

Mary Jane Cody

July 3, 1942 ~ August 6, 2024

I was born in Passaic, New Jersey on July 3, 1942 to John and Maida Connelly. I spent my childhood in Passaic with my 3 brothers (Joe, Frank and Bill) and all my lifelong friends from St. Nicholas and St. Mary's Schools. I found my love of teaching at Caldwell College where I earned my degree and teaching credential. This is the same time that I found the love of my life James (Jim) Cody, from Lodi, New Jersey. We both loved listening to music, bowling, golfing, and entertaining our friends and family. I was so excited to start a family of my own. In 1969, I welcomed my first son, James, into the world and followed 4 years later with the addition of Mark to our family. After a few years living in Ambler, Pennsylvania and Old Bridge, New Jersey, our family of four moved to the Jersey Shore and settled in the amazing town of West Keansburg. Living in the Bayshore area was such an important part of my life. I loved going down to the floodgates and watching my love Jim catch the "big fish" that he loved telling everyone about. The time that I spent walking the coast of Sandy Hook searching for shells and sea glass was priceless. Keansburg is also where I found my calling and enjoyed a fulfilling career teaching second grade at St. Ann's School. The special times that I had included teaching "all my Sweeties" reading, math, and going on the yearly field trip to the Museum of Natural History in NYC. I also had the privilege of spreading the Word of the Lord to many students at St. Ann's School and through CCD religious education in the Parish of St. Ann. I especially loved preparing and watching the young children receiving their First Communion and the older students receiving Holy Confirmation. These are special moments that I have cherished my entire life.

Keansburg has always connected me with such amazing people. Some of my fondest memories are the weekly prayer meetings with the greatest lifelong friends, attending and performing at St. Ann's Festival with the community, and sitting and chatting with friends after daily Mass at the local deli or senior center.

The most precious gifts in my life are my friends and family. My son Jim is married to Kerri and resides in Port Monmouth, NJ and Mark is married to Pam and lives in Draper, UT. Jim and Kerri have two wonderful sons, Jimmy and Daniel, while Mark and Pam have three sons: Alexander, Brenden, and Grayson. Yes, all grandsons. I so cherished the time I spent with Kerri and Pam and the great love and joy they have given to me.

Grandchildren are so amazing and such an important part of my life. Jim and I loved following and attending all the grandkids' school activities, sporting events, and hearing about their days. The time I got to spend with them was priceless and each of them made me so proud of how they are living their lives.

I was lucky to have a family that I loved; to be a sister, a sister-in-law, an aunt, a great aunt, and cousin to so many loved ones. I thank God for giving me the opportunities to be part of their lives in good times and during tough ones.

After losing my soulmate Jim in 2017, I started a new adventure by moving to Salt Lake City. In Utah, God's power and love was so evident when I saw the enormous Rocky Mountains and expansive Great Salt Lake. The sunsets

are spectacular. I don’t think I have ever seen so many colors in the sky at one time. When I moved to Utah, I lived with Mark and Pam. They reintroduced me to my love of "fine" wine and board games, and I had the chance to celebrate with new friends and family at numerous Christmas and summer parties. Eventually, I decided to move back to West Keansburg and spend more time with Jim and Kerri. Then COVID hit. Ugh. When it was safe, I returned to Utah and moved into an independent living community. I spend my days on field trips to local attractions and my nights sitting by the fire with the ladies chatting. After some time, I found out that I had Lewy Body Dementia, and moved into Crescent Senior Living Memory Care. My days were filled with concerts, art projects, and learning about new traditions and cultures from around the world. Surrounded by the love of my family and the strength of my wonderful caregivers, I passed away on August 6, 2024. However, that is also the spectacular, amazing day that I was reunited with my love Jim, all my family and friends that have been waiting for me. I want to thank my family for giving me the strength to live but allowing me to go at the end.

Thank you to everyone who played a part in my life. You have made my journey so rewarding and amazing. I will love and cherish all of you. Each of you holds a special place in my heart and always remember that “I Love You”. One final quote… “You can take the girl out of Jersey but you cannot take Jersey out of the girl.”