

JOAN BIES NEWMAN



Of Upper St. Clair, PA, passed away peacefully at home on December 22, 2024, at the age of 95. As a daughter, sister, friend, wife, mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, artist, and child of God, she lived a remarkable and holy life.

Joan was born in Queens Village, New York, on May 15, 1929, and attended Our Lady of Lourdes elementary school where she first met the man who would one day become her husband of 70 years, Robert Newman. With the encouragement of her father, she attended the Arts Students League of New York, then worked as a fashion illustrator at Vogue. Her vocation to marriage and motherhood followed. Joan married Robert in 1953 and soon bore the first of what would eventually be 11 children. They lived in various places in New York before the family moved to Pittsburgh in 1959 where she created a home buzzing with activity, fun, and warmth. Any stray dinner guest, child, or animal was always welcome. Joan firmly believed in the importance of improving the larger world, helping to found Pittsburgh's La Leche League, advocating for recycling "before it was cool," co-creating the Brookside Farms Herpetological Society, serving on many committees and ministries at St. Thomas More Catholic Church and School, and working diligently with her husband to protect the unborn. As her children grew, her artistic talents re-emerged. In the 1980s she became active in the Upper St. Clair League for the Arts, drew commissioned charcoal and pastel portraits, and illustrated fashion ads for local department stores that appeared in the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette and Pittsburgh Magazine. As an artist her whole life, she taught us to recognize the beauty in all of creation. She remained a trusted role model as a wife and mother: gracious, understanding, warm, and welcoming to friends, partners, and offspring; and dependable, humble, and helpful whenever anyone needed advice of any kind.

In 1990, on the day their youngest child left for college, Joan and Robert took Joan's parents into their Upper St. Clair home for them to live out their days comfortably, continuing the dedication to family that marked Joan's entire life. Joan was preceded in death by her beloved husband, Robert; her parents, Sylvester and Barbara; her brothers, Philip, Sylvester, and Ronald; her sister, Barbara; and her grandchild, Tess. She is survived by her children, Paul (Beth), Anne (Frank Kirkwood), Patricia (Steve Hahn), John (Sheri), James (Vanessa Rivera), Anthony (Linda), Frances (Tom Herfurth), Mary (Brandon Hardin), Kathryn (Eric Mallison), Michael (Betsy), and Nancy Kirkwood. She also is survived by 40 grandchildren and 16 great-grandchildren.

Friends and family will gather at **PAUL HENNEY CREMATION AND FUNERAL TRIBUTES, INC.**, 5570 Library Road, Bethel Park, PA 15102 from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. on December 29, 2024. A Mass of Christian Burial will be held at 10:00 a.m., December 30, 2024, at Resurrection Parish, St. Thomas More Church, 126 Fort Couch Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15241. A luncheon to honor the life and legacy of Joan B. Newman will follow at St. John Capistran Catholic Church, Capistran Hall, 1610 McMillan Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15241.

In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to People Concerned for the Unborn Child (PCUC), 3050 Pioneer Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15226, 412-531-9272.

Send condolences post-gazette.com/gb