



## Mary Ellen Kreilkamp

February 6, 1935 - April 21, 2023

Mary Ellen Kreilkamp, age 88 of Olympia, Washington (formally of Rensselaer, IN) passed away peacefully on Friday April 21, 2023. She was born in Chicago, IL on February 6th, 1935 to Dominic and Elizabeth (Tully) Carfagno.

Mary Ellen graduated with the class of 1953 from Trinity High School in River Forest, IL and was a 1975 graduate of St. Joseph's College, with a degree in Elementary Education. She was a firm believer in early childhood education and the teaching methods of Dr. Maria Montessori. This led her to own and operate The Montessori Preschool at St. Joseph's College and later at her North College Ave. residence. Her greatest pleasure was to hear news about her former pupils or enjoy a visit with them. She was also a kindergarten teacher from 1967-1968 at the Armory in Rensselaer.

Upon retirement Mary Ellen and her loving husband Don traveled extensively in Europe and lived briefly in London, England. Later they both embraced mission work at the Salvatorian Major Seminary in Tanzania, East Africa. Mary Ellen volunteered at orphanages and schools. She would often remark that "you can leave Africa but it never leaves you". She truly believed it to be an extraordinary experience of a lifetime. Mary Ellen's commitment to the underserved, marginalized and helpless led her to perform prison ministry at the local correctional center in Rensselaer for many years along with

numerous other charitable organizations. Mary Ellen relocated to Olympia, WA in 2019 to be with her daughter Emmy and grandchildren Elliott and Ezra. She enjoyed an active life in the Pacific Northwest, hiking, camping and traveling.

Mary Ellen was preceded in death by her first husband Donald Cebulski, son Michael, daughter Margaret, and sister-in-law Barbara Drewganis. In 2017 her second husband Donald Kreilkamp passed away. She is survived by her children, Mary, Joseph, Lynn and Emmy; grandchildren Matthew, Caton, Natalie, Christian, Elliott and Ezra; her sister Patricia (husband Peter) Leopold and all of her loving nieces and nephews of the Leopold and Drewganis families.

A memorial Mass will be offered at St. Augustine Catholic Church on June 24th 2023 at 11:00 AM with the Reverend Joshua Bennett officiating. A visitation at the church will be held from 9:00 AM to 10:45 AM Interment will follow at Mt. Calvary Cemetery in Rensselaer.

# Cemetery Details

## **Mt. Calvary Cemetery - Rensselaer**

Mt. Calvary Cemetery  
Rensselaer, IN 47978

# Tribute Wall

JH

“ *Jen Hilbert lit a candle in memory of Mary Ellen Kreilkamp*



Jen Hilbert - August 23, 2023 at 12:42 PM

RG

“ *Ramon Gonzalez lit a candle in memory of Mary Ellen Kreilkamp*



Ramon Gonzalez - July 27, 2023 at 10:32 PM

RG

*I met Mary and her Husband Don in Ohio for a Retreat! Great example of Our C.P.P.S Companion Sister and wonderful Human being!*

Ramon Gonzalez - July 27, 2023 at 10:34 PM

JJ

“ *Jeanine Jullian lit a candle in memory of Mary Ellen Kreilkamp*



Jeanine Jullian - June 12, 2023 at 12:07 AM

JJ

“ Just seen this about Mary Ellen I was trying to get ahold of her she took care of my dad and was such a blessing to me and difficult times God bless the family and I know she is having a wonderful time in heaven with her Lord and savior

---

**Jeanine Jullian** - June 12, 2023 at 12:07 AM

NW

“ Noelle Weishaar lit a candle in memory of Mary Ellen Kreilkamp



---

**Noelle Weishaar** - June 01, 2023 at 01:57 PM

JK

“ Judy Kanne lit a candle in memory of Mary Ellen Kreilkamp



---

**Judy Kanne** - June 01, 2023 at 08:27 AM