



## Frances Reis Costa

May 3, 1934 - December 12, 2020

Frances Marion Reis Costa

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Frances Marion Reis Costa led an extraordinary life dedicated to her family of seven children and to her late husband, Joseph G. Costa. She was a patient person. Mom waited more than 14 years for the day she would reunite with her husband of 49 years, the love of her life. That day came December 12, 2020.

Born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania on May 3, 1934, she was preceded in death by her parents, Charles Reis and Frances Armstrong Reis and by her husband, Joseph G. Costa.

As an only child, Fran was the focus of her parents' attention. She loved to laugh and she loved to make people happy. Things changed abruptly when her father died when she was 14. She and her mother were left to face the world together. She worked hard to fill the void for her mother that her dad's passing had left. From that point, she felt compelled to take care of her mother, as she did for the remainder of her mother's life. Through it all, she never lost her sense of humor and love of laughter.

A graduate of Misericordia School of Nursing in Philadelphia, Mom began her nursing career as an RN in Philadelphia. Over the Christmas holidays in 1956, a friend asked her to go on a blind date with "this great guy". She begrudgingly agreed to go. It was a decision that would change her life. A night of talking and drinking coffee at a Philadelphia diner with Joe Costa began a love affair and partnership that would take them from Philadelphia to San Francisco to the Mojave Desert (China Lake, CA) back to Philly to Toledo, Ohio to Long Island, New York finally in 1970 to her home of 50 years, Memphis (Germantown), Tennessee.

Along the way, Fran and Joe built a family: Joe Jr. was born in China Lake. Greg and Francie were born in Philadelphia. The move to Toledo brought Michael and Judi. In New

York, John joined the family. The move to Memphis brought the arrival of her seventh child, Jeanie. Her family was complete. Mom was happy. As an only child, she wanted many children... she got her wish. Mom would tell us to watch what you wish for.

As one of her seven children, it was common to hear Mom say "You're my favorite, but don't tell the others." She meant it. At that particular moment in time, you were the most special. You were the one getting her undivided attention. You were the reason for her happiness. You were the favorite. She continued that nurturing love and echoing that same phrase to her 14 grandchildren and 19 great grandchildren.

Mom was devoted to her husband. They had a strong marriage and a great partnership. She provided the emotional support, the home structure and the love of a wife that allowed him to harness his ambition to focus on building a successful business to support their family. Together they built Delta Materials Handling, Inc. into one of the Mid-South's leading materials handling companies. They gave their children a stable home and a real-life example of a husband and wife devoted to each other. Together, they provided their children with the advantage of being raised in a loving relationship between two parents.

Mom's faith was deep. She was a dedicated Roman Catholic. She loved her Church. A highlight of hers and our father's service to the Church was when they got to meet Saint Pope John Paul II on a trip to Rome. She loved her local parish, Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Germantown, and she loved St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. She volunteered and served in many ways. Mom and Dad were members of the Knights of the Holy Sepulcher. Mom served OLPH on various committees and volunteer opportunities ranging from the Altar Society to helping count the Sunday collection.

St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, however, was her passion. An active volunteer of the Ladies of St. Jude, Mom served as the organization's president in 1989. The annual PGA golf tournament at

Southwind benefiting St. Jude always brought her great joy. Their home on the 13th fairway provided an opportunity to not only throw the best party during tournament week but also to showcase the mission of St. Jude. Mom was one of the first, if not the first, to line her back deck with "We Love the Kids at St. Jude" banners along with pictures of the kids of St. Jude. Each year, TV cameras would capture these messages telling the world how much St. Jude means to the people of Memphis.

While health issues over the past few years slowed her down, Mom's spirit and personality endured. She had that great sense of humor. She had a quick wit but couldn't tell a story

in under 10 minutes without getting distracted and laughing about how she got off track. She loved to laugh. She always made whomever she was speaking with to be the focus of her attention. Her priority was you.

Our family would always joke that mom never met a stranger. Stand behind her in line at the grocery store, and you might score an invitation to a holiday party or some family event. (Lucky for you because Fran knew how to throw a great party.) She connected immediately with everyone she met. Over the years, Mom made and maintained many friendships, from her girlfriends in Philly to relationships born in Memphis to business acquaintances turned close friends. Perhaps none of Mom's friendships were as dear or as deep as the love and respect she had for her personal assistant, caregiver and best friend, Pamela Ross.

Mom's life lessons and legacy live on in her children: Joseph C. Costa (Annette) of Oakland, Tenn., Gregory A. Costa (Jeanie) of Memphis, Tenn., Francie Costa Emerson (George) of Collierville, Tenn., Michael J. Costa (Suzy) of Chattanooga, Tenn., Judi Costa Colloredo (Jim) of Germantown, Tenn., John P. Costa (Karen) of Memphis, Tenn. and Jeanie Costa Torchio (Paolo) of Denver, Colo.

Mom is at peace now, reunited with the love of her life. Mom is happy. Dad is happy. We are sad for our loss but we are blessed to have had Frances Marion Reis Costa as our mother. We are happy Mom and Dad are together with our Lord in Heaven.

We, the children of Frances Marion Reis Costa, were given a wonderful life because we had two extraordinary, loving parents. Today we say goodbye to our dear, sweet, sainted mother and a life well lived. We love you Mom. We will miss you every day. Thank you for your love and devotion.

In lieu of flowers, please make a donation in the name of Frances Marion Reis Costa to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital <http://giftfunds.stjude.org/FranCosta> (if you call in a donation to St. Jude, please use Ref. ID # 22207652) or to Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic Church in Germantown, TN.

Funeral arrangements are pending and COVID restrictions will apply. Immediate family only at the service with a Celebration of Life to be on a date in the future.

# Cemetery

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## **OLPH Columbarium**

8151 Poplar Avenue

Germantown, TN, 38138

# Comments

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“ Thoughts and prayers are with the Costa family, I'm sorry for your loss.  
Respectfully,  
Rick Radcliff

**Rick Radcliff** - December 15, 2020 at 08:25 AM

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“ Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Frances Reis Costa.



December 14, 2020 at 08:49 PM

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“ I am so sorry for your lose, but your Mom is in a better place with her "JOE" and Preceda. I am sure their Christmas will be pasta, wine and salad. Growing up Fran was always good company, always making laughter for all of us.

She will be surely missed.

Preceda's sister Marie

**Marie Martin** - December 14, 2020 at 11:38 AM