



Mary L. Villanueva-Shriver

October 25, 1938 - October 8, 2023

With deep sadness, the Villanueva Family announces the passing from this earthly life to Heaven of our dear Sister and Aunt, Mary Jo Villanueva-Shriver on October 8, 2023. Mary Jo was born in Pueblo, Colorado on October 25, 1938, the 13th of 19 children born to Nazario and Esperanza (Hope) Villanueva. Four siblings went to Heaven as infants so she only grew up with 14 brothers and sisters. Her parents, three sisters (Rose Hernandez, Daria Segura, and MaryAnn Sanchez), and six brothers (Pifi, Bennie, Johnnie, Toby, Joe, and Edward Villanueva) preceded her to Heaven as well as many brothers and sisters-in-law, nephews, nieces and cousins. Mary Jo was also preceded to Heaven by her loving, shy, quiet, and faithful husband, Bill Shriver, Jr. Mary Jo is survived by her sisters, Frances Villanueva, Angie Lobato, and Teresa Manty; her brothers, James (Pilo) Villanueva, Julian Villanueva, and a host of relatives in Colorado and California. Mary Jo discerned her vocation very early in life and she never strayed from it. In 1953, at the very young age of 15, she left the only home she ever knew (Salt Creek), and traveled to Yankton, S.D. where she joined the Benedictine Order and that is when she became Mary Josephine. She was given the name after the school and parish that nourished her vocation, St. Joseph. Who knows what they want to do in life at age 15? Even less, who chooses the strict path of a Catholic nun? Now you know just how much Mary Jo loved Jesus and her love for Him grew over the 23 years she would go on to serve as a Benedictine nun and teacher. She earned a Bachelor's and Master's Degree

in elementary/secondary education and taught at Boys Town and in the Omaha, Nebraska Public School system until her retirement in 1989. Mary Jo met her lifelong friend, Sister Carla Gross, in Yankton in the early 1960's and they remained very close. Thank you Sister Carla for the enduring friendship you shared with Mary Jo. Let us not forget the many friends she met in Omaha including Connie Davis and her family who shared many holidays with Mary Jo. She met so many friends named Mary, she numbered them! We are so grateful to the many friends who watched over Mary Jo in Omaha and whom she never forgot. Despite serious vision loss over the years, Mary Jo never stopped reading or writing. It is no exaggeration to say she spent thousands of hours writing our family history, sending holiday and birthday cards to every single sibling, niece, nephew, cousin, and their spouses! If we did not get a card on or before our birthday, it would come shortly thereafter with an apology and explanation why it was late. Living in Omaha for so many decades and given Mary Jo's intense fascination with sports, it was inevitable she would become a lifelong Husker fan. Indeed, she watched their last game and happily reported that they won. Now she was a loyal Bronco fan too and rooted for the CU Buffs so long as they were not playing against Nebraska! She always had a Husker blanket on half of her couch and a Buff's blanket on the other half! She could pronounce the most difficult names of professional tennis players and football players and could rattle off their stats and the teams they play or played for at the drop of a hat. She had perfect memory for everything. Mary Jo was a treasure to her very large family and friends. But in the end, all she ever wanted to do was serve God. She persevered in the faith of knowing she was chosen by God, that she was never alone, and that she would return to Him one day. We are confident that Mary Jo's last sentiment was ultimate gratitude to her sister Frances for hosting her last years at home – Pueblo.

Previous Events

Memorial Service

OCT 18. 10:30 AM - 11:30 AM (MT)

Romero Family Funeral Home
110 Cleveland St.
Pueblo, CO 81004
(719) 583-1313
romeroffh@live.com

Tribute Wall

DK

“ *This was Mary Jo's going away dinner when she moved back to Colorado*
Connie Davis



Davis Connie K. - October 17, 2023 at 06:57 PM

CM

“ *1 file added to the album Aunt Jo*



Charlene Maes - October 17, 2023 at 01:41 PM

DO

I have some very fond memories of Mary's days with us at Sacred Heart Monastery. I have enrolled her in our Book of Life. My Sympathy. Sr. Doris Oberembt, osb

Doris Oberembt - October 17, 2023 at 05:41 PM



“ *A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Mary L. Villanueva-Shriver.*

October 17, 2023 at 01:41 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum* was purchased for the family of Mary L. Villanueva-Shriver.



October 17, 2023 at 01:41 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Mary L. Villanueva-Shriver.

October 17, 2023 at 12:58 PM



“ *Divine Peace Bouquet* was purchased for the family of Mary L. Villanueva-Shriver.



October 17, 2023 at 12:58 PM