



Denise Adele Gums

October 26, 1953 - July 22, 2020

Denise Adele Gums, 66, passed away on July 22, 2020, in Oakland, California.

Arrangements have been entrusted to Chapel of the Chimes Oakland, 4499 Piedmont Ave, Oakland, California 94611.

Service details and Obituary will be posted as soon as they become available.

To ensure the health and safety of our community, we are following all guidelines set by local, state and CDC officials. If you are planning on attending a service, please contact the funeral home in advance, so that we can plan accordingly.

Comments



“ With profound sadness we express our deepest condolences to Denise's beloved family. May her family and the large extended family of her many friends be comforted by the memories of her great love of life, love of humanity and passion for a world of peace, justice and equality! Her light will shine bright forever!

We thank Denise for all that she has done for the people of Haiti. We will miss her joyful presence as she worshipped, sang, danced, ate, marched, was arrested for engaging in civil disobedience, cared for any of us in need and challenged us to do more for our immediate community and the world. We will always feel her loving, giving spirit inspiring us to do right.

Rest in peace dear Denise!

Maria, Pierre Labossiere and family

Pierre Labossiere - August 16 at 05:33 PM



“ Denise, my angel, I think about you always. I cherish our conversations and I will always remember how you would greet me. " Hello my beautiful sister !" I hold you close within my heart and there you remain. Until we meet again, "My beautiful sister!" AriannaAlexandria.



AriannaAlexandria - August 14 at 11:23 PM



“ Sweet Tranquility Basket was purchased for the family of Denise Adele Gums.



August 14 at 10:08 AM



“Denise was the brightest star in God's universe! She shared her spirit and voice with many of us throughout the years; unique strong, kind and a powerful presence that walked in Grace! My thoughts and prayers are with her Beloved Family. She will remain in all our hearts!
Kathi Britton, St. Benedict Choir Member

Kathi Britton - August 12 at 12:25 AM



“Denise was sui generis - one of a kind. Bombastic and opinionated, she could sometimes be irritating, but this was outweighed by her instinctive kindness and sincere empathy for the pain of others. She often had to face personal adversity but was sustained by her unapologetic pride in her race and religious faith. Denise provoked people to think and was a constructive force for good.

Requiescat in pace.

PATRICK SULLIVAN

Patrick Sullivan - August 04 at 05:02 PM



“Shekinah Samaya-Thomas lit a candle in memory of Denise Adele Gums



Shekinah Samaya-Thomas - August 03 at 09:31 PM



“I am deeply saddened by the news of Denise's transition; a transition FAR to young! Denise was "life force" personified! Her vivacious, energetic, and dynamic presence was always accompanied by a smile that brightened my day and any one blessed enough to have an encounter with Denise! I would occasionally see her on my way to work and offer her a ride up to her school, and this turns out to have been my last encounter with her in early Spring 2020! As always, she was dynamic, happy, and full of joy, eager to get to her classroom just as I was on my way to mine!

I share 2 memories, one most favorite and the other most cherished.
Most favorite memories are of EVERY time I was blessed to share her presence

during worship services at Our lady of Lourdes. I ALWAYS knew when she was "in the Lord's house" because I could hear her voice praying and praising Jesus throughout the service. Such a blessing, and her voice is LITERALLY missed!

But my most CHERISHED memory is from 2009 or 2010, when I was first dating my now-husband. We were by then "boyfriend/girlfriend" but LONG from the point of being "permanent"; one day I had attended a Saturday evening worship service while he was at work and Denise and I were chatting after worship ended. She asked me "where's your husband?" to which I replied that he was "at work, but he's NOT my husband yet". She just smiled that big, bright, broad smile she was known for and said "Oh, he WILL be, just wait"! From her lips to God's ears, as we were engaged in 2011 and married in 2013! It was her prescience that gave me hope in times of doubt!

I will miss seeing her on my way to work and in worship. While I know she's blissfully peaceful with her loving Jesus, she's gone too soon, and very much missed! My deepest condolences not only to her family but all who loved her! I do hope we'll have SOME form of final celebration as a community for the life of one so FULL of celebration of LIFE!

Godspeed, Denise! I'll see ya one day on the other side! <3

Shekinah Samaya-Thomas - August 03 at 09:30 PM



“ Dear Gums family,
I first met Denise at a youth leadership meeting in 1980 when I was 17 years old. Two months later, she became my mentor and a supportive "big sister." As an avid defender of the oppress, she advocated for those seeking justice. She was truly a phenomenal woman with grace and beauty. Thanks for sharing her with me over the years . My sincere condolence, Jacqueline Jackson

Jacquie Jackson - August 02 at 12:09 PM



“ Denise, your presence always gave me light and love. You opened my heart and mind. I'm struggling with the fact that you have left us so young. I will not stop seeking your presence whenever I am even near Our Lady of Lourdes or any place where we have convened together in solidarity. May your goodness and kindness and humor and deep convictions of Justice and the goodness of humanity live on in our hearts and in our actions. My heart aches.

Mary Marsella - July 30 at 05:30 PM



“ I am heartbroken to hear the news of Denise's passing...though I know her beloved presence will remain at all the churches she attended and at all the social justice gatherings she made more vibrant, passionate and alive. I have distinct memories of sitting next to her in church at St. Columba (especially during the African American celebration series!) and just reveling at how she made everything more fun and alive - singing, dancing at her seat, calling out in response to something particularly meaningful said in the scriptures or homily...or just moved by the music. Her vibrancy, her authenticity and her strong spirit and social justice heart will be deeply missed. As will her amazing African clothes, her vibrant earrings and her always beautiful hair...lighting up our church whenever she entered. You are with us still, Denise, we will do all we can to continue your memory, your energy and passion for racial and economic justice and your love of African traditions and people...and your love for the people of Oakland.

Jenafir House - July 29 at 09:28 PM



“ Denise Gums was a uniquely beautiful person, passionate for justice and full of joyful song. Her leadership in the fight for racial justice through Oakland Community Organizations/Faith in Action East Bay, whether through action, protest, voter registration, voter mobilization will be missed. May we all rise to honor her by carrying forward the torch she bore so faithfully for many years. We will miss you Denise.
Ron Snyder

Ronald Snyder - July 29 at 02:24 PM



“ Sadden to hear of the Acsenion of Oakland's Sweet Fiesty Fancy Fearless ColorFull Courageous LOVE BUG, DENISE GUMS A TRUE SISTAR/SOLDIER FRIEND Gone too soon, But she "made it count!" RIP
A LOVE SUPREME

Gwendolyn - July 30 at 03:29 PM



“ Full Of Love Bouquet was purchased for the family of Denise Adele Gums.



July 29 at 01:53 PM



“ I will always remember Denise for her relentless advocacy for social justice and her shared love for the people of Haiti. Her inspiration lives on in the people she touched.

Bless you sister. Rest in Power!

Kevin Pina
Haiti Information Project (HIP)

Kevin Pina - July 29 at 01:17 PM



“ Denise was a very spirited person. Any event or Mass she attended, you knew she was there. She really marched to her own drum, she was a very unique person, She will be deeply miss. Rest in God's loving arms, Denise.

Bernardine Joseph - July 28 at 08:18 PM



“ My God, you will be missed. I went to King Estates Jr. High with her and her brother. What a loss! I ran into her again when Glenview Elementary temporarily relocated to my neighborhood and the site of my elementary school - Santa Fe Elementary. My God rest your beautiful soul.

Cathy Leonard - July 28 at 08:06 PM



“ Denise Gums went to church at OLOL. She was so young. I hope she be happy and fulfilled in life. she will be missed by her family.



kathy wood - July 28 at 05:32 PM



“ Denise was a beautiful sister , she always had a smile and a positive comment about her love for Black people and me. Another "Warriors Shero" for social justice has fallen. Denise will always be a Beacon for our struggle, and in my heart an African Queen .

Dr. Derehia DuVal - July 30 at 08:34 PM



“ Yolanda Cater lit a candle in memory of Denise Adele Gums



Yolanda Cater - July 28 at 02:30 PM



“ I miss Denise's energy and passion as she fought tirelessly for civil rights. I miss you my sister. Rest in heaven.

Yolanda Cater - July 28 at 02:30 PM



“ I will love Denise forever. She is my friend, sis-star and just a radiant being. She is missed everyday. I still have not settled into the reality that she is no longer with us in the flesh. Her spirit will live on forever. It just hurts to know that I will not see her anymore. When I go certain places or see certain things, i am often reminded of her. Love you Denise

Leta - July 28 at 11:26 AM



“ My African SiStar Queen Denise meant so much to me and my school community of Piedmont Avenue Elementary. She served her students, families and community with love every summer that she worked with me. She always kept it real! She always took time to make me feel so special. We shared a love for African fashion. I will truly miss her. May she rest in paradise surrounded by love and beauty. I'm so sad and can't believe it. The community will miss her spirit, her courage and commitment to social justice. Sincerely, with Sympathy and Condolences, Mrs. Zarina Ahmad, Principal, Piedmont Avenue Elementary School

Zarina Ahmad - July 29 at 04:52 PM



“ Wilfred C. Harvey purchased the Pink Tribute Spray for the family of Denise Adele Gums.



Wilfred C. Harvey - July 28 at 10:31 AM



“ Such a sweet soul! A wonderful person full of LIFE, LOVE, and LIGHT! Eternal Rest Grant Unto Denise, Oh Lord, and Let Perpetual Light Shine Upon Her. May she Rest in Peace. AMEN

Nuna - July 28 at 12:37 AM



“ I will remember all of the good times I had with Denise at school and church. She was a wonderful and joyful soul. I will miss her smile and laughs the most. I am grateful for all the joy she would bring when she walked into a room.



Marisa Brown - July 28 at 12:09 AM



“ Full Of Love Bouquet was purchased for the family of Denise Adele Gums.



July 28 at 12:04 AM



“ I was a priest at the parish for a while and I lived Denise. She brought a brightness into my life. She was warm, honest and genuine. I have no doubt that god had taken her home to the kingdom. Thank you Denise. Till we meet again. Terry x

terry murray - July 27 at 05:20 PM



“ Denise's flamboyant presence brought joy, energy and a spirit of celebration to our parish of Our Lady of Lourdes, Oakland. A most colorful personality has been taken from among us at a time when we are unable to gather normally to honor her life of faith and search for justice. A vibrant life energy exuded from her and her absence

will be noted and her presence missed. She was the woman of courage and conviction who called out from her seat exclamations of joy and spontaneous support. She will surely be missed but she will be a most colorful addition to Heaven and a great advocate for us. Eternal joy be yours, Denise. I offer my condolences to all your family. Sister Kathleen Laverty

Sister Kathleen Laverty - July 27 at 02:19 AM



“ I was so sorry to hear that Denise had passed. She was such a genuine friend, passionate about social concerns, never judgmental, always kind. She was sincerely caring with her students, willing to go the extra mile to make sure they not only understood their work, but to make sure they were happy. I always looked forward to talking with her, and I miss her deeply.

Maria Mathis - July 26 at 09:14 PM



“ I will miss Denise and her colorful spirit and voice. She added such life to mass at Lourdes! Rest in peace, dear Denise. I'm blessed to have been in your presence.
Love,
Rose

Rose Santillano - July 26 at 06:41 PM



“ I knew Denise as a parishioner at Our Lady of Lourdes in Oakland, California, and always admired how authentic she was to herself and to what she believed. She exuded warmth!
She was friendly, lively, outspoken, and brought energy and color to any space that she entered. I did not have the privilege of knowing Denise well, and yet I will miss her greatly. I am grateful that she is someone I met on my life journey.

Christabel Pinto - July 26 at 05:53 PM



“ Sentiments of Serenity Spray was purchased for the family of Denise Adele Gums.



July 26 at 04:15 PM



“ Linda Bowles-Adarkwa purchased the Crystal Cross Bouquet for the family of Denise Adele Gums.



Linda Bowles-Adarkwa - July 26 at 03:22 PM



“ I was so heartbroken to hear of this terrible news last week! There will be so many things Denise’s church family will have to miss with her gone: Denise’s vibrant clothes and hair, her hoots and hollers when she heard some fabulous music being sung, her exclamations of “Amen!” in the quiet of a mass when an important truth was being told, her heartfelt and articulate intentions stated out loud and with great conviction during the Prayer of the Faithful, her ability to know everything going on in this Bay Area and around the whole wide world and reference it at the drop of a hat to educate us all, and countless other things.

I wish I had known her better. I wish I had spent more time getting closer to that great ball of love and energy that Denise was. I wish she was still here to color our lives for a little bit more time.

But, enough about me.

She is home now with our Lord and is able to know true peace and joy in his loving arms! From where she sits, she will be able to intercede on our behalf to God and get us that justice that she so vigorously fought for during her life with us.

God bless you and keep you, Denise. Thank you for bringing the grace of your spirit to all of us who knew you at the churches you attended, even a tiny little bit. I will miss you deeply, but pray for your eternal rest by Jesus’ side.

Martina Tran - July 26 at 02:10 PM



“ Denise, knowing you and fellowship with you was some of those wonderful moments. Today, The Lord has decided otherwise by taking you away from your love ones. It’s very sad and painful but only God knows why. We will miss your beautiful voice singing along with the choirs and your rich contribution during bible study. Sister, as you’re making your way to the Father’s home, may your soul rest in perfect peace .

Eugenie Leke - July 28 at 07:52 AM



“ My young daughter and I were blessed to be in Denise’s presence at Our Lady of Lourdes Church over the years as she typically sat in front of us. This sad news breaks our hearts. She was kind, vibrant, and as my daughter says - so very joyful. She will be sorely missed.

While our lives at OLOL will be a bit dimmer without her physical presence, memories of her and her work in the community will shine on brightly on our hearts. Heaven has gained another angel. Rest In Peace, Denise.

Amy Ferraz-Teodrose - August 01 at 04:59 AM



“ Denise, i will miss your love, hugs, and wonderful words of encouragement. Thank you for being in my life and I will miss you. I'm not saying "good-bye", but rather, "I'll see you later, my sistah"

Nikki Walker - July 26 at 02:08 PM



“ Denise was a caring person. She was extremely dedicated to community work and progressive politics. She loved attending and supporting events in the Black community. I met her about 35 years ago. Her smile will be missed. Linda Jolivet.

Linda Jolivet - July 26 at 10:43 AM



“ My Sistar and Beloved Friend Denise is truly a bright Light that warmed the hearts of everyone she met. Always a brilliant smile and encouraging words. She was always there to brighten your day. Comfort to the grieving hearts of all who loved her.



Nefetina Abrams - July 26 at 09:46 AM



“ My most profound and deepest condolences to the Family Friends and Loved Ones of Denise Adele Gums RISE IN POWER TRUEST SISTA FRIEND COMRADE; TRUEST FRIEND OF AFRIKA OF HAITI & OF THE AFRIKAN DIASPORA; WALK IN ROYALTY



Malaika H Kambon - July 26 at 08:07 AM



“ Denise lived her life authentically. She was always an advocate for her community. She loved her church community and lived her true African culture without apology. She will truly be missed.

Chiquita T. Tuttle, PhD

Chiquita Tuttle - July 26 at 12:51 AM



“ I am a parishioner at Our Lady Of Lourdes and got to know Denise when she was part of our discussion group on the Pope's encyclical about the environment. I loved Denise's enthusiasm and her honesty not to mention her wonderful dresses and head scarves. Her passion for justice and love of life surrounded her like an aura. I pray for her and all her family whom I'm sure will miss her deeply. Blessings, Sr. Corinne Florek, OP

Corinne Florek - July 26 at 12:44 AM



“ Denise was a beautiful woman who loved the community and was always willing to serve and help others. My cousin and friend was a true Queen. She is singing with the angels. May she Rest In Peace and Power. With love, Amanda Elliott

Amanda Elliott - July 25 at 08:18 PM



“ I didn't know her personally but she made an impact on me. She was always dressed so colorfully. She had a lovely singing voice and added harmony when she could. I loved seeing her rushing in late to morning Mass. She often blurted out "Amen" when the homily touched her. Her prayers of intention were always really long and full of current issues and needs of marginalized people. She had a smile as wide as the sky and you could tell she had a heart to match. Eternal rest grant unto her O Lord and let perpetual light shine upon her! May she rest in peace and rise in glory!



“ I could always expect to see Denise at any important or non-important community gathering. In fact, whether it be at an Lecture Series, rally, city council meeting or whatever, Denise would be there to lend her voice. I worked with Denise within Alameda County on more than one occasion. Her African community and African American community will miss her smile and colorful head coverings!



Gloria Crowell - July 25 at 03:16 PM



“ I met Denise in 2015 at Our Lady of Lourdes where we both attended morning Rosary prayers and Bible studies on Wednesdays.

I am from Kenya and she always greeted me in Swahili, "Jambo"; thanked me in Swahili, "Asante Sana"; and "kwaheri" , "goodbye".

The late Denise was fashionable in her dressing and one would have mistaken her for an African lady as she was mostly dressed in traditional African attire.

Her friendly smile and association with many people in church will be highly missed by all who knew her.

May the Good Lord Rest Her Soul in Eternal Peace.

John Gichache Mbuthia

John Gichache Mbuthia - July 25 at 04:02 AM



“ So sorry to hear of Denise's passing. I got to know her a bit more after joining OLOL's Bible Study group. She always had a complimentary greeting. She showed such passion about children she worked with, her faith family, etc. She always evangelized about Our Lady of Lourdes Church and what being a member meant to her.

I admire that she had a vast knowledge of Catholicism and the bible. I learned much from her over this past year. One of a kind Denise was and she'll be surely missed.

RIP.

---Monique Mackey (OLOL Parishioner).

Monique Mackey - July 24 at 08:17 PM



“ Thomas Devin sent a virtual gift in memory of Denise Adele Gums



Thomas Devin - July 24 at 08:05 PM



“ Thomas Devin sent a virtual gift in memory of Denise Adele Gums



Thomas Devin - July 24 at 08:05 PM



“ Thomas Devin lit a candle in memory of Denise Adele Gums



Thomas Devin - July 24 at 08:04 PM



“ Denise lived in the building next mine. We always stopped to chat a bit when we ran into each other. I will miss her.





Bobbe Leviten - July 24 at 07:34 PM



“ I am sorry to hear about Denise passing from our world. I enjoyed getting to know Denise at Howard last school year. I appreciated her passion, advocacy, and love of our students and community. I enjoyed chatting with her and will miss her smile and warm welcome.

mirit friedland - July 24 at 03:32 PM



“ I will sorely miss our champion of social justice. A true "judge" from a family of biblical judges to stand up and take the lead. Personally, when I saw her it brought a wide grin to my face and warm to my heart for her presence meant Ashe to the People and Amen to the Spirit.

Love to the Family ,
Godfrey

Godfrey Wilson - July 25 at 04:18 PM



“ Rest in peace by lovely D

Marie - July 25 at 08:56 PM



“ Sister to all community with good spirit. We will surely miss her
I even believe it

Ellen - July 26 at 03:25 AM



“ Denise was the epitome of a Pan-Africanist. She championed the causes of people of African descent in Africa and the and the Diaspora. Denise was a Pan-African queen and she will be greatly missed by all who knew her. God bless Denise and may her soul rest in peace.

Dr. J. Vern Cromartie - July 28 at 01:58 PM



“ Denise you are truly missed I am thankful to have had you as a friend. We have some fun exciting memories that can never be taken away and that is so beautiful!

I loved your free non judgemental spirit and creative afro centric style.

You can now rest in peace and not have to worry about the troubles of this world.

Your morals, convictions

and cheerful partying spirit!! will be kept alive and celebrated!! I will always

remember your beautiful smile Love you Tamahra

Tamahra St.Cyr - August 18 at 04:02 AM