

### **Testimonial: On Behalf of Bishop Dr. William A. Industrious**

*Good Day to the Honorable Carla Joseph, members of the 35<sup>th</sup> Legislative Committee on Government Operations, Veteran's Affairs and Consumer Operations, the listening and viewing audience, family, friends, and acquaintances:*

I am Dr. Andre'a Dorsey, the granddaughter of the esteemed Bishop Dr. William A. Industrious. As a professor, an entrepreneur, and the founder of a nonprofit organization focused on the holistic development of youths in the community, I have followed in my grandfather's footsteps. We share similarities as servant leaders who empower others through teaching and training. It is with great honor that I testify in support of Bill #35-0223 an act renaming a portion of Gamle Gade to Bishop Dr. William A. Industrious Street. First of all, I would like to thank Almighty God for His goodness and for guiding and leading us through all of our experiences. I would also like to extend gratitude to Senator Carla Joseph for her diligence in working to initiate this bill and making it a reality, as well as all of the committee members.

#### *A Lifestyle of Faith & Love for Family*

From a qualitative research approach, I will examine and reflect upon my early childhood experiences from the thematic framework of a firm foundation within the context of faith, family and empowerment. My family support system consisted of my parents and grandparents of whom my grandmother, the late Rehena Brathwaite-Industrious passed away approximately five years ago. They played an integral role in establishing a lifestyle of a faith-based background through a rich Godly heritage for our family circle.

As a family man, our grandfather is a dedicated and loyal person who loved and provided for his family from humble beginnings. His residence started out living in Savan, Baracks' Yard (previously located on the waterfront where the Superior Court now exists), Oswald Harris Court to his present residence in Smith Bay. His tenacity to his family was displayed in honoring and living by the principles of the Word of God. Alongside his wife, he would have family devotions with his seven children at 5:00 am to teach them the biblical principles and spend time in prayer. To him, it was important for his children to know that God should be the center of their lives and to live by His teachings.

An example would be the family norm of a typical Sunday in the life of my grandfather. His day consisted of leaving his Smith Bay residence around 7:30 a.m. with some of his grandchildren in his vehicle. Every week, my siblings and cousins enjoyed a signature island tour traveling throughout various neighborhoods on the island of St. Thomas providing transportation services for persons who attended the church. My grandfather would proceed to Plaza Extra, and purchase assorted drinks so that everyone would have a drink and pastries that he collected from the generous donation of bakeries on Saturday afternoons. He made his timely pickups to open the doors of the Christian Unity Church located in Savan. It was imperative that Sunday School started at 9:30 a.m. to remain on schedule for the church service at 11:00 am. On any given Sunday, my grandfather delivered a message of conviction of God's goodness and saving grace for an hour or more followed by a compelling sound of the alarm to accept the Lord Jesus as one's savior. If it was a regular Sunday, departure from church would be after 1:00 pm along the highway route to ensure that everyone returned safely to their doorsteps unless someone in need of family counseling or access to resources would result in delay from heading home due to his commitment to addressing the needs of others by my grandfather. He would also divert to

visit his aged mother who lived on Nadir Hill so that his grandchildren could greet her regularly. He returned home around 2:30 p.m. Later in the evening, he would leave home again around 6:30 p.m. to transport people to the church service which started at 7:30 pm and lasted until approximately 10:00 pm.

### *A Desire for Empowerment*

Our grandfather has demonstrated a strong sense of empowerment of other people, as well as himself. He worked for various organizations and became self-employed. His taxi business allowed him to become an ambassador of the Virgin Islands. He was also an entrepreneur with his wife for many years. Upon his retirement, my grandfather went to assist Industrious Auto Repairs and Parts, Inc. working closely with his son and grandchildren doing many duties to keep himself relevant and enjoy the company of his family while greeting all the customers who stopped by. While working full-time as a taxi driver to provide for his seven children, he also served others through ministry free of charge because he would always emphasize that the gospel can't be purchased; it was freely given to humanity. My grandfather, Bishop Dr. Industrious loved people regardless of their diverse backgrounds or socioeconomic levels. His church family became an integral part of his life. So focused on his God-given vision, my grandfather would utilize weeknights participating in broadcast services aired on the local radio station for over 30 years; teaching and training church members to become ministry leaders and ministers of the gospel; and providing biblical counseling services to persons in areas of healthy relationships; illnesses, loss of loved ones or financial hardships. He is truly a full-time philanthropist. Despite my grandfather experiencing three major heart procedures, two broken legs at the same time, contracting the COVID-19 virus, and the recent loss of his wife of 68 years, he remained resilient to his calling as a servant leader. He held on to his life of faith and the healing power of God through it all surrounded by the love of both his family and church family.

As I encounter people in the community, personal experiences are shared pertaining to my grandfather's generosity and kindness toward them ranging from individuals of single-parent households to those who arrived in the Virgin Islands from other neighboring islands. In addition to sacrificing his time, he believed so strongly in ensuring that the Christian Unity Church building would be completely built before leaving this earth, my grandfather sacrificed family resources to ensure that sufficient funding was made available for what has become known as the beautiful structure in the Savan community serving as a beacon of hope for many. His volunteerism for serving persons within the community led to the bestowal of an Honorary Doctorate of Divinity Degree from Ebenezer Bible Institute for his exemplary service, leadership role, and community involvement under the leadership of Dr. Josette Rey.

### *Leaving a Legacy*

In regular conversations, my grandfather would remind his family that this church and the people he served for approximately 60 years are integral aspects of his legacy. We appreciate his leadership team who continues to make his vision a reality under the lead pastor, Angela Rawlins of Christian Unity Church who has been and is still a source of inspiration and support for him over the past 40+ years.

At this moment, our immediate family which consists of 4 generations (7 children, 29 grandchildren, 42 great-grandchildren, and 2 great-great-grandchildren) and in-laws is honored to ensure that he has been given the flowers he deserves while he is still here with us so that he may know that his labor was not in

vain. He is the epitome of a standard of excellence, humility, and being sold out for the gospel. May his legacy live on through his family and the lives touched both locally and abroad. Grandfather – we all salute you on an exemplary job well done before your Heavenly Father, your family, and our community. We would like to express once again our sincere appreciation to Senator Carla Joseph, her team, and the 35<sup>th</sup> legislative body for the opportunity to be a part of the process of honoring our father and grandfather, Bishop Dr. William A. Industrious. God bless you all.