



Fly While You Still Have Wings: And Other Lessons My Resilient Mother Taught Me

By Joyce Rupp

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Winner of a Catholic Press Association Award: Soft cover-spirituality books. (Third Place).

For thirty years, beginning with *Fresh Bread* in 1985, Joyce Rupp has comforted millions with books such as *Praying Our Goodbyes* and *May I Walk You Home*. For the first time, she shares the story of her own grief in the wake of her mother's death, offering readers both a profile of her mother's resilient spirit and a voice of compassion for their own experience of loss.

In this heartfelt memoir about her mother Hilda's final years, Joyce Rupp shares the lessons her mother taught her, especially to "fly while you still have wings." As a poor farmer's wife and the mother of eight living on rented land in Maryhill, Iowa, Hilda lived a life of hard labor and constant responsibility--from milking cows and raising chickens to keeping the farm's financial ledger. Rupp shows how the difficulties of her mother's early years and family life, including the loss of a twenty-three-year-old son, forged a resilience that guided her through the illnesses and losses she faced in later years. This affectionate profile of their relationship is, at the same time, an honest self-examination, as Rupp shares the ways she sometimes failed to listen to, accept, and understand her mother in her final years.

Rupp begins each chapter with a meditative poem that captures the essence of each stage in the journey. Her unflinching candor and profound faith illumine this story of a mother and daughter with a universal spirit of hope, reconciliation, and peace.

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Editorial Review

Review

"Every page of Joyce Rupp's beautiful book is filled with practical wisdom. By meditating on the rich life of her own mother, Rupp not only shares with us timeless and life-changing lessons, but also reminds us that holiness always makes its home in humanity, and that saints are everywhere. I loved this book!" --**James Martin, S.J.**, Author of *Jesus: A Pilgrimage*

"Joyce Rupp's memoir of her mother Hilda is beautiful, honest, and graced with astonishing insights into what it means to be a daughter, a mother, a human being. Her account of how this resilient woman raised eight children on an Iowa farm at first reminded me of Tim Russert's loving memoir of his father--the stories are that good. But when I got to Joyce's tender journey with her mother through the process of dying I could not help but think of C. S. Lewis's *A Grief Observed*--the book is that good. When I finished reading, I put the book down and could think of nothing other than what I had just read. *Fly While You Still Have Wings* is Joyce Rupp's best book ever, a total original, and I would not be surprised if it became a classic." --**Michael Leach**, Publisher Emeritus, Orbis Books

"This beautiful memoir of her mother displays the remarkable gifts that have earned Joyce Rupp so many loyal readers: engaging storytelling, moving poetry, personal experiences shared with honesty and insight, and depictions of grace breaking into the most ordinary human events. In Joyce's deft telling, her mother's story becomes not only the inspiring portrait of a strong woman, but also a primer on the mother-daughter relationship and the meaning of love and limits, suffering and courage, grief and healing. Her book's most important contribution may be the wisdom she offers on how to meet the challenges and discover the blessings of giving and receiving care in life's later years." --**Kathleen Fischer**, Author of *Winter Grace: Spirituality and Aging*

"Joyce Rupp's best book yet. How many of us would like to pay tribute to our mothers by acknowledging the lessons learned from them that still guide us, and reflect on what we wished we had done in her later years and failed to do, or what we did do and wished we had not? Joyce does this beautifully and becomes our teacher in this honest memoir." --**Trish Herbert**, Author of *Journeywell: A Guide to Quality Aging*

About the Author

Joyce Rupp is well-known for her work as a writer, spiritual midwife, international retreat leader, and conference speaker. She is the author of numerous bestselling books, including *Praying Our Goodbyes*, *Open the Door*, and *Fragments of Your Ancient Name*. Rupp is a member of the Servite (Servants of Mary) community and the codirector of the Institute of Compassionate Presence. She resides in Des Moines, Iowa.

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