



## Mary Vargas

January 25, 1945 - February 23, 2019

Mary Vargas passed into everlasting life on February 23rd after spending her last days at home, surrounded by the memories of a life well lived, feeling the love of her family and hearing testimony from those whose lives she touched with her faith and kindness. She pitched a valiant but short battle against ovarian cancer and the complications that eventually took her from us. She is survived by Carlos, her knight in shining armor and loving husband of 54 years; her pride and joy, their children Angeles Gannon (Matthew), Maria Vargas, and Adrian Vargas (Viviana); the grandchildren that were the lights of her life, Alina, John, Shane, Spencer, and Asher Gannon and Amelia Mary Vargas who is expected to arrive in June; her beloved sister (hermanita) Carmen Kroth; and many loving nieces, nephews, cousins and her extended family of great friends.

Mary's story is one that shows us the redeeming power of love. She was born on January 25, 1945 to Alina and Victor Vazquez in Binghamton, NY. When Mary was 5 years old her mother was diagnosed with breast cancer and she moved with her two girls to Puerto Rico where she passed away shortly thereafter. Mary felt the loss of her mother her entire life, resolving early on to be the best mother she could when she had her own family. Mary was born cross-eyed and lived with that until she was 16 years old when a kind uncle paid for her corrective surgery. Until that moment, Mary lived her life looking down at the ground and refusing to meet anyone's eyes for fear of being ridiculed for her condition. This experience gave her a never ending well of empathy for all of those who felt unloved, unworthy and lacking in value – an empathy that was part of who she was and how she approached others.

Mary was enrolled in the University of Puerto Rico when in 1964 she was seated in alphabetical order in an English class next to a handsome senior named Carlos Vargas. Their brief courtship was filled with stolen moments, ROTC dances, chaperoned outings and a proposal. Mary always said she really only began to live after she met Carlos, and live they did after marrying in September 1964!

54 years of marriage produced many adventures including living in Texas, Germany, Puerto Rico, Mexico, New Jersey, New Hampshire, Alabama, Washington DC, Delaware, North Carolina, Florida, South Carolina and Georgia. Everywhere they went they made friends, reveled in the fun of setting up new houses and decorating (sometimes

rearranging the furniture just for fun), entertaining with theme parties and Puerto Rican music and food. Not only a perfect pairing in life, Mary and Carlos were amazing dance partners, moving effortlessly to the salsa or merengue beat, enjoying each other's skill and sharing their love of Latin dancing with anyone who asked for lessons. Mary instilled in her children the importance of being a good host, embracing their cultural heritage and for the girls, never leaving the house without lipstick on. Mary and Carlos loved to travel and had great trips to Europe, the Caribbean and across the US, but Mary felt most at ease at home surrounded by her family.

Most people know Mary for her cooking, which for her was an expression of love and a way to minister to those in need. She made the most perfect white rice with crispy "pegado" that ever was. She was a voracious collector of recipes from magazines and was the rare cook that could actually make them flawlessly. It is no wonder that in her retirement she chose to volunteer at the Fuquay Varina Food Bank, helping to compassionately feed the hungry without judgement.

Mary was equally known for her kindness and as the best cheerleader you could ask for. She was the person you counted on to give you a spontaneous hug because she felt you needed one, or offer enthusiastic words of encouragement or give you a compliment that was so outrageous yet sincere you felt uplifted by hearing it. Mary knew how to soothe the unspoken hurts and help the broken to heal. She did this guided by the loving hand of Jesus.

When Mary became a born again Christian, she spread the love of Jesus passionately and vocally. She knew God had worked miracles in her life and she wanted to share that joy, frequently testifying how He had worked through her and with her. Mary wanted everyone to know the peace that she had found in Christ. In recent years, she and Carlos became members of Church Alive, a community that allowed her to worship as loudly and freely as she wanted beside her loving grandchildren.

To know Mary was to know how profoundly she impacted the lives of everyone she came in contact with and to know the magnitude of the void she leaves behind.

# Previous Events

## Celebration of Life

FEB 27. 11:00 AM (ET)

Church Alive  
5309 Umstead Rd  
Fuquay Varina, NC 27526

# Tribute Wall

PW

“ Dear Carlos, Angie, Maria and Adrian,  
I send condolences to your dear family in the loss of beautiful Mary. Carlos, I so appreciate your and Mary's dedication to the kids at St. Paul's all those years ago. And look at them now -- supporting each other, staying in touch and celebrating the good times they had together. All because of you and Mary! i thank you from the bottom of my heart! Cherish the wonderful memories of your years together and remember the good times.

Sincerely,  
Patricia Watts  
Ned's Mom

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**Patricia Watts** - February 27, 2019 at 12:35 PM



“ 1 file added to the album Memories of Mary



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**Wake Funeral & Cremation Services, Inc.** - February 25, 2019 at 04:19 PM