



Joan Read Bres

November 26, 1929 - February 6, 2022

Joan (pronounced Joann) Read Bres died at the age of 92, on Feb 6, 2022, in Durham, NC where she lived with her daughter Nancy Bres Martin, son-in-law Chris Martin and grandson Matthew Martin. She is survived by her 8 children, 16 grandchildren and 25 great grandchildren. Joan had 4 daughters, Meri (Jaime) Kolb of Baton Rouge, LA; Judy (Tim)Wildfire, Nancy (Chris) Martin, Jane (James) Brinkley of Durham NC, and 4 sons, Mike (Lucy) Bres, John (Sherry) Bres and Jimbo (Christy) Bres of Birmingham AL and Bill Bres of Mobile, AL.

She is preceded in death by her beloved husband of 74 years, James (Jim) Ray Bres Jr., her mother Vivian Read, her father John James Read Sr. , her brother John James Read Jr and her daughter-in-law Virginia Bres.

Joan was born on Nov 26, 1929 in Picayune MS where she spent most of her childhood. She attended Hinds Junior College until her marriage in 1947. Throughout her life she lived in Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, New Jersey and North Carolina.

Joan dedicated her life to being Mama/Mom to her 8 children, Gran to her 16 grandchildren and 25 great grandchildren, a daughter who cared for her own mother, mother-in-law and father-in-law in the final years of their lives and a devoted wife and loving and caring friend to all who knew her. She was the queen of embracing and finding joy in the chaos of a big ol' (loud!) family and in life. She could make you feel like the only and most important person in the room. She was truly a smart, patient, nurturing person and she always had a way of knowing the right thing to say or helping talk through a situation. She had endless grace and patience and a great sense of humor as well as a unique and fun style (big bracelets and cool glasses and hats even into her 90's). Everyone was accepted in her "no judgement" home and all were welcome in her life.

She was an extraordinary quilter who made Christmas quilts for all grandchildren, as well as, baby quilts and T-shirt quilts when requested. The 'Gran' ornaments that she gifted all her grandkids for 25 years will brighten Christmas trees for years to come. She was an

avid Scrabble player and crossword puzzler, loved to travel whenever she could and made the best gumbo around. She was a devout member of Holy Infant Catholic Church until her death.

After her children were grown, Joan worked as an Executive Assistant in the President's Office at the University of Alabama in Birmingham for many years. She also was a founding member of the Birmingham AL Alzheimer's Support group, a group that provided support to her for many years while she was caring for her mother who died of Alzheimer's. She served as Vice President for several years and helped many care givers struggling to care for loved ones with the disease.

Even in death she was a giving person, donating her body for teaching and research. As a result a funeral mass and celebration of Joan's life will be delayed until Spring. Services will be held at Holy Infant Catholic Church in Durham, NC at that time. Donations may be made in her honor to: Alzheimer's Association of Central Alabama, the current incarnation of the Birmingham Chapter that Joan was instrumental in founding back when she was caring for her mother ts afflicted with the disease; or Eastern North Carolina Alzheimer's Association, an organization her family currently is involved. More information is available online at <https://alzca.org> and <https://www.alz.org/nc>.