



GRACE IRENE WARGO

January 3, 1944 - October 30, 2022

IN LIEU OF FLOWERS MEMORIAL DONATIONS MAY BE MADE IN GRACE'S NAME TO:

POPE JOHN XXIII ENDOWMENT FUND:

www.popejohnendowment.org

VISITATION:

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 2022

4PM TO 8PM

STICKLE-SOLTESZ FUNERAL HOME

FUNERAL MASS:

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 2022

11AM

ST. THOMAS THE APOSTLE RC CHURCH

5635 BERKSHIRE VALLEY ROAD

OAK RIDGE, NJ 07438

973-208-0090

INTERMENT:

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 2022

FOLLOWING FUNERAL MASS
ST. THOMAS THE APOSTLE CEMETERY
ADJACENT TO THE CHURCH

Grace Irene Wargo, 78 years of age, passed away after a long illness on Sunday, October 30, 2022 with Joe, her devoted husband of 57 years, her three children and two of her five grandchildren by her side.

She was born to Grace Irene and Ernest David Lee in Newton Massachusetts on January 3, 1944, even though the family home was in Teaneck. Her mother had traveled to the suburbs of Boston to stay with family for the express purpose of giving birth to her fourth and final child who was also her namesake near her own hometown of Boston. It was as she had done with her other three children Audrey, Elaine and David. Her mother seemed to be trying to instill in her children the idea that everything in Boston was better. However, if that was truly her intention, it was a lesson that never took root with Grace. What did take root was the willingness to make unconventional and sometimes bold choices to engage her imagination and to have faith that all would work out for the best for herself and her family.

When she was still a preschooler the family relocated to Lake Mohawk in Sparta. Grace loved the natural, wild and untamed spaces of the highlands of New Jersey where she lived the rest of her life, relocating only for the length of a single semester at the University of South Carolina. Nothing about the student life there suited the direct talking, simply dressed northerner who shunned most makeup and much preferred sleigh-riding, canoeing, ice skating or swimming to cocktail parties and dances. Instead of reengaging in campus life upon her return to New Jersey she chose to work the checkout at the local Acme while attending William Paterson with an eye on becoming a teacher.

New Jersey was also where she met her Joseph. Joe and Grace met in high school at Our Lady of Lake (now Pope John XXIII). They graduated in 1962 and married on June 5, 1965. The visible signs of her pregnancy with their first child cut short her teaching career but they joyfully welcomed another Joseph to the family in August of 1966. They settled in a small lake cottage in need of much work, but with a stunning view, before their second, Kathleen, arrived in 1968 followed by James in 1970.

The dining room table was just as likely to be filled with Christmas cookies and it was to be covered with glitter and sequins from an extended session of homemade Christmas ornament making. She baked, sewed, crocheted, did needlepoint and macrame and arranged dried and fresh cut flowers. She encouraged her children to join in her many pursuits. She even founded a local chapter of the Junior Garden Club which her children were required to join. She was also just as likely to be volunteering as class mother or chaperone on a field trip as she was to be fiercely advocating for one of her children in the community or at school.

All of these interests, plus her aptitude for math and accounting lead to two successful businesses, but it was her confidence, faith and perseverance that allowed her to take that step each time. The first business was an auto parts store, Milton Auto, that she ran in partnership with her husband for at least a decade. The second was Holland Mountain Farms, a nursery that she ran largely on her own for over 20 years. She was known by many around town as “the flower lady”.

Grace identified herself as a proud Irish Catholic, though she would admit to a fraction of English blood if pressed. She would also probably identify as a mother, wife, business owner and gardener. To her family and friends, she was strong and smart and kind and loving.

She is survived by her loving husband Joseph, her son Joe and his wife Iris, her daughter Kathy and her husband Tom, her son James and his wife Karen as well as her grandchildren Bryan, Bianca, Joseph, Kaitlyn and Ryan. Grace is also survived by her sister Audrey Kelly and many nieces and nephews.

The family will receive visitors on Thursday, November 3, 2022 from 4pm to 8pm at the Stickle-Soltesz Funeral Home, 187 La Rue Road, Newfoundland, NJ 07435 (for GPS use 1 Post Place).

The funeral mass will take place on Friday, November 4, 2022 at 11am at St. Thomas the Apostle RC Church, 5635 Berkshire Valley Road, Oak Ridge, NJ 07438 followed by the interment at St. Thomas the Apostle Cemetery, adjacent to the church.

In lieu of flowers memorial donations may be made in Grace's name to the Pope John XXIII Endowment Fund:
www.popejohnendowment.org

On line condolences and directions: www.sticklesolteszfuneralhome.com.

Previous Events

Visitation

NOV 3. 4:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Stickle-Soltesz Funeral Home
187 La Rue Road
(Parallel to Route 23 North between Clinton Road and Union Valley Road)
Newfoundland, NJ 07435
(973) 697-6700
info@sticklesolteszfuneralhome.com
<https://www.sticklesolteszfuneralhome.com>

Funeral Mass

NOV 4. 11:00 AM - 11:45 AM (ET)

St. Thomas the Apostle RC Church
5635 Berkshire Valley Road
Oak Ridge, NJ 07438
(973) 208-0090

Interment

NOV 4. 12:00 PM - 12:30 PM (ET)

St. Thomas the Apostle Cemetery
5635 Berkshire Valley Road
Oak Ridge, NJ 07438
(973) 208-0090

Tribute Wall

CM

“ Grace and Joe lived in Lake Swannanoa before moving to the Holland Mt home. I would go there to buy plants from Grace, who just loved everything about the farm and greenhouses.
Condolences to Joe and her family. Cathie Miller

Catherine Miller - December 05, 2022 at 03:04 PM

KO

“ 4 files added to the tribute wall



Kathy O'Leary - November 02, 2022 at 08:11 PM



“ Full Of Love Bouquet was purchased for the family of GRACE IRENE WARGO.



November 02, 2022 at 06:29 PM



“ *Camille -Hurd lit a candle in memory of GRACE WARGO*



Camille Timpone -Hurd - November 02, 2022 at 11:17 AM



“ *Country Basket Blooms was purchased for the family of GRACE IRENE WARGO.*



October 31, 2022 at 03:30 PM