

Happy Easter! Today is the climax of Holy Week, which began on Palm Sunday and continued through Holy Thursday and Good Friday to arrive at this joyful celebration. I hope this has been a good Holy Week for you.

Holy Week 2010 was marked by the passing of a dear member of my family: my brother-in-law, Alexander Bloom, who died on Tuesday of Holy Week (March 30). He was born Alexander Bielaga, but when he married my sister, Melanie, in 1989, he took the Bloom name. Below is the picture from their wedding day. I am also including a picture of Alex with one of the grandchildren – Hannah Lindenau, after her birth in Fairbanks. (Hannah’s dad, Bob Lindenau, was serving on the Fort Wainwright military base at that time.)

Alex was a dedicated member of the Knights of Columbus. He attained Fourth Degree Knighthood – and often served in honor guards: at funerals, confirmation ceremonies, parish events presided by a bishop, etc. In January of 2008 Alex realized that his health problems made it difficult for him to take part in honor guards. He decided to hand over his Fourth Degree sword and uniform. Below is the last picture of Alex in the Knights uniform. The funeral for Alex will take place at St. Cecilia Parish in Stanwood, on Tuesday, April 6 at 11 a.m.

This week our parish will participate in the Divine Mercy Novena. Each afternoon we will pray the Chaplet of Divine Mercy (bilingual) at 3 p.m. If you are unable to come to the parish, please try to have a moment of quiet at 3 p.m., which is the hour when Jesus died, the hour of Divine Mercy. Next Sunday is Divine Mercy Sunday. I invite you to join me and others in the church at 3 p.m. for the concluding prayers of the Novena. After saying those prayers (which take 15 to 20 minutes), we will have the 40 Days for Life Victory Celebration in our parish hall. It is a pot luck event, but do not worry if you don’t have a dish to bring. There will be plenty of food.

The following Sunday (April 18), Bishop Eusebio Elizondo will be with us for the Sacrament of Confirmation. I am very impressed with the young people who are preparing for this powerful sacrament of Christian maturity. Please keep them in your prayers.

Remember also those who were baptized and received into the Church at the Easter Vigil. You will find their names in the bulletin – and in next week’s bulletin we should have some pictures. They are called “neophytes” and they especially need our encouragement and prayers as they join us in the great adventure of faith.

Finally, I want to say a special “thank you” to all who worked so hard to make our Holy week liturgies so beautiful: to our musicians, altar servers, lectors, extraordinary ministers of Communion, sacristans, ushers and hospitality ministers – as well as all of those who worked behind the scenes to make sure our church and grounds are as beautiful as possible. St. Mary of the Valley is a wonderful parish – and I am happy and proud to be your spiritual father. May Easter blessings come upon you and your family!



Alex and Melanie Bloom, wedding day, June 30, 1989

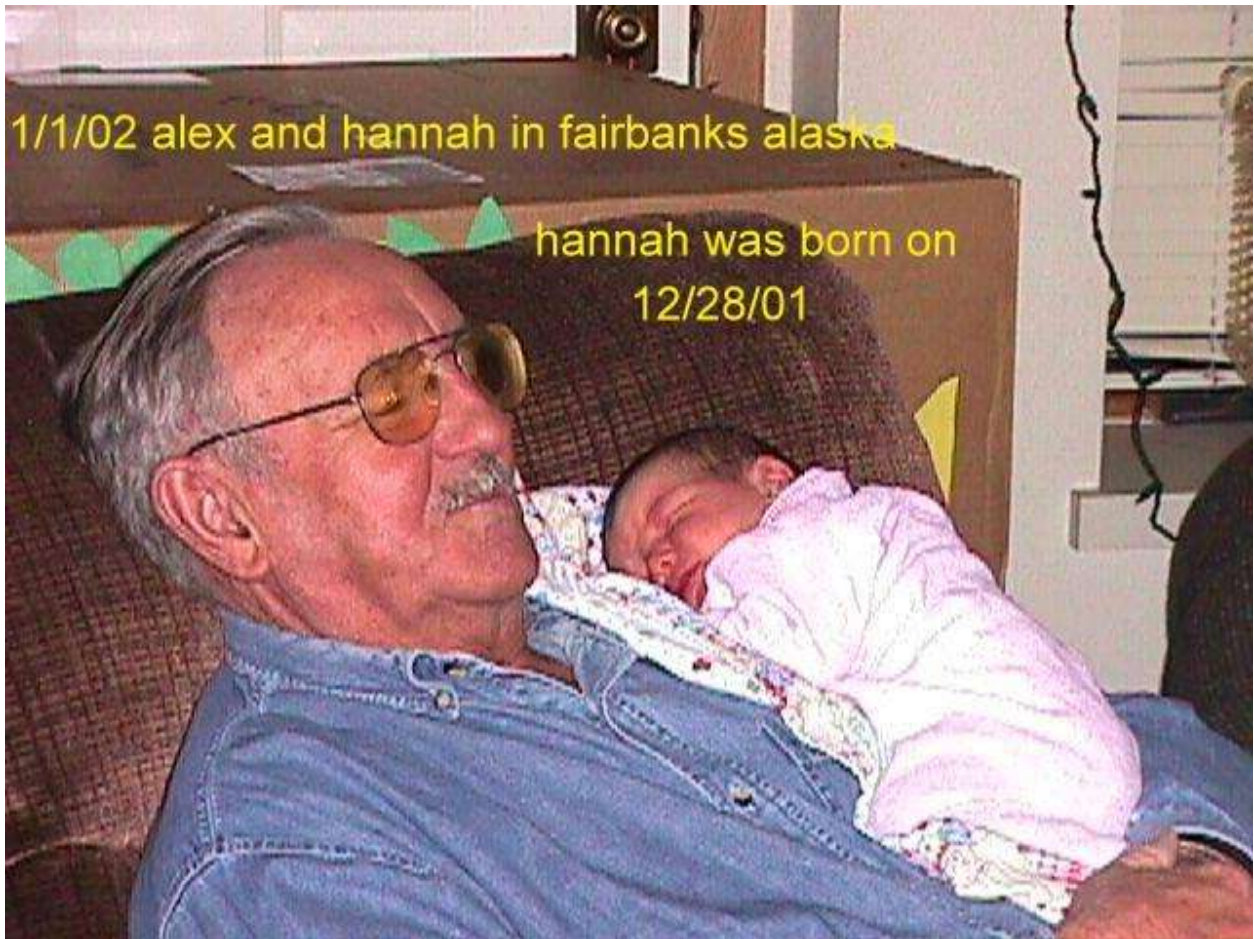


Alex and Melanie, January 2008





March, 2002: Alex with Melani Palacios Marrón (daughter of Obst. Luz Marrón, director of Mary Bloom Center)



Alex with Hannah Lindenau at Fort Wainwright Army Base, January 1, 2002