



## James Donald Varela

August 25, 1942 - May 4, 2007

Rev. James Donald Varela, 64, beloved husband, son, father and grandfather went to be with the Lord on Friday May 3, 2007. Don was a native of Santa Fe, NM, and a member of New Life Providence Church. After graduating from York High School in 1960 Don served 4 years in the Air Force before beginning the first of many business enterprises. Don opened Republic Personnel Service in Norfolk, and it quickly grew to a nationally-franchised company. In the mid-1970s Don accepted Jesus Christ as his Savior and served Him by becoming involved in the Catholic Charismatic Community in Tidewater. His ministry efforts included the publication of The Good News Letter, which had an international distribution in the tens of thousands. His shepherd's heart became evident as God called him to be the founding pastor of New Creation Community in Chesapeake. While serving in the ministry, Don was passionate about the cause of the unborn child and uniting fellow pastors in the Tidewater area. His tireless efforts earned him the respect, love and appreciation of the entire Christian community. He was predeceased by his father, Tom Varela. Don was "Papa" to his grandchildren, all of whom he loved and adored. His compassionate heart was shared lovingly with the community through many outreach programs. He gave his time endlessly to those who were suffering or in need.

Don is survived by his wife of 33 years, Joyce Varela; mother, Carmen Varela, 5 children, Gregory Varela, Charmaine Turbitt, Suzanne Hastings, Paul Varela, Samuel Varela; 12 grandchildren; 5 siblings, Kathy Amsler, Thomas

Varela, Anita Lopez, Robert Varela, Geno Varela.

A funeral service will be held at 7:00 p.m. Monday in the New Life Providence Church 1244 Thompkins Lane, VA Beach. The family will receive friends in Loving Funeral Home, Churchland Chapel Sunday from 4-6p.m. Burial will be in the Albert G. Horton, Jr. Memorial Veterans Cemetery at a later. date.

# Tribute Wall



“ *Daddy,  
Father's Day is Here and I cant beleive your not with us.. I can't even begin to tell you how much I loved you. I always thought that I was strong, but I'm not. You were the strongest man I knew and everyone came to you with thier problems including me. You have always been my Father and my Friend. I seem to need both... I miss you with all of my Heart and send you kisses and hugs. I know that when my day comes to go to heaven, there will be no fear, because my Daddy will be there to welcome me. Forever your Daughter...  
Charmaine###imported-begin##Charmaine###imported-end##*

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June 16, 2007 at 12:00 AM



“ *Uncle Don,  
Although I only got to spend a few years with you, I thank the Lord for that time. You were such a genuine and loving man, and you shared Grandma's quality of making everyone feel as if they were special and your "favorite." Every time I saw you, you were quick to give me a big hug and say "I love you" and I always knew you meant that. I love you too, Uncle Don, and I can not wait until the day I see you again for a GREAT big hug. The words you said to me at Jamie's wedding will always stay fresh in my mind, Uncle Don. Thank you for being an inspiration to me and to all that knew you. It is my goal to be more like you.  
Aunt Joyce and Family, My thoughts and prayers are with you always. I love you!###imported-begin##Cara-Jean Varela###imported-end##*

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May 21, 2007 at 12:00 AM



“ Joyce, Aunt Carmen, and Family,

*We wish we could have been there with you. We are praying and thinking about you all. Don will be missed so much. We know Heaven received one special person. Don inspired and brought so many people to our Lord Jesus. He was a great person. Our prayer's are with you all. Love you, Uncle Amador, Aunt Irene, Gary, & Carla, Alvin, & Rosanne, Andy, & Marla, Ilene & Family##imported-begin##Carla Ward##imported-end##*

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May 11, 2007 at 12:00 AM



“ Joyce, Aunt Carmen, Cousins, & Families: You all are in my prayers, thoughts and in my heart. Donny made this world a better place to live in for so many people, me included. The love that he has for his LORD and his FAMILY will always be in my heart, and will never be forgotten! PRAISE THE LORD for granting us the MIRACLE of our 2006 Gonzales Family Reunion, just know that one day we will all be celebrating the BIGGEST REUNION of all when we get to HEAVEN!! Donny - "We're not loosing you even though we part - your with GOD NOW and your SPIRITS IN OUR HEARTS - so just go on ahead, we won't be far behind - we'll see you on the other side of time." At the family reunion Donny talked about how Grandma & Grandpa use to give us a special blessing, at special times - Donny is receiving them again, but not only from Grandma & Grandpa but also from GOD!! I LOVE YOU ALL!!!

*With Love, Hugs, Prayers, and Kisses, Rick, JoAnn and Gionni##imported-begin##JoAnn Valdez##imported-end##*

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May 10, 2007 at 12:00 AM



“ Uncle Don was one of the most sincerely loving people that I have ever met. As I get to know the whole family better I can see the effect Uncle Don has had. The Varela family will be in my thoughts and prayers.##imported-begin##Terry Unrau##imported-end##

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May 10, 2007 at 12:00 AM



“ I was so sorry to hear of "Uncle Don's" passing. I have enrolled him in a novena of masses with the Legionaries of Christ. He was a wonderful man full of Christ and a big part of my childhood.  
With Love,  
Monica Lopez Howerton##imported-begin##Monica Lopez Howerton##imported-end##

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May 09, 2007 at 12:00 AM



“ To The Varela Family: We were deeply sorry to hear about Don's passing. He will surely be missed by many and remembered for his kindness to others. We all share in your grief.  
Sincerely, Joan Chivetta Jon's mother##imported-begin##Joan Chivetta##imported-end##

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May 09, 2007 at 12:00 AM



“ *What a great loss the Varela family and all the rest of us have encountered. I will miss his soft spoken, but firm voice. Don was truly an inspiration to me. I could and always called him for advice. He helped me land the best job i could get, with Cox Comm. in Pensacola, just over 1 month ago. I am truly saddened by this loss, but rejoice that he is with "Our Father" looking down on all of us. I pray the lord comforts the family and let you guys know he is there for you.*

*Sincerely,  
Kevin Stage and family###imported-begin###Kevin Stage###imported-end##*

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May 08, 2007 at 12:00 AM



“ *I work with Kathy in Waycross, GA. Our thoughts and prayers are with all of you during this difficult time - so sorry for your loss. May God bless and keep you all in His tender care and bless you with His mercy and grace.###imported-begin###Anita Weeks###imported-end##*

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May 08, 2007 at 12:00 AM



“ *"He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."*

*May his memory always encourage you, and his wisdom forever a part of you and your generations to come.*

*With sympathy Tim and Adrienne Small###imported-begin###Timothy Small###imported-end##*

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May 08, 2007 at 12:00 AM



“ *Varela family, I dont know if any of you remember me, but I was a friend of Geno's in high school. I met Don in the 10th grade.He told us many things. I remember them all. He believed in us when we were very young.He opened his home to us, and himself.Im a better person for knowing him. My prayers go out to all of you. Geno if you read this call me 757339-1958 any time.Im sorry for your loss. Mrs. Varela ,Rob, Geno, all of you are good folks, and I thank God for knowing you.When ever I think of the name Varela I smile, inside and out. I love yall. Doug Anderson###imported-begin##Doug Anderson###imported-end##*

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May 08, 2007 at 12:00 AM



“ *Thoughts and prayers for Greg and Family.*

*Warm Regards,*

*Mike "5" Jones###imported-begin##Mike###imported-end##*

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May 08, 2007 at 12:00 AM



“ *You're in our thoughts and prayers. My mom Frances and I were so happy to have seen you all last summer in Pecos, NM it had been such a long time. We are so sorry for your loss. May God bless you all. Take care, many xoxo###imported-begin##Liz Herrera###imported-end##*

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May 08, 2007 at 12:00 AM



“ Aunt Carmen and Family,  
May god bless you and keep you strong during this difficult time.  
Our thoughts and prayers are with you all.  
Frances' Daughter##imported-begin##Laurie##imported-end##

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May 08, 2007 at 12:00 AM



“ Joyce, Aunt Carmen and Families  
We were so sorry to hear of Donald passing. Our Love and Prayers  
go out to you now and always.  
Barbara, Doug Simmons & family##imported-begin##Barbara  
Simmons##imported-end##

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May 08, 2007 at 12:00 AM



“ Aunt Carmen, Joyce and Family,  
  
You and your families are all in our prayers down here in New Mexico. We count are blessings everyday that we were able to see all of you at the reunion. Donnie was such a wonderful person, he seemed to just light up a room. We were talking about when you all drove up to the parking lot at St. Rose church and how he just looked up and praised the Lord for getting you all there for the reunion. We wished we could be there for you, but know that we are in spirit and in prayer. We love you all so much. May God bless you and be with you always.  
With all our love, Aunt Chica, The Valdez Family, The Gallegos's, The Martinez Family and The Hampton Family.##imported-begin##Lulu Hampton##imported-end##

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May 07, 2007 at 12:00 AM



“ Joyce, Aunt Carmen and Family,

*My thoughts, prayers and love are with you through this time and always.##imported-begin##Paul Gallegos##imported-end##*

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May 07, 2007 at 12:00 AM



“ Greg,

*You and your family are in our thoughts and prayers. Even though I never met him, it sounds like your dad was a wonderful person.*

*With Sincere Sympathy,  
Jerry and Sarah Cobb and family##imported-begin##Sarah Cobb##imported-end##*

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May 07, 2007 at 12:00 AM



“ *My condolences to the Varela family.*

*Don was the first friend of my father, Carl Mahler, that I remember. I will never forget my Don and my dad, both with thier afro's in the 1970's. May you rest in peace Don.##imported-begin##Cheryl Mahler Casey##imported-end##*

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May 07, 2007 at 12:00 AM



“ Greg, I am sorry for the loss and the grief that your whole family is experiencing. I know your Dad was a great father, grandfather, your friend and hero. I am very confident that he is exactly where he wanted to be when he left earth. Take care of yourself and your family##imported-begin##Brent Artrip##imported-end##

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May 07, 2007 at 12:00 AM



“ Dear Varela Family,

*You are in my thoughts and prayes. I wish I could be there with you. It was through Don's faithfullness to God that I had seventeen wonderful years with my mother. His constant prayers and contact with my mother introduced her to the Lord and literally saved her life. PRAISE GOD! Don has gone home to be with his God and my mother. Love to all of you!##imported-begin##Beadie DeArmond##imported-end##*

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May 07, 2007 at 12:00 AM



“ Greg, I am so sorry to hear of your Dad's passing. My thoughts and prayers are with you and your entire family. May your many wonderful memories with him help to sustain you through this difficult time.##imported-begin##Jeri Vincent##imported-end##

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May 07, 2007 at 12:00 AM



“ Joyce, Aunt Carmen & Family

*Our prayers & thoughts are with you  
Love Lucky and Sheila Gonzales##imported-begin##Sheila Gonzales##imported-end##*

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May 07, 2007 at 12:00 AM



“ Our love and prayers are with all of you. May God give you peace and grace during this difficult time.##imported-begin##Vic and Terrie Shunkwiler##imported-end##

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May 07, 2007 at 12:00 AM



“ Dear Varela Family: I worked with Don and many of you almost 25 years ago at Universal Management. Don and his family were wonderful "mentors" in my youth. My prayers and thoughts go to each of you at your time of loss.##imported-begin##Lee Ann Hart Held##imported-end##

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May 07, 2007 at 12:00 AM



“ Our prayers are with you during this very difficult time. May God comfort each and every one of you.  
Chaplain Susan Forehand  
Virginia Beach Police Dept##imported-begin##Susan Forehand##imported-end##

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May 07, 2007 at 12:00 AM



“ I am so sorry for your loss. My prayers go out to you.##imported-begin##Barbara Mercer##imported-end##

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May 07, 2007 at 12:00 AM



“ Don We grew up in life and business together. I will always love you as my friend. You followed your belief's, and because of this children live, your family loved, your friends flourished. God has already blessed you and now he has you to keep. See you when I see you.##imported-begin##Robert Williams##imported-end##

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May 07, 2007 at 12:00 AM



“ My heart aches along with you and your family as I am coming up on a memorial for my dear mother. May you find comfort in knowing that your father is no long suffering and resting in the arms of our dear Lord and Savior. With all my sympathy, Bonnie Johnson###imported-begin###Bonnie J. Johnson###imported-end###

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May 07, 2007 at 12:00 AM



“ Dear Joyce, My most precious memories are of you and Don are from the days of Living Waters. Your love and prayers as a couple, Don's active roll in proclaiming and claiming "Tidewater for Jesus" continues even to this day. May the God of hope flood you, and all of your family, with peace and increasing love. Praying for you. Debbie Durand Cossu###imported-begin###Debbie Cossu###imported-end###

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May 07, 2007 at 12:00 AM



“ Our thoughts and prayers are with the entire Varela family, on behalf of the GSK Response Center. May God bless James and the family.###imported-begin###Kerry Falcon###imported-end###

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May 07, 2007 at 12:00 AM



“ Uncle Don,  
*It's hard to put into words what you mean to me. You embody love and shared your love with everyone that came your way. You made me feel like I was the most special person you knew, and now I know that's how you made everyone feel. I thank God that He let me have you in my life. I pray that everyday I become more and more like my loving Uncle Don. I can't wait to see you again!*  
Love,  
Jamie###imported-begin##Jamie Varela###imported-end##

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May 06, 2007 at 12:00 AM



“ Uncle Don,  
*Although I wasn't your brother or son, you made me feel as if I were both. When I was around you I was a better person, you always seemed to bring out the best in everyone. You always seemed to truly care about the events in my life, and frequently told me that you were proud of me. Uncle Don, I was always proud of you.*###imported-begin##Joe Varela###imported-end##

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May 06, 2007 at 12:00 AM



“ Never say with grief, "he is no more", but rather say with  
**THANKFULNESS**, "he was".###imported-begin##Steve###imported-end##

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May 06, 2007 at 12:00 AM



“ Joyce, Aunt Carmen and family,  
We were all so sad to hear of the passing of Don. You are all in our prayers. Wish we could be with you but we love you all very much and are there with you in spirit.  
We are all so glad that we were all able to get together for the family reunion in July in New Mexico. It was such a blessing that we were all able to be together. God Bless you all.##imported-begin##Jeanette Saiz and Family##imported-end##

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May 06, 2007 at 12:00 AM



“ Uncle Don,  
you were one of the greatest men i ever knew and will ever know. You made everyone feel as if they were special, as if you loved them the most. You hold a special place in my heart and even though i never told you, you were my favorite uncle. I love you and cant wait to see you again. I will always be your chicka linda!##imported-begin##Jessica Varela##imported-end##

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May 06, 2007 at 12:00 AM



“ Dear Brother,  
You've touched my life in so many ways and I'll think about you everyday. My kids love you with all their heart. Thank you for loving us and showing us what a man of God truly is. I know you're planning our next family reunion. I can't wait!  
I love you man...Geno##imported-begin##Geno Varela##imported-end##

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May 06, 2007 at 12:00 AM



“ Don, We may not have known you very long, but you touched our lives with your love and kindness. We are grateful you came into our lives even if it was only for a short time. You and your family will be in our thoughts at this difficult time. Thank you for all you shared with our family and for letting us be a part of your family.##imported-begin##The McNeal Family##imported-end##

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May 06, 2007 at 12:00 AM



“ To all the Varela family, I am very sorry for your loss and I am keeping you in my prayers. Don was a wonderful man whom I remember fondly from my childhood on New Colony Drive. My heart has been so sad since I heard the news, I remember all the support your family gave to mine when I was a child. Don is loved and missed. Joyce, Carmen, and everyone, I can't express enough my feelings of sadness. I do know that Don is with the Lord now.##imported-begin##Kimberly Wilson Cleaver##imported-end##

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May 06, 2007 at 12:00 AM



“ Varela Family, Our prayers and thoughts are with you now. we are so thankful that we got to spend a little time with Him in July, The Lord is so good and will provide you comfort now as he did with our family in the death of our dear mother.##imported-begin##Dave &Theresa Guevara##imported-end##

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May 06, 2007 at 12:00 AM



“ With deep sympathy to the Varela Family.##imported-begin##Robin Wright##imported-end##

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May 06, 2007 at 12:00 AM



“ Our thoughts and prayers are with you.##imported-begin##David Martinez Family##imported-end##

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May 06, 2007 at 12:00 AM



“ Joyce and family, We sure are sorry for your loss. Don meant so much to us. God bless you all. Tom and Sherry Miller##imported-begin##Sherry Miller##imported-end##

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May 06, 2007 at 12:00 AM



“ Joyce, Aunt Carmen & family,  
Our thoughts and prayers are with you all during this difficult time. Don was a terrific man & cousin. I'm so thankful to God for bringing us all together last July at the family reunion. We love all of you. Keith, Kathy, Andi & Shay Uderjohn##imported-begin##Kathy Uderjohn & family##imported-end##

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May 06, 2007 at 12:00 AM



“ We are extremely sorry to hear of your loss. Please know that we are praying God's mercy and grace upon you all during this difficult time.

Mr. & Mrs. Ronnie Jimenez and Family##imported-begin##Ronnie and Kim Jimenez##imported-end##

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May 06, 2007 at 12:00 AM



“ Sorry about your loss. Don was a very special man in our lives. The memories will live in our hearts forever.##imported-begin##Christine & Ronnie Concepcion##imported-end##

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May 06, 2007 at 12:00 AM



“ We love you guys and are in our prayers.

RB##imported-begin##Randy & Joan Brewer##imported-end##

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May 06, 2007 at 12:00 AM



“ As a former member of New Creation Community please convey my deepest sympathy to Carmen and entire Varela family. My desire is to attend the service, but as a breast cancer patient this is not possible. I shall be there in spirit. My prayers are for peace and strength to all In HIS name, Grace Paul##imported-begin##Grace Paul##imported-end##

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May 06, 2007 at 12:00 AM



“ My Precious Brother:  
Thank you for always being there for me. You always made me feel safe; you could make me feel like a little girl and a woman of value all at the same time. You were father-figure to my boys and Papa Don to my grandchildren and I am eternally grateful to God for you. I will miss you with all my heart until the day we stand together worshipping Jesus, face to face, as you are doing now. With all my love, Anita.##imported-begin##Anita Lopez##imported-end##

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May 06, 2007 at 12:00 AM



“ Don; I can't begin to tell how much you have and will always mean to me. The many sacrifices you made for me and the way you were always there I will cherish. I thank you for the example you have set as Big Brother, Pastor, and Friend. It will only be a short while before we will once again be together for eternity which I Praise God for.##imported-begin##Tom Varela##imported-end##

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May 06, 2007 at 12:00 AM



“ Dear Brother and friend:  
You were my senior by 18 months; which meant we shared many wonderful times together, from winning dance contests in high school to sharing and praising the Lord together in later years. I will miss you more than I can imagine but I am blessed to know that I will be with you again in Glory someday.  
Love always your sister, Kathy##imported-begin##Kathy Amsler##imported-end##

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May 06, 2007 at 12:00 AM



“ My dear brother,  
I thank God for the wonderful gift and blessing He gave me in you. You were my mentor, brother, and faithful friend. You'll never know the impact you had on my life. The love you always gave to me is immeasurable and I promise to love your family the same way. I will miss you terribly and so look forward to being with you again soon. I love you.  
Robby##imported-begin##Rob Varela##imported-end##

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May 06, 2007 at 12:00 AM