



Maria Teresa Villarraga

May 16, 2023

Maria Teresa Villarraga was born on January 20, 1933 or 1937 (although she said her true age would be carried to her grave) in Bogota, Colombia to Maria Romero de Villarraga and Gerrardo Villarraga Ramirez. She was the first born amongst 6 siblings, followed by Ana Cecilia Villarraga (aged 85), Gladys Villarraga, Angel Villarraga (aged 81), Liliana Villarraga (aged 78) Libia Villarraga de Caruana. As the first born, Teresa was like a second mother to her siblings ensuring that they were taken care of. This came easy to her as she always was warm and kind to everyone she met. She cared deeply about those she loved and often was quite generous and selfless.

Teresa cared so much about her family, she left her beloved country of Colombia to move to the Queens, New York with her niece Diana to live her sisters Ana Cecilia, Libia and with Ana Cecilia's husband Victor Manuel Villarraga. She left behind the only place she knew because she loved her sisters so dearly and wanted to support them on their new journeys seeking the American Dream. As many immigrant stories are told, the first years adjusting to American culture were difficult. Finding their place in new country where they had to earn their respect as Latino Americans in the 1970s. Teresa learned new customs, a new language, encountering racism, discrimination, and misogyny as women in the workforce were discouraged at this time period. Teresa showed extreme resilience and always upheld a positive mindset. She always saw the good in every bad situation. Her strength, and her integrity were something that her family admired about her.

In the 1970s, they moved to New Jersey away from the bustling city life of Jackson Heights, Queens. This is when Teresa was employed at Meldisco within the Human Resources Department for 20 years. She really loved her job and spoke proudly of her roles and responsibilities. She enjoyed the freedom and independence of making a living for herself. Teresa was a dedicated worker who almost never took sick days and worked many years of her life up until her retirement age.

Teresa was also known for her dedication to her religion. This was something very important to her. She was a highly active community member at Holy Trinity Roman Catholic Church in Hackensack, New Jersey. She never missed church on Sundays and was always present for all Easter and Christmas services. Teresa loved her community so much, she would volunteer to serve coffee and bread with butter every Sunday. She would do this for many years rarely missing a day. Teresa was not only devout to her religion, but she truly loved being connected to her spirituality and the community she helped form. She would on occasion read sermons at her church as this brought purpose and sense of belonging to her. At church, people knew Teresa as charismatic, kind, gentle, and warm. She had many friends and was well respected amongst her peers and church leaders. Although there came a time where Teresa couldn't continue to go to church due to her health, she carried her religion and spirituality deep within her heart and soul. Her church remembers her for her laugh, smile, genuineness, and positivity.

Teresa was a true matriarch for her family in New Jersey. Teresa never had any biological children but raised her niece Diana as her own. She was not only a sister, but also a mother, and a grandmother to her family. She loved her nieces and nephews deeply. Her love was unconditional, non-judgmental, secure, warm, and pure. You always felt safe around Teresa because she would ensure to protect those who mattered most to her. She dedicated her life to her family and loved them deeply.

Despite a decline in Teresa's health, she continued to emulate her soul. She never stopped smiling and was always so kind to everyone she met. She

would still find the positives in any situation, no matter how difficult they were. She would reminisce about her fond memories of Colombia, her devotion to god, and her deep love of her family. This is what brought Teresa the most joy in her life. Teresa left an impression on so many people's lives, and she will be remembered most for her integrity and kindness. Teresa was a pure soul with a big heart. She will be missed and remembered by so many.

Cemetery Details

St. Joseph's Cemetery

179 Hackensack Ave
Hackensack, NJ 07601

Previous Events

Memorial Mass

MAY **19**. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

Holy Trinity RC Church
34 Maple Ave
Hackensack, NJ 07601

Tribute Wall



“ *Volk Leber Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of Maria Teresa Villarraga*



Volk Leber Funeral Home - May 18, 2023 at 03:20 PM

SP

*María Teresa, que gran ser
Siempre recordaré tu dulzura y bondad para cada una de las personas
que compartimos con Tigo, te llevaré siempre en el corazón 💕*

Sonia esmeralda Pérez - May 19, 2023 at 11:19 AM



“ *Volk Leber Funeral Home created a Webcast in memory of Maria Teresa Villarraga*



Volk Leber Funeral Home - May 18, 2023 at 01:16 PM



“ *Maria Teresa Villarraga*

October 08, 2023 at 09:59 PM



“ *Maria Teresa Villarraga*

October 08, 2023 at 06:27 PM



“ *186 files added to the album LifeTributes*



Volk Leber Funeral Home - May 18, 2023 at 03:03 PM