



Irene Opolka

December 25, 1919 - January 2, 2024

LORETTO - Irene Opolka, age 104 of Naples, Florida, passed away peacefully at home on January 2, 2024, under the care of Avow Hospice of Naples.

She was born on Dec. 25, 1919, in Loretto, the daughter of the late Louis and Vencenzia (Conti) Solfanelli.

Irene married Anton Opolka at St. Stephen Catholic Church in Loretto on July 10, 1943. Anton preceded her in death on Feb. 17, 2003.

She was a member of St. Stephen's Altar Society. Faith, family and friends were the center of her life.

Irene was happy to be a part of the war effort during WWII, working as a riveter on airplane wings at Murray Corporation of America in Detroit; she was called "Irene the Riveter."

She loved being in her kitchen. Some things she enjoyed making were homemade spaghetti, raviolis, pasties and special desserts for her family and friends who looked forward to eating at their home when they were in town. Irene liked sewing, knitting, crocheting, and playing solitaire on her tablet.

Irene is survived by her daughter, Rosemary (Tony) Kordowski of Naples, FL and son, Robert (Judy) Opolka of Midlothian, TX; granddaughters Irene (David) Gardiner, Kimberly (Blake) Biddick, Kelly (Aaron) Griffin; eight Great Grandchildren, all who live in TX; and several nieces, nephews and many special friends who kept in touch with Irene after she left Loretto.

She was preceded in death by her brothers and sisters, Americo Solfanelli, Rose DeBernardi, Elia Chounard, Ester Cerra and Alice Stanchina.

Irene remained a member of St. Barbara Catholic Church in Vulcan after leaving Loretto. She spent time every year living with her son and her daughter to be with her family.

Her family would like to thank all the caregivers at Avow Hospice, for their wonderful care of mom.

Visitation will be held on Wednesday, January 10 from 10-11 a.m. at St Barbara Catholic Church in Vulcan.

The Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated on Wednesday at 11 a.m. at St. Barbara's Church, with Fr. Marty Flynn, officiating.

Interment will follow at the Norway Township Cemetery.

Cemetery Details

Norway Township Cemetery

Norway Township, MI

Previous Events

Visitation

JAN **10**. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

St. Barbara's Church
159 Mission Street
Vulcan, MI 49892

Mass of Christian Burial

JAN **10**. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (CT)

St. Barbara's Church
159 Mission Street
Vulcan, MI 49892

Tribute Wall

MA

“ *The best great grandmother I had I truly miss you and it hurts me to know that you're gone and that I have to find out a whole year later. Love you Nona I have a beautiful baby boy now I really wanted you to be a great great grandmother.*



maria - December 12, 2024 at 08:22 PM

ST

“ *I have such nice memories of Mrs. Opolka from growing up in Loretto. I never saw her without a beautiful smile & a happy attitude. She was such a dear person & treasured friend of my mother. My love & prayers are with all of her family.*



Susan Tinti - January 09, 2024 at 12:42 PM

LS

“ *Liz and Vince Stanchina purchased the Divine Peace Bouquet for the family of Irene Opolka.*



Liz and Vince Stanchina - January 08, 2024 at 03:38 PM

LS

“ Liz and Vince Stanchina planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Irene Opolka.

Liz and Vince Stanchina - January 08, 2024 at 03:38 PM



“ Enchanted Cottage was purchased for the family of Irene Opolka.



January 06, 2024 at 10:47 AM

LM

“ Love, Valerie, John and Matthew planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Irene Opolka.

Love, Valerie, John and Matthew - January 06, 2024 at 10:47 AM



“ Lavender Reflections Spray was purchased for the family of Irene Opolka.



January 04, 2024 at 08:08 PM

RS

“ Robbin Sandlin lit a candle in memory of Irene Opolka



Robbin Sandlin - January 04, 2024 at 09:06 AM

RS

“ I was very sad to hear of Ms. Irene's passing. I only met her once, she was in her 90s. I am friends with her daughter, Rosemary, who talked about "Mom" always, and so I feel I knew Mom. I am so impressed with what I just read about her. I knew she was amazing (Rosemary is just like her), but didn't realize her background, only some of it that I was told through the years. She certainly had a wonderful, loving life and I know anyone who knew her, loved her. There was not anyway you could not love her. I'm sure God gave her a long life because of the great person she was down here with all of us. Godspeed "Mom." Love and hugs and prayers to the family.

Robbin Sandlin - January 04, 2024 at 09:00 AM

BB

“ *Godspeed Nona. She lived a wonderful life which I was a part of for almost 50 years. Fun to talk with and had a beautiful smile as seen on this site. She and Gramps opened their home to me when I came north with Bob, Judy and family to experience a real winter although -25 degrees was a bit of a shock for this Texan. Nona would have dinner prepared for us when we got out of the cold except on Friday when we went to Fish Fry.*

Nona was able to share her 104th birthday with Bob's family on Christmas Day via computer. She was able to see and hear all sing Happy Birthday.

I was blessed to spend time with this wonderful woman and her family.

Bob Bentsen

Bob Bentsen - January 03, 2024 at 03:18 PM