

MARY ELLEN (VENTURINI) HRITZ



Age 97, of Whitehall and Bethel Park, beloved wife, mother, grandmother and great-grandmother, passed away surrounded by her family on Sunday, January 19, 2025.

Predeceased by her beloved husband, Joseph A. Hritz; and her 11 siblings, Frank, Emidio, Sofia, Elizabeth, Atilio, Anthony, Thomas, Marion, Stephen, Mary and Rocco.

She will be dearly missed by her children, Andrea (Ronald) Gronsky, Michael (Stacy Stull), Jeffrey (Ann Kelton), Christopher Jon "CJ" (Beth), Gina (Robert) Pasko, Elizabeth (Thomas) Wisniewski and Thomas (Michele Timon); 20 grandchildren; and 22 great-grandchildren. She is also survived by many nieces, nephews, cousins, and friends.

As a child of the Great Depression, our mom wore her frugality as a badge of honor, displayed in the form of old takeout containers, and rubber bands on everything. But she still managed to lead a rich life, and was not frugal in her love for us. Her kindness and open mind routinely blessed her family with a sense of belonging. Children were always welcomed with treats and a closet full of toys. Her quick wit and strategic brain made her a formidable card player and a sharp-tongued comic, especially when it came to teasing her older grandchildren. Our mom's love for us and true artistry came through most notably in her kitchen. She was a creative baker who made all the family favorites like HoHo Cake, Poppy Seed Roll, and 12-Layer Cake. She was also never afraid to tackle a modern recipe, like homemade kale chips-one of her favorites.

As a senior at Holy Rosary High in Columbus, OH, Mary Ellen typed out an essay about her future plans to get an "office job" after graduation. "Then," she wrote, "after working a few years, if I am lucky, I'll get married and settle down for the rest of my life."

Mary Ellen got that office job at Armour & Co., and it was there that she had the luck to meet Joe Hritz, the love of her life. Joe had just returned from serving in the U.S. Army during WWII, where he earned three Purple Hearts. They married in 1949, and built a life together based on their shared devotion to faith and family. We are happy to think that our parents are now reunited for all of eternity.

Friends will be received at the **JOHN F. SLATER FUNERAL HOME, INC.**, 412-881-4100, 4201 Brownsville Road, Brentwood 15227, on Friday, January 24, 2025, from 2-8 p.m. Funeral prayer on Saturday morning, at 9:30. Mass of Christian Burial in Blessed Trinity Parish, St. Sylvester Church, at 10:30 a.m. If desired, family suggests contributions to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, 501 St. Jude Place, Memorials Processing, Memphis, TN 38105. Please send condolences to

www.johnfslater.com

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