



Theresa Punsalan

October 7, 1934 - August 15, 2023

Theresa B. Punsalan, a devout Catholic, and beloved mother and grandmother, passed away on August 15, 2023, at the age of 88. She was born on October 7, 1934, in Buffalo, NY, the cherished daughter of Martin and Helen (Murphy) McGowan.

Theresa's journey was one marked by dedication, love, and service. She met her true love, Ernesto Punsalan, on a blind date - and the two were united in marriage in a small family ceremony on September 16th, 1963. Their bond was a source of inspiration to all who knew them.

As a young adult, Theresa started her career as a surgical technician at Mercy Hospital in Buffalo, NY. Once she met and married Ernesto, their family became her main priority, and over the next decade they were blessed with five children. During that time, they moved from Baltimore to Houston, then Syracuse, and finally settled in Elyria, OH during Ernesto's surgical residency. Once settled in Elyria, Theresa raised five children while running her husband's medical office. Her commitment to her work touched countless lives, and her compassionate nature left a lasting impact on those who knew her. Theresa retired and moved to Michigan upon her husband's passing. Outside of her professional pursuits, Theresa's heart belonged to her faith and her community. An active and dedicated parishioner of The National Shrine of The Little Flower Basilica Catholic Church in Royal Oak, MI, Theresa found solace and inspiration in her spiritual life. Her steadfast involvement and contributions enriched the lives of those around her. She made many

cherished friends along the way in her later years through the local church community.

Theresa leaves behind a legacy of love and dedication to her church and family. She will be greatly missed by her children: Ellen (Dave) Nager, Ernie (Robin) Punsalan, Elizabeth (Jerod) Swallow, Rick Punsalan, and Robert Punsalan. Additionally, she leaves behind six grandchildren who she was so proud of: Jordan, Cory, Danielle, Manny, Gavin, and Den.

She is reunited in eternity with her beloved husband, Ernesto, as well as her parents, Martin and Helen, and her many siblings.

A Funeral Mass in honor of Theresa's life will be held at The National Shrine of The Little Flower Basilica Catholic Church on Friday, August 25, 2023, at 10 a.m. The family kindly requests that you share your cherished memories of Theresa on the website www.sullivanfuneraldirectors.com

Previous Events

Funeral Mass

AUG **25**. 10:00 AM (ET)

National Shrine of the Little Flower Basilica
2100 Twelve Mile Rd
Royal Oak, MI 48073-3910
(248) 541-4122

Tribute Wall

EM

“ Almost nothing stopped Theresa from attending The Most Holy Sacrifice of The Mass. She very faithfully, as long as she was allowed to, led The Most Holy Rosary after Most Holy Mass, and I am sure that she very generously supported the Shrine of the Little Flower. She was very helpful to me and supported me well as a member of the non-profit's board. She had a very charitable heart, as shown by her actions. She did not trumpet her kindness - she just did it. As she came into this world on the Feast of Our Lady of The Most Holy Rosary and left it on the Feast of The Assumption of The Most Blessed Virgin Mary, I have a strong feeling that she is already enjoying Heaven with our Most Blessed Virgin Mary. Holy Theresa, pray for us. Elizabeth McCullough

Elizabeth M. - October 29, 2025 at 11:07 PM



“ A grove of 3 [Memorial Trees](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Theresa Punsalan.

August 24, 2023 at 06:51 PM



“ Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of Theresa Punsalan.



August 21, 2023 at 08:22 PM