

# DOLORES MARIE (VALASEK) O'CONNELL



It is with deep sorrow and love that we announce the passing of Dolores Marie (Valasek) O'Connell of Plum, formerly of Bethel Park, known by most as "Dolly," on Wednesday, January 1, 2025. She was a devoted mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, sister and friend. Dolly passed away unexpectedly but peacefully at her home, leaving behind a legacy of love, kindness and generosity that touched all

who knew her. She was a devoted and loving wife for 60 years of Thomas "Tom" O'Connell who preceded her to Heaven in 2023.

Dolly was a loving mother to Mary Beth (Dave) Genday, Sharon (Ron) Willochell and Daniel (Jacq) O'Connell. She was an adoring Gram to Michael (Lindsay) Genday, Kelsi Genday, Kyle Genday and Jonah Willochell, and a proud great-grandmother to Collins and Cohen Genday. She is also survived by her dear sister, Yvonne Jungle, and brother, Walt Valasek, as well as many nieces, nephews and extended family. Dolly was predeceased by her beloved siblings, Bertie Kort, Margie Maliszewski, Millie Mazur, Al Valasek, Emanuel Valasek and Robert Valasek.

A devout Catholic, Dolly was active in her church communities and held a deep devotion to the Blessed Mother. She made several pilgrimages to Medjugorje, a place close to her heart. She also found joy in the peace of nature, having visited numerous national parks across the United States. She was an active member of the Legion of Mary in her younger days and prayed the rosary daily. She always had a rosary of some sort on hand - in her pocket, in her purse, in her car... wherever Dolly went the rosary went with her.

In her earlier years, Dolly hosted many charity carnivals in her backyard, always striving to support those in need. Her compassionate spirit extended beyond her family, and she was well-known for her generosity and thoughtfulness, always eager to offer a meal, a kind word, or a helping hand. Dolly also had a passion for learning, especially languages, and proudly amassed an impressive 1807-day continuous learning streak on Duolingo while learning Italian, which she continued until the day of her death.

Dolly trained as a secretary at Robert Morris, then worked for Westinghouse as an executive secretary for several years before starting her family. She later worked for State Farm Insurance, as well as the World Affairs Council of Pittsburgh.

Above all, Dolly was the kindest, most giving soul, and her ability to make everyone feel welcome and loved was unmatched. She never knew a stranger, always offering food, water or a thoughtful gesture to those around her. She cherished time spent with her family, from rolling down hills with her grandchildren to dancing in her kitchen. In her youth, she danced the night away in Jamaica, and in later years, she continued to dance through life with a heart full of joy.

Her home was a place of warmth and laughter, where anyone could always count on a cup of coffee, a sweet treat or a slice of warm bread. Dolly's love of life and laughter will be missed by all who had the privilege of knowing her.

Friends and family will be received 2-4 and 6-8 p.m. on Thursday, January 9, 2025, at **MAURICE L. KNEE, LTD. FUNERAL HOME**, 7663 Saltsburg Rd., Plum, PA 15239. Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated at 10:30 a.m. on Friday, January 10, 2025, at Our Lady of Joy R. C. Church of Holy Family Parish, 2000 O'Block Rd., Plum. Interment will follow in Queen of Heaven Cemetery, 2900 Washington Rd., McMurry, PA 15317. In lieu of flowers, the family suggest donations be made to the Little Sisters of the Poor, Society of St. Vincent DePaul or to your local church.

Dolly's memory will live on in the hearts of all who were blessed to have known her, and her love will continue to inspire us every day. You will be dearly missed.

Send condolences [post-gazette.com/gb](https://www.post-gazette.com/gb)