



Gloria Elizabeth Merkel

February 15, 1928 - March 30, 2020

Mrs. Gloria Elizabeth Merkel passed away on March 30th, 2020 at the home of her beloved daughter and son-in-law, Louise & James Budrow of Bristow, Virginia. She was 92 years old. Gloria courageously fought the ravages of dementia and a failing heart for several years before finally succumbing. Gloria was born on February 15, 1928 in Queens N.Y. She was the oldest daughter of Herman and Elisabeth Kautzman, and a loving sister of Alyce Fensterer (deceased) and Harriett Kautzman.

On May 10th, 1946, Gloria married the love of her life, Lewis J. Merkel Sr. After nearly 50 years of marriage, Lewis passed in February 1995. Their love produced seven beautiful children: daughters Karla Yates (Alan), Gloria Merkel Baio, MaryAnne Merkel, Regina Ratchford (Forest), Louise Budrow (James); and two sons, Lewis Jr. (Anastatia) and Christopher Sr. (pre-deceased). Gloria also lovingly raised her grandson Christopher, Jr. Gloria was known as "Granny" to the next generations. She will be dearly missed by her children, 18 grandchildren, and 21 great-grandchildren.

Gloria was a devoted military wife to her husband MSGT Lewis Merkel, United States Air Force. They enjoyed many adventures together during Lew's 20-year career. Gloria was a devout Catholic who gave much of her time and energy to the churches where she and Lew were parishioners. After Lew's USAF retirement in 1964, the family resided in Toms River, NJ where the family became members of St. Joseph's Parish. Gloria was a member of the Altar Rosary Society and the St. Joseph Grammar School PTA. Gloria & Lew

ensured their children had a strong Catholic education. Gloria was also involved with the Catholic Chaplaincy at the Cathedral of the Air, Lakehurst Naval Air Station, NJ. She was an active member and soloist of the Cathedral choir.

Gloria's work with Charities was exceptionally notable and indicative of her kind and compassionate heart. She was a founding and active member of the Ocean County NJ Cystic Fibrosis Foundation. She was a founding member and president of the Moorestown, NJ chapter of the Deborah Heart and Lung Hospital in Browns Mills, New Jersey.

In 1991, Gloria and Lew moved to Cornelius, NC where they became parishioners of St. Therese in Mooresville, NC. Gloria helped found the parish's Women's Auxiliary Society, and also served the parish as an usher. Gloria was also very engaged with the Newcomers Club of North Mecklenburg and South Iredel Counties, serving as President of the Club from 1993 through 1995. She is still remembered and beloved by the many people whom she had welcomed into their new homes. Gloria's great love of children is evidenced by her work as an after school teacher at Cornelius elementary school and part time teacher at Blythe elementary.

Gloria's extraordinary and generous life was only equaled by her beautiful voice. She was a woman of song who shared her exceptional talent freely with many, in choirs, at family gatherings and, for a brief while, on television. She was a frequent guest singer on the Phil Crosby show during her time in Spokane, Washington.

Gloria loved to travel! She was blessed to have been able to visit many world destinations, even in her later years. She loved visiting friends and family, including loved ones living in Germany. Gloria's greatest passion was her family, her husband, her children and many grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Not a day would pass when she wouldn't be lovingly in touch with her precious family.

Gloria was a beautiful soul, a great friend and confidant to many. Her legacy of friendship, empathy and counsel live on in her devoted children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. She is at rest now and through the grace of Jesus Christ, in whom she and Lew so fervently believed, they are finally “home” together again.

A private Mass for Gloria will be held at Holy Trinity Catholic Church in Bristow, Virginia. Afterwards, she will be laid to rest beside her beloved husband and son, Christopher, at her family plot in Queens New York. Due to the current COVID-19 Outbreak, a memorial Mass and celebration of her life will occur at a later date.

Tribute Wall

RR

“ *What I remember most about Gloria (Mrs. Merkel) while growing up was her beautiful voice. She and dad would sing at the Cathedral of the Air in Lakehurst on Christmas Eve. and hitting that high note while singing 'Oh Holy Night' was truly memorable.*



Gloria was always a loving and generous lady to our family. I have very fond memories of Merkel and Reina families together for many occasions.

Rose Reina-Rosenbaum - April 22, 2020 at 09:42 PM

BT

“ *The Bereavement Ministry Team and the Parish Community of St. Mark Catholic Church, Huntersville NC extend our deepest sympathy at this difficult time. Be assured that you and your family are in our prayers.*

Bereavement Ministry Team - April 14, 2020 at 10:48 AM

EY

“ *A lovely lady who was always so kind to our family, we shared many fun times and laughs over the years, always so hospitable when we visited. Kathleen, Jennifer, Kim and I will always remember Gloria with love ~ May you Rest in Peace Gloria*

*Eileen Yates
Kathleen Yates
Jennifer Yates
Kim Yates Scott*

Eileen Yates - April 06, 2020 at 10:36 AM

JM

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Jennifer Mauro - April 04, 2020 at 05:41 PM



“ Mom, I always liked this picture of us taken at some hole-in-the-wall diner during one of our many road trips! I miss you so very much.

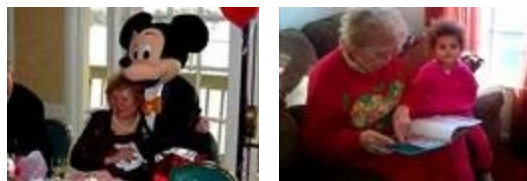
I do not feel your presence in my home, I know this means you found your way to Jesus, dad and Chris. This gives me peace.
Xoxox



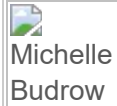
Louise Budrow - April 03, 2020 at 12:45 AM



“ 2 files added to the tribute wall



Jacqui Budrow - April 02, 2020 at 07:15 PM



Michelle Budrow

“ *Granny and her great-grandson James Richard Budrow <3*

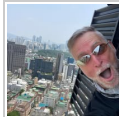


Michelle Budrow - April 02, 2020 at 06:40 PM

KY

Though her illness kept Great Granny from expressing her deepest feelings outwardly, I believe Granny's heart was pounding with joy & pride as she held Baby James, her newest great grandchild. How can I be certain of that? Because that is the way Granny welcomed every grandchild and great -grandchild! There was room in her heart to love all of them, whether they lived near or far.

Karla Merkel Yates - April 02, 2020 at 09:53 PM



What I remember and love about Gloria is the way she would light up and lift a room when she came in. The whole spirit of a place would be raised up by her. Like she brought her whole wonderful life with her wherever she went, sharing it with everyone in her smiles, stories, song and laughter.

Lawrence Burg - April 04, 2020 at 10:38 AM