



Katherine C. Oppedisano

June 10, 1937 - September 25, 2019

On September 25, 2019, Katherine Constance Oppedisano, loving mother of four children, passed away at the age of 82. Katherine was born on June 10, 1937 in Meadowbrook West Virginia, the daughter of the late Rose (nee Spino) and Lawrence Marra. She was the daughter of a coal miner and the granddaughter of Italian immigrants, and she spent her childhood surrounded by her close knit extended family, who lovingly nicknamed her "Toots." In her youth, Kathy played the organ for Church and spent her high school summers working at a drive-in movie theatre-but it was at Fairmont State University that she found her life's passion: in 1959 she graduated with a Master's Degree in teaching. She would teach for the next 47 years. Her first classroom was a one room school house in the hills of West Virginia. No doubt this position influenced her approach to education for the rest of her life-no matter the age of the child, she always taught to their abilities and interests, and all of her students thrived.

In 1966, Katherine married Pat Oppedisano of Locri, Italy. They settled in Shelby Township, Michigan where she raised four children and taught for 38 years in the Utica School district. Crissman Elementary was her second home, and the students and teachers there became like family. She filled school years with chemical and physical change experiments, hands-on projects including sugar Easter eggs and salt maps, magic shows, plays, garden growing, and cooking. Creating learning experiences and inspiring students brought immense purpose and joy to her, and she was never too

busy to mentor and share with fellow teachers. Helping others was the overarching call for her life.

At home she loved cooking, baking, gardening, hosting gatherings and holidays, and spending time with family and friends. She happily fed and hosted all the neighborhood kids in the summer, and she decorated elaborate birthday cakes for all of her children on their special day.

In her later years, Kathy's egg-dyeing, pumpkin carving, Christmas caroling, and pancake breakfast parties were celebrated occasions for all who were lucky enough to walk through her door, and her door was always open. Even without a special occasion, Kathy's hospitality knew no bounds. She selflessly cared for her family and friends, including her Aunt Mary Bommarito. She was especially close with her brother Tony and her sister Mary Ann. Her daily interstate phone calls to Mary Ann were cherished, and they would vividly recap the days' events together.

As a grandma, Kathy showed her grandchildren how to explore nature, be inquisitive, and find wonder in all things. In her lap they learned to love to read, and in her home they learned how to hatch a chrysalis, bake pizza cookies and pepperoni rolls, make giant bubbles and homemade playdough, do magic tricks, pick tomatoes from her garden, and search for the perfect Halloween costumes.

Katherine was preceded in death by her beloved brother, Anthony "Bobby" Marra of Tennessee. She is survived by her four children, James, Anthony, Lisa (Jason) Wanecek, and Joe (Callie), her sister Mary Ann (Steve) Mayes, her brother John Marra, ten grandchildren and many well-loved nieces and nephews.

Memorial Visitation will be held at the Rochester Community House, 816 Ludlow Ave, Rochester, on October 10th, from 5:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. A Memorial Mass will be held at St. Kieran's Catholic Church, 53600 Mound Rd, Utica at 11:00 a.m. on October 11th.

In lieu of flowers please consider making a donation on Kathy's behalf to: [DonorsChoose.org](https://www.donorschoose.org) where you can help fund a classroom teacher's project.

Choose a project in Utica Schools or anywhere in the U.S.

St.Jude Children's Research Hospital- www.stjude.org/tribute where your donation helps families get life- saving treatments at no cost and funds research to find cures for childhood cancer.

Previous Events

Memorial Gathering

OCT **10**. 5:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Rochester Community House
816 Ludlow Ave
Rochester, MI 48307

Memorial Mass

OCT **11**. 11:00 AM (ET)

St. Kieran Catholic Church
53600 Mound Road
Shelby Township, MI 48316

Tribute Wall



“ *Serenity Wreath was purchased for the family of Katherine C. Oppedisano.*



October 09, 2019 at 07:28 PM



“ *Full Of Love Bouquet was purchased for the family of Katherine C. Oppedisano.*



October 09, 2019 at 01:48 PM



“ *Eric & Stacia purchased the Medium Dish Garden for the family of Katherine C. Oppedisano.*



Eric & Stacia - October 09, 2019 at 10:28 AM

CP

“ I was Mrs. Oppedisano's student teacher in 1981. She was a great influence and always teased me because I came into her class ready to hit the ground running. She gave me the highest compliment when she said I was a lot like her in my teaching ideas and creativity. We worked so well together the students never noticed who was teaching in front of them. We was an incredible talented giving person and will truly be missed.
Corinne (Duvall) Peltier

Corinne Peltier - September 30, 2019 at 11:26 AM

LW

Oh my goodness I haven't heard your name in so long. My mother talked about you ALL the time when you were her student teacher and years after. She was so proud of the teacher you became and bragged about your accomplishments. She loved to mentor and teach. It was her gift. Thank you for posting your thoughts and memories here. They are precious.
Lisa- her daughter.

lisa wanecek - October 01, 2019 at 02:26 PM

TF

“ The Husk Family (Bud, Paul, Mike, Amy & families) purchased the Your Light Shines for the family of Katherine C. Oppedisano.



The Husk Family (Bud, Paul, Mike, Amy & families) -
September 29, 2019 at 04:32 PM

CC

“*Kathy O!! You were such a huge part of my teaching career! You friended me at Crissman from the start and always helped me find ways to reach my students. You helped me to have a love for literacy it has carried with me 20 years later. From your staff egg breakfast bakes, to your Magic Shows, you touched the heart of every staff member and every student you came to know and work with. For the longest time when I would see alumni, they would ask "How is Mrs. O?" Your love and kindness and passion for learning has traveled and stayed with your students, many who are now adults. I guarantee that your legacy lives on in every person who knew you. I know that we have an angel shining down on us teaching the importance of love and kindness. You will be missed. Prayers and hugs to your family. ~~Courtney*

Courtney Conley - September 29, 2019 at 02:25 PM

LW

Hi Courtney. Thank you for posting these wonderful memories. She talked about you often and your friendship. I am glad that she meant as much to you as you meant to her. She was an amazing role model in life and in my own teaching. Your words are beautiful and comforting. Thank you. -Lisa. Her daughter.

lisa wanecek - October 01, 2019 at 02:27 PM

PB

Mrs. O was the teacher each 3rd grader at Crissman hoped to have. A wonderful, caring, humble, devoted teacher to her students. I'm so glad both my sons had a chance to learn from her. We kept her sugared eggs for years until they simply crumbled. I know her resting place will be heavenly.

Patricia Boik - October 11, 2019 at 02:51 PM

IM

“ Mrs. O was always full of love, and such a inspiration to all . She was so happy when we all gathered around especially at Christmas 🌲 You will deeply missed and always in my heart ❤️ ❤️ ❤️ ❤️ ❤️ ❤️ ❤️ ❤️ ❤️ ❤️



Ina Menzo - September 28, 2019 at 11:00 PM

LW

Hi Ina, Your presence and support through the years was so important to her and my brothers and I are thankful for your kind words and support the last several months. She ALWAYS looked forward to your visits and haircuts and talked about them days before and days after. Thank you for making her smile. Lisa

lisa wanecek - October 01, 2019 at 02:31 PM