

After Her Dad Dies, Black Woman Shares Picture of White State Trooper Who Prayed with Him Before He Died

On May 22, Ashlye Wilkerson's father, Anthony Geddis, passed away. Weeks after the funeral, she posted a picture on LinkedIn of her dad in the passenger seat. In the picture, a white state trooper is leaning partially through the window and holding her father's hand with his head bowed in prayer.

CNN reported that when Wilkerson heard the siren and saw the lights in her rearview mirror, she felt anxious. "We were very mindful of how things can play out," she told CNN.

But she also didn't want to allow herself to be unfairly influenced by stereotypes.

"I don't think it's fair to characterize everyone based on someone's actions," she said. When the state trooper walked up to the car, Wilkerson apologized for speeding and provided her license and registration, but her father quickly jumped to her defense.

In her post, she wrote to her father in first person, "You shared with him that I was your baby girl, and we were returning to S.C. from your cancer treatments in N.C. The officer nodded and went back to the car."

Her post continues, "When he came back, he asked you if he heard correctly that you had cancer. Once you confirmed, the officer took a deep breath. He sighed and said that he too had loved ones who battled cancer. He asked if he could pray with you. You welcomed the prayers with gratitude and informed him that you're a deacon of your church. You proudly shared your

love for Christ and your belief that God's will would be done. When you all were done, there was a small silver cross that he placed in your hand for you to keep with you as a symbol of your faith."

Wilkerson was surprised that her father had shared his health condition, and asked him why he shared it with the officer. Geddis replied that he would never want his daughter "to be penalized for taking care" of him.

She recalls, "The officer gave me my items with a warning ticket that day, and said that he would continue to pray for you on your journey."

At the end of the post, she concludes, "Heartfelt thanks to this officer who prayed for and with you that day."

Her LinkedIn post went viral. It's now gathered over 7,000 comments and 133,000 likes on LinkedIn alone.

The North Carolina State Highway Patrol found out about it and sent a message to Wilkerson. Shortly afterward, Jared Doty, the officer in the picture, heard the news. He told CNN that he didn't know "that a photo had been taken of their meeting."

While admitting he often privately prays for many of the people he stops, he said, "This was the first and only time that I ever verbally requested and prayed for somebody out loud on the interstate."

When Doty was interviewed, he said, "This is not about me at all. I don't want any recognition. I didn't do anything." He continued, "This man lost his life, and his daughter is honoring him. I want her to be able to honor him the way she wants, and not for something I did." {eo}

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