognition Ceremony. Some of the employees have long names that can be hard to pronounce. So I was at the podium giving out the plaques and of course you have to say their names. I could not pronounce their names. I was so embarrassed. I don't remember the exact words that Monsignor said, but he looked at me and was basically like, "It's OK because we can't say them either."

I think Monsignor set a good legacy. He helped a whole lot of people, probably people he didn't even realize that he helped. I'm grateful for him having that vision.

### **PAT FOLEY**

*Original Editor of The Clarion*

I went to Father Linder and I said, "I think we better have a newspaper." He said, "Oh, what a good idea." He said, "Give me some names. I don't know what we would call this." I gave him three names, one of which was the New Community Clarion. There were two others and God only knows what they were because I never can remember them. The Clarion was the big trumpet that goes through the medieval times that brings the good news of the world. And that's why I chose it. So then I put the three of them in front of Father and I said, "What do you think?" He said, "Oh I like that Clarion one." I said, "I do too." So that's when the New Community Clarion began. The good news of the world from medieval times became the good news in New Community.

Father Linder always had his eye out for the goodness of what was happening down in Newark. He always looked for the good news down there and he certainly got it right until the very end. It became much more than a little thing in Newark. It really encompassed the whole world. Father Linder was just such a wonderful person. I miss him already. We did good things together.

### **RAS BARAKA**

*Mayor of Newark*

Monsignor Linder was a man who stood by and advocated for Newark during some of the most painful hours of our city's existence, during and after the 1967 rebellion. When others dismissed or abandoned Newark, he rolled up his sleeves and went to work in Newark, creating the New Community Corporation. Over the past 50 years, NCC has become one of the nation's largest, most comprehensive community development corporations in the United States, offering an incredible array of vital services, ranging from affordable housing to workforce training to self-sufficiency programs to English as a Second Language classes, all of which have been nationally recognized.

Monsignor Linder's legacy stands firm in the works of the New Community Corporation and the many people he helped. All of Newark is grateful to him for his love of our city and commitment to it for the past five decades.

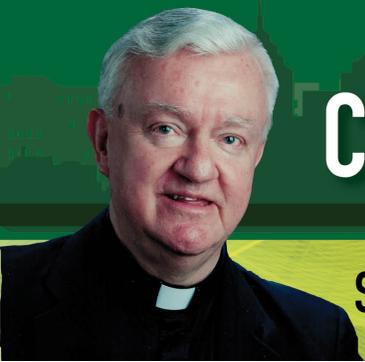
### **RAMONA GALLEY**

*New Community Workforce Development Center Registrar*

I met Monsignor at St. Rose of Lima Church where he was the pastor. I just moved here with my infant daughter. I was going through some tough times when I started attending St. Rose of Lima. I didn't talk to Monsignor about anything that was going on with me, but for some reason he saw a need and asked how he could help. Monsignor didn't only preach the Gospel but he lived the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. He was always looking to lift people up; to help them become their very best. He was the definition of the "Good Samaritan" — kind and very humble. When you are willing to walk one mile, Monsignor will walk two extra miles with you. He never gave up on people.

I went to say hello to him a few days before he passed. He looked a little tired that day, but still he asked if everything was OK and if there was anything he could do. I said, "No, I just wanted to say hello." He sees beyond what you see

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in yourself. He believed in people. We will miss him a lot.

### FATHER BEATUS KITURURU

*Excerpts from Homily delivered June 14, 2018 at St. Rose of Lima*

His call was now to bring light where there is darkness; peace where there is violence; love where there is hate; respect where there is contempt; compassion where there is selfishness and greed; inclusion where there is segregation and discrimination.

Monsignor Linder understood very well that there is a lot of pain in the human heart. But he also understood that as long as one believes in the resurrection of Christ, there is no pain that cannot be healed.

Those who knew well Monsignor Linder realized that he never gave up on anybody. He stood to the end by those who needed the love of God even when some cheated him or betrayed him or spoke ill of him.

### VERONICA ONWUNAKA

*Extended Care Administrator and NCC Director of Health and Social Services*



Monsignor William Linder — A GREAT MAN

In my mind, Monsignor Linder was not just a God sent but earthly redeemer. His teachings through the way he lived, acted, spoke and encouraged others to emulate, is what made him a saint. He believed in helping the poor, the oppressed, the voiceless and even the rich. Anyone who came in contact with Monsignor would leave with the spirit of wholeness no matter what your troubles might have been. I will forever remain grateful for him making me a better human being and hope and pray that God will continue to give me the grace to carry out all that he taught me. He will be greatly missed.

### FATHER PHILIP WATERS

*Excerpts from Homily delivered June 16, 2018 at Cathedral Basilica of the Sacred Heart*

It was clear from the very beginning that Bill Linder was a priest who was not afraid to roll up his sleeves and get his hands dirty.

In his work as a priest, he preached the word, but more important, he lived the word. No matter how dirty his hands got, he confronted those forces both in the city and even in the church which worked against the dignity not only of his beloved parishioners, but of all the residents in the city.

Today we bid farewell to a community organizer, a role model, a pastor, but most of all, a friend. We ask not what he leaves behind, but what we will take with us.

Many other efforts in the city were built on sand, but his were built on the rock of faith which stood against all the storms that blew against them. Many other programs have been blown away. NCC endures. But this man who was willing to walk with poor and the disenfranchised built a legacy which will last as long as the people of Faith are willing to grasp his vision.

He was truly a visionary and a prophet — a good faithful priest — and someone who was willing to roll up his sleeves and get his hands dirty.

### SAMMY, HELEN, SIBONAI AND MESGANA GEBREYESUS

Father Linder, thank you for sharing your faith, grace, strength, kindness, passion, vision, example, charity, humility, compassion, humor and unconditional love.

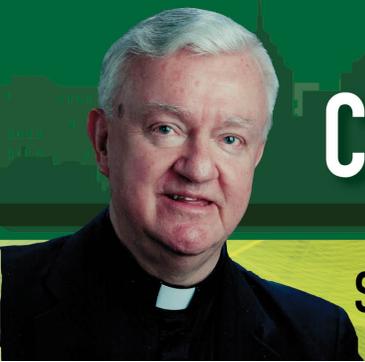
We admired you for being graceful, generous, gifted and courageous. You were a gift from God, always there to lend a helpful hand to others in need, special, kind, caring and loving for all of us. Father Linder had a huge heart of gold that was full of love. Father Linder, we are grateful for all of your support and for creating an environment of mutual trust, respect and friendship.

We had the pleasure of entertaining you in our house on holidays or beautiful summer days for the last 20 years. It was a blessing. Thank you for the kindness you have shown our family and being a part of our family. You were a very special person. No one can replace you. You inspired us in many ways. Your legacy will never be forgotten. Rest in Eternal Peace.

### MONSIGNOR ED BRADLEY

*Minister to Retired Priests*

Monsignor Linder struck me as a dedicated, loving priest with a positive mind, determined will and open heart. As I looked at the information in his file, I was astounded by the number of awards and other recognitions that were bestowed upon him for his work with New Community Corporation. These came from religious and civil organizations and from national and international groups. Yet, with all this attention and adulation, he always remained focused on “helping residents of inner cities improve the quality of their lives to reflect individual God-given dignity and personal achievement.” There is a saying from St. Teresa of Avila: Bloom where you are planted. Monsignor Linder was planted in Newark from the time of his assignment at Queen of Angels Parish when he was first ordained. How wonderfully he used his God-given gifts — not only did he bloom but so did the people and the city of Newark.



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### JOANN WILLIAMS-SWINEY

*NCC Family Resource Success Center Director*

Monsignor Linder was an angel given to the city of Newark, N.J. We were blessed to have him in our lives and community.

Monsignor was a man of compassion, strength, fortitude; he was a great visionary with a love for the community and those who were less fortunate whom he served for most of his life. He was stern but humble and very approachable; and always made himself available to hear the concern of others.

He was a constant thinker of how he could do more to serve. Magis is a Jesuit principle I keep taped to my computer on a small piece of paper to remember in my daily work and life. Magis, which means an individual restless desire to do more, think bigger and work harder for the greater glory of God. Monsignor was the example of what Magis stands for.

I will serve the community always keeping Monsignor and his vision in mind. The Resource Center was one of Monsignor's many visions. He wanted a place where people could come to receive the help that they needed and be treated with dignity and respect. I was fortunate enough to work for Monsignor's mission and see many of his visions become a reality.

He believed in people having an opportunity to excel in their lives. He had faith in people and their potential for growth and his vision for them very rarely failed to come to fruition. I was fortunate enough to be in his midst.

He gave me the inspiration to be at my highest and best self. Over the years and every time I met with him I was struck by both the force of his personality and the quality of his intellect.

His passion shone through in everything he did. I, like so many others, will miss seeing him around NCC, but his presence remains all throughout the community.

### RONDA LAWRENCE

*NCC Environmental Services Project Manager*

When I met Monsignor, I was 12 years old. At the time, he was our priest and would counsel me. While counseling me, I was in the choir for him and I was a lector. My brother was an altar server and my mom was also very active in the church. He performed my graduation from St. Rose. I was a recipient of the Monsignor William J. Linder Scholarship, getting a full scholarship to attend Immaculate Conception High School in Montclair.

And from there, he married me. He baptized three out of my four children. He gave two out of my four kids their first communion. And he gave my oldest her confirmation.

Through all of this, I knew nothing of New Community. He was just my priest.

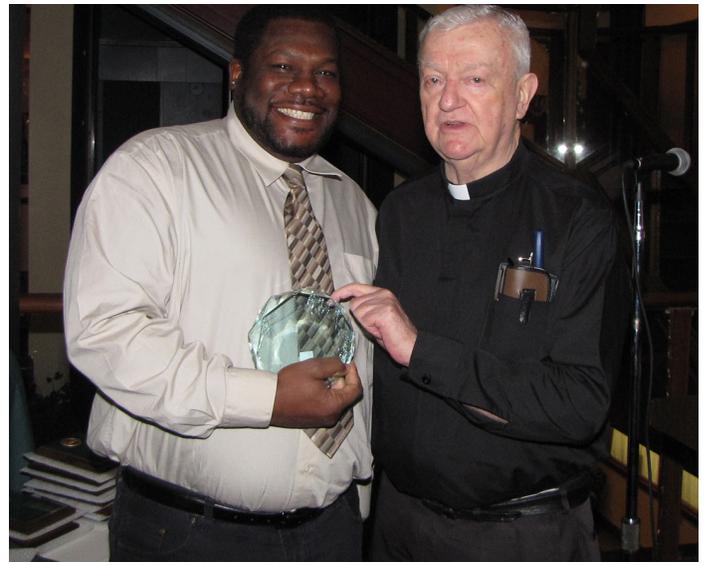
And then I got a call from him asking me to work with him. I felt as though he knew that I was responsible enough for him to bring me into something that I didn't even know existed and something that was so dear to him. That was the best out of anything. Because when I started working here, I realized how much he had accomplished. So knowing

that he trusted me to come and be a part of something he established, that was the best feeling. And it still is.

Because of all he has done, it really made me feel like I owe it to him to give this place everything that I have because he made it all possible for me.

### ALI JENKINS

*NCC Transportation*



When I first started working with him, he was a priest and I was a regular driver. I didn't know how to interact with him so I would just be quiet. As the years went on, we got to talking and getting to know one another. I used to ask him about how he first started putting New Community together. And I asked about all the different things that went on in Newark. He told me because he was in the middle of it.

I miss him. I spent the past 14 years with him. I used to do a lot with him. He was basically like family to me because we did a lot of family stuff together, like taking him to Thanksgiving and Christmas get-togethers. I'm going to miss that. Because I really loved traveling with him. I'm still feeling the loss.

### SHANELL SING

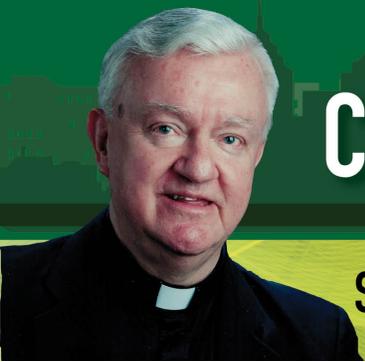
*Teacher's Assistant for NCC Early Learning Centers*

"This Little Light of Mine" was one of the first songs that I learned attending St. Rose of Lima. As a young child I did not really understand what that song meant until I became older and able to work with Monsignor Linder. He allowed God to use him in so many ways to help others, my family and myself. Monsignor's teachings and life experiences became a little light of mine. He not only talked about hope, love and faith but he walked the walk. To me Monsignor was a great and wonderful understanding man. It was my honor to be a part of his life and my honor to continue his legacy.

### MARTHA ELETA-ILUONOKHALUMHE

An anonymous moralist once affirmed "the human mind is like a jug, no mortal can look into its recesses and you can only judge of its purity by what comes out of it." As mortals,

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# Commemorative eClarion



## Serving The People Of The New Community Network

OUT OF THE ASHES  
CAME HOPE

none of us, including the closest associates of Monsignor William Linder, could access his mind to decipher its purity or otherwise, but God in his infinite goodness had endeared Monsignor Linder with profound positive outward signs which in no doubt pointed to his inward grace.

Meeting him as a young mother became a life changing experience for my family and me. He became not only my spiritual leader but also my therapist, guidance counselor and a father figure. He listened to my numerous personal problems and counseled me, making me feel like I had no issues at the end. After every session with him I felt a huge sigh of relief.

He was a generous giver, he gave without any expectations. My children received scholarships from his scholarship fund which enabled them to receive quality education. My son graduated college with a bachelor's degree in computer science. My daughter will be graduating in December and heading to medical school. Another child is currently attending Saint Vincent Academy with the assistance of Monsignor's scholarship fund.

You gave me one last surprise when you showed up for a mass in memory of my late father in September of 2017; it reaffirmed the selfless person you were.

He was a humble and generous man of God and he had a great sense of humor. There will never be another Monsignor Linder. He was one of a kind.

Thank you for all that you did for my family. We will forever miss you. I will live life like you taught me so I will see you again someday. You are now an angel watching over us from above.

Rest in peace Monsignor, till we meet to part no more.

### ANDREW SOLOMON

*NCC Environmental Services, St. Joseph Plaza*



Monsignor was a very good friend to me, my wife Gillian and my son Ishmael. He put my son through Babyland, St. Rose of Lima and St. Benedict's Preparatory School, where he paid my son's school fees through the Monsignor William J. Linder Scholarship. My son went on to Saint Vincent College in Latrobe, Pa. He finished his college degree and master's degree. He is now the assistant director of residence life and multicultural student life at Saint Vincent College.

I've been with Monsignor Linder for 22 years. Over the years he and I have become very close friends. He had a

great sense of humor. He was a very nice person. He cared about people. He was great to the people.

### TRACEY BATTLES

*NCC Philanthropy Officer*

I remember my mother would always talk about Monsignor Linder. He was responsible for converting my mother to Catholicism in 1975. My parents were a young couple and they came to talk to Monsignor about raising two young sons in the faith and Monsignor gladly baptized my brother and me in 1976.

Throughout the years, I kept in contact with Monsignor at different events and he would always tease me about working for the Archdiocese of Newark. "You need a real challenge!" He would always say. So in 2006, I answered the New Community challenge and I had the honor of working with Monsignor for 12 years. I will always remember his sharp memories and how he could recall events and the "story behind the actual story!" I remember when he taught at Columbia University, we would make an annual trek to talk about our department. When we would discuss our role at New Community with the students, I always remember Monsignor would discourage notes; he wanted us to know our job and speak of it from the heart and mind. I always felt challenged by him and no matter how well an event went, he would always ask me, "What can be done to improve the event for the following year?" He would always ask about my children and my own health. I will never forget that.

I will always be grateful to Monsignor and I will work to do my part to continue his legacy.

### GILDA ROGERS

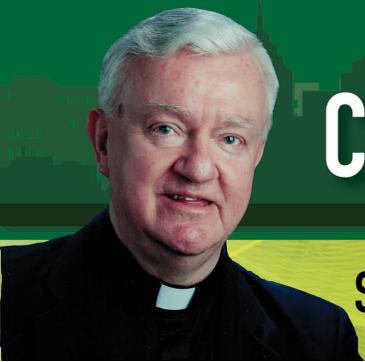
*Co-Author of "Out of the Ashes Came Hope"*

I think we too often toss around the word "privilege" and "honor," without really giving much thought to the gravity of these words. For me, it was a privilege to meet with Monsignor William J. Linder, and for over two years, to work with him on his memoir: "Out of the Ashes Came Hope," which turned out to be a valuable learning experience. I had a reserved seat into the life of a self-actualized human being, who put the needs of others first. What better honor, as a writer, than to go on this journey with Monsignor as he discussed his covenant with God and his commitment to serve and illuminate the best of what humanity offers, and that is LOVE. There were hills and valleys, roadblocks and bumpy roads, but the mission was clear: To help residents of inner cities improve the quality of their lives to reflect individual God-given dignity and personal achievement.

From a young boy, it was innate for him to help others. And born from that was a courageous spirit that defied the odds to make a difference.

There's a humorous passage in the book, when the Linder Family is visiting with Great Aunt Agnes in Saratoga, N.Y., where little Billy is told by his Aunt what it means to be brave: "Billy boy," she would say, while squeezing my cheeks to make her point, "you get nothing out of life being scared." With vivid imagery she fostered in me early on a sense of resolve and fearlessness. "Or you'll wind up

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# Commemorative eClarion



## Serving The People Of The New Community Network

OUT OF THE ASHES  
GAME HOPE

sleeping on a bed of nails and unhappy for the rest of your days,” she quipped. Well I didn’t want to sleep on a bed of nails for the rest of my life, so I chose to be brave no matter what. We all should be so brave.

### ALEXANDRA SOLANO

*NCC Accounts Payable Analyst*

The world lost a great man in Monsignor Linder. He’s one of the kindest people I’ve ever met. If anyone ever had a problem and needed someone to talk to, his door was always open. He always strived for people to do better. He was always willing to help in any way he could to make the community better. A perfect example of his willingness to help someone improve their lives, he provided me the opportunity to send my daughter to a highly respected Catholic school and I will always be thankful for that; and in his memory, we will continue in his work.

### ZORAYA E. LEE-HAMLIN

*President/CEO of RayZo Marketing*



My favorite memory of Monsignor was when we had a discussion about him documenting his life’s story and all the things that he had done. Monsignor was very modest and didn’t like the idea of touting his accomplishments, not in the least bit. In fact several people had asked him to write a book and he refused. He was such a fierce warrior and advocate for those less fortunate and he didn’t think any of that deserved any kind of praise. People should just do the right thing, from a place of love, as he reminded us all when he spoke at the ribbon cutting for A Better Life, the homeless housing services building.

We talked about how approaching things from a selfless point of view is important for all of us to learn and how important it was to have something documenting his life’s work, like his memoirs, because it would eventually become part of the historical archives of Newark, the city he loved so much. With that he agreed.

### ANGELA POTTS

*NCC New Start Program Manager*

It began with a buzz in the air that a baby was found in the neighborhood by a dumpster, and as expected the community was heartbroken to hear the news. I received a call a few days later that Monsignor Linder was requesting a meeting with me. My mind began to race, playing the meeting over in my head several times before the actual meeting. I began to ask others close to him questions as to why he wanted to meet with me. No one had any answers for me. Being the woman of faith that I am, I prayed and waited for the appointed time.

While waiting for the meeting to begin, it felt like a lifetime. In rolls Monsignor Linder in a wheelchair to the meeting appearing a little tired but very much alert. The meeting began with me asking how he was doing and he wanted to know how I was doing. He wanted me to know that New Start, which is a baby program for at-risk moms, which is an affiliate of Family Service Bureau, had his full support. He wanted to know first-hand if we had what was needed to assist those who crossed our paths, and to be sure that they knew we are there for them. He said, “No mother should have to make the decision that mother made” to leave the child at a dumpster. With a heavy heart we concluded that we are capable of being the change agent for those who cross our paths or simply a ray of hope. I assured him that we seek to do that with every young woman that we encounter on a daily basis.

While I was gathering my things preparing to leave the meeting, he called my name, and as I looked up at him, he said to me, “Thank you Ms. Potts for all that you do!” As I reflect on the memory of that meeting with Monsignor, I pause a minute to look up and say, “Thank you Monsignor for all that you have done.”