



Marie S. Mattera

December 8, 1929 - October 31, 2025

Marie S. Mattera, at 95, went home to be with the Lord on October 31, 2025. Born at the start of the Great Depression in a traditional Italian immigrant household, Marie was not satisfied with the status quo. A woman ahead of her time, she was strong and courageous. Right after World War II, she graduated from South Philadelphia High School for Girls. Using the skills she learned as an administrative assistant, she went to work for the Quartermaster Corps at the old Philadelphia Navy Yard. For a young woman at that time, this was unique and intrepid.

For Marie, family was always her greatest love and her top priority. She was married for 34 years to Joseph L. Saponaro, with whom she raised their six children in Philadelphia, PA and Runnemede, NJ. Her goal was to ensure that her children had every opportunity she could provide. She instilled her courage in them, raising each to be kind, independent, and sophisticated. Most of her children became entrepreneurs, inspired by their mother's strength.

Once her children were grown, it was time for Marie to make her mark in the career world, again. She excelled right from the start and always earned the highest praise from all. From 1970-1976, she worked for an educational thinktank, Research for Better Schools, in Philadelphia. Then, in 1977, that entrepreneurial spirit led her to a very successful career in real estate. First, she was a realtor for four years in the Cherry Hill, NJ area. Then, she planted her roots in 1981 in Brigantine, NJ, her parents' summer home since 1949,

where she flourished in residential real estate sales for 15 years, revolutionizing the local market and leaving a lasting legacy for generations to come. Then, semi-retired, she worked for 5 years in the legal department at Trump Castle/Marina in Atlantic City.

Once retired, she became very passionate about genealogy. As the internet still was in its infancy, Marie relied on the old-fashioned method, traveling to Philadelphia, Utah, and all the way to Italy to trace her family's roots. She even saw an opportunity, using that new internet invention and creating her own genealogy website, which caught the attention of numerous college professors who praised her skills.

Marie loved many other pursuits, including reading, traveling, knitting, crocheting, sewing, swimming, astrology, decoupage, and upholstering furniture, often making her own clothes and for family. She also cherished one of her family's greatest pastimes: cooking. If it was a holiday, Marie was preparing an elaborate dinner for her loved ones. Who could forget her wonderful lasagna? It was creamy and delicious.

Family always meant everything to her. Marie is survived by her six children: Susan M. Smith (Steven), Joanne M. Vernamonti (James), Joseph P. Saponaro (Patricia Palmer), Randall J. (Patricia Horton) Saponaro, Jay J. Saponaro, and Rodney J. Saponaro. She also will be deeply missed by her 14 grandchildren (who affectionately called her, "Marmee"), 22 great-grandchildren, and countless extended family and friends. She is preceded in death by a grandson, Kyle Saponaro; her parents, Nicola and Susanna (DeBlasio) Mattera; her brother, Clement Mattera; Joseph L. Saponaro, her husband of three decades and her son-in-law, Joel A. Waller.

A memorial service to celebrate Marie's life will be held on Saturday, November 15 at her beloved St. Monica's Parish, 2422 S. 17th St., Philadelphia, PA 19145. Visitation will be from 9-10 a.m. with mass to follow at 10 a.m. She will be buried at St. Peter & Paul Cemetery, 1600 S. Sprout Rd., Springfield, PA 19064. To leave condolences or share a special memory of Marie with the family please go to: <http://www.StolfoFuneralHome.com>

Arrangements entrusted to Stolfo Funeral Home, 2536 S. Broad St.,
Philadelphia, PA 19145, 215-334-7376

Previous Events

Viewing

NOV **15**. 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM (ET)

St. Monica Church
2422 S. 17th St.
Philadelphia, PA 19145

Funeral Mass

NOV **15**. 10:00 AM (ET)

St. Monica Church
2422 S. 17th St.
Philadelphia, PA 19145

Tribute Wall

LD

“ Rodney and family, so sorry for your loss, you were blessed to have had such an amazing person in life as your Mom!

linda Dalessandro - November 14, 2025 at 08:26 AM

LG

“ Love, Debbie Gifoli purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Marie S. Mattera.



Love, Debbie Gifoli - November 13, 2025 at 11:48 PM

PW

“ Marie was one of the most thoughtful people I ever worked with. She was an inspiration and had grit. May her family be comforted by their memories of her . From: P. Wild

Patricia Wild - November 13, 2025 at 10:04 AM

NI

“ So beautifully written. ❤️ Marie was definitely one of a kind and well ahead of her time for certain. Not only was she dedicated to raising her family, she also helped pave the way for women entrepreneurs. Her legacy will always remain. I wish I had the opportunity to ask her many questions. Especially, how to make clothing. She will always remain an inspiration to be strong, smart, independent, dedicated and lovely.

Nicole Iannece - November 13, 2025 at 08:00 AM

TM

“ *The Minnicks planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Marie S. Mattera.*

The Minnicks - November 12, 2025 at 08:50 PM

TM

“ *The Minnicks purchased the Loving Lilies and Roses Bouquet for the family of Marie S. Mattera.*



The Minnicks - November 12, 2025 at 08:50 PM

DK

“ *Doc, Pam and the kids planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Marie S. Mattera.*

Doc, Pam and the kids - November 10, 2025 at 03:30 PM

DK

“ *Doc, Pam and the kids purchased the Sentiments of Serenity Spray for the family of Marie S. Mattera.*



Doc, Pam and the kids - November 10, 2025 at 03:30 PM