

# IRENE TESTA SPEZIALETTI



On Monday, March 31, 2025, beloved wife of 56 years of the late Robert J. Spezialetti; much loved mother of Mary Spezialetti and Dr. Madalene Spezialetti; sister of the late Laura Perry and Mary Matich; also survived by nieces and nephews.

Our Mom was a devout Catholic, a proud Sicilian-American and a true East Liberty native, born over Testa's, her family's grocery store on Penn Avenue. She attended Divine Providence Academy in East Liberty, and upon graduation, moved to New York City, where she studied at NYU and Columbia University while working for a well-known New York City hat designer. She then moved to Los Angeles, and continued her studies at UCLA before returning to Pittsburgh to work in her family's business while teaching ballroom dancing. It was at a ballroom dancing social that she met our Dad, Robert Spezialetti, who had just returned to Pittsburgh from Milan, Italy. She devoted herself to raising us before returning to complete her degree in secondary education, with honors, at Duquesne University, at age 50, after which she worked in the social services field. Our Mom loved starring in Madalene's short films, one of which earned her the Best Actress prize in a Pittsburgh 48-Hour Film Festival, and another which won the top prize at a Carnegie Museum Two-Minute Film Festival. While dementia later took much from her, it failed to take everything, and she maintained her determination and her ability to make incisive, and often witty, observations. She fought fiercely to the very end. We would like to thank her many caregivers from Honor, particularly Tracie, April, Lisa, Sara, Zee, Valerie, Michele, Lakisha, Leah, Diedre, Dina andCarolynn, who gave her such compassionate care in the last two years of her life.

Friends will be received at Madonna del Castello Church (St. Joseph the Worker Parish), 2021 S. Braddock Avenue, Pgh., PA 15218, on Friday, April 4, 2025, from 9:00 AM, until the celebration of a Mass of Christian Burial, at 10:00 AM. Interment in Good Shepherd Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions can be made to St Anthony's School Programs at [stanthonykids.org](http://stanthonykids.org). Arrangements by **JOHN A. FREYVOGEL SONS INC.**

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