



## Marilyn Mae Kress

December 24, 2020

Marilyn Mae Olson was born on July 2, 1934 in the small Norwegian community of St. Olaf, Iowa.

In those days, most babies were birthed at home where Marilyn was the first of six children born to Agnes and Gerhard Olson. When she was six years old her dad bought a 120 acre farm in the nearby farming town of Fayette where Marilyn spent her formative years. By the age of twelve she was driving a tractor or a team of horses, baling hay and de-tasseling corn to pitch in with the colossal planting and harvesting operations.

At an early age she knew she wanted to become a nurse so after graduating from high school in 1952, she left the farm to attend Mercy School of Nursing in Dubuque, Iowa. She was first in her family to attend college and earned a degree as a registered nurse. It was there she met the man who would become her husband, George Kress. At the time, George was a football player for the University of Iowa. As Marilyn loved to tell to their children years later, she was with a group of nurse friends in a music hall when she first met George. One of Marilyn's friends animatedly asked her, "Do you know who that is? He's a big football player from Dubuque." Two years after that chance encounter, the two were married.

She continued her nursing career until the birth of her first child, Ann. A

second daughter, Jane, was born in 1960. Marilyn resumed her nursing career in 1963 as a hospital nurse while George pursued his doctorate at the University of Iowa. During this time, son Dave was born. In 1967 George was offered a professorship at Colorado State University in Fort Collins, Colorado. Upon arrival in Fort Collins, Marilyn enrolled the kids in St. Joseph's school where she became an active volunteer, initiating the annual Book Fair fundraiser for the school's library. She was also one of the first volunteers for the Meals on Wheels program where she would even help clean the homes of those clients in particular need, do their grocery shopping, and listen compassionately to their life stories. Ever the nurse, she took it in stride when one of her elderly clients answered the door in nothing but his undershorts. Unphased, Marilyn delivered the day's meal into the kitchen of the geriatric gentleman, who upon the next week's visit, had no memory of his previous stage of undress.

Marilyn took up tennis while in her early forties. She proved to be a fierce competitor when she and George won some City Doubles Tournaments. She was equally competitive when playing cards, be it bridge, cribbage, euchre, and even Old Maid. As she would trounce everyone else, she would claim it was due to skill and ability. A fourth child, Dan, was born in between tennis matches and card games.

Marilyn's life took a dramatic turn when she was unexpectedly stricken with a cerebral aneurism at the age of forty-nine. The condition proved permanently disabling, but over the next thirty-four years she retained her sense of humor, love of family, and devotion to her Catholic faith. The Legion of Mary welcomed Marilyn into their fold as a devotee of the Holy Mother. She was also a member of the Parish Nurses team at St. Joseph's who are the Florence Nightingale's of Fort Collins.

It was her faith, her husband's devotion and Iowa farmgirl pluck that saw her

through her challenging debility. Marilyn died peacefully on Christmas Eve. She is survived by her husband George of 63 years, daughter Ann Kurronen (Jussi), Jane Kress, Dave Kress (Sheri) and Dan Kress. Her Olson siblings are Faye Bena (John), both deceased, Dennis Olson, Diane Mullins (Terry, deceased), Bonnie Olson and Ronald "Buzz" Olson (Jane). She had seven grandchildren and numerous nieces and nephews. The family wishes to thank all those who helped care for Marilyn these past few years, with special thanks to Antoinette Pike. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to Meals on Wheels, St. Joseph School Library or the charity of one's own choice.

Private services will be held for the family and streamed online for all others who would like to take part as follows:

Recitation of the Rosary at 1:30 pm followed by Memorial Mass at 2:00 pm, Tuesday, December 29, 2020. Follow either link below to join the service:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCfTYqQ96sVNI3ED-UZFF0eA>

<https://www.facebook.com/StJosephChurchFC/>

# Tribute Wall

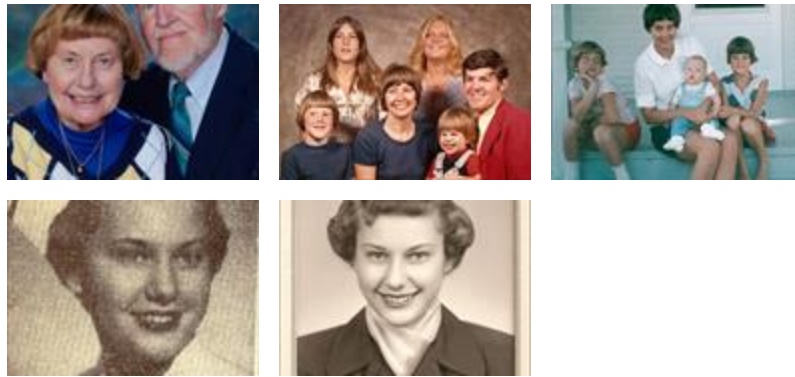


“ *Marilyn Mae Kress*

October 25, 2022 at 06:14 PM



“ *8 files added to the album Memories Album*



**Ann Kress Kurronen** - January 02, 2021 at 07:56 PM



*Beautiful pictures and memories. Thank you for sharing these Ann.*

**Joe Spanier** - January 09, 2021 at 11:24 AM

AG

“ As a little kid, Mrs. Kress was definitely my first pick for a second Mom. She had a special way about her that let you know she was definitely a Mom, but a very cool Mom. She had a twinkle in her eye and a tone to her voice that put you at ease. She understood us as kids and what we we’re thinking about, whether it be Oreo cookies or talking to boys on the phone. She never made us feel bad about wanting those things, but she somehow taught us to have some discipline (about eating too many cookies) and self confidence (not depending on the boys calling us). She made me feel like she loved me as though I belonged to her. For sure, I think she has a front row in heaven.

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**Anne Reid Griffin** - December 31, 2020 at 10:57 PM



“ I have wonderful memories of playing Uno with Marilyn, George, and Dan at the kitchen table in their house on Rangeview. The games were always competitive but with lots of laughter. Every time I see a deck of Uno cards those memories come back. We lived next door on Rangeview and as Dan and I were born a few months apart, Marilyn and my mother were instant co-mothers and friends, sharing babysitting duties and making sure Dan and I didn't get into too much trouble... but with lots of freedom to play. Although, Marilyn would sneak me some Wonder bread when I wandered over looking for Danny ;) She also apparently saved me from a certain injury when she found me (a 1.5-year-old) running around naked in the Kress front yard at 3 in the morning. How confused my mother must have been when the doorbell rang and there was Marilyn, holding a wild naked child. I have very strong sense memories of playing very happily in the Kress family room with the sounds of the Cubs on TV. An amazing lady who lived a wonderful life. Our condolences to the Kress family. Rest in Peace, Marilyn.

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**Ethan Duff** - December 29, 2020 at 09:10 PM

JS

“ We wanted to share our sincere condolences to the Kress family on Marilyn's passing. Many fond memories of Marilyn remain with me some forty years after growing up in the neighborhood, schools and church together with Dan. Marilyn was always welcoming and patient despite our youthful mischief. I remember times when we rode along on her meals on wheels route not really understanding then how much she gave to the community. How many innings of Cubs games did we watch in the family room? And, yes, there was that wicked sense of humor and always a sly remark or joke at every encounter. What a inspiring family that endured the hardest tests of faith. Our hearts are with her in heaven and with George, Ann, Jane, Dave and Dan in their mourning.

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**Joe Spanier** - December 29, 2020 at 05:19 PM

MS

“ Our condolences to all of the Kress family, all of whom I consider my second family. I met the Kress family when I moved into the neighborhood when we moved here in 1976. I felt welcome in their home from day one and still do to this day. My fondest memories of Marilyn were the talks we would have about our beloved Cubs. Every time we saw each other that was one of the first things we talked about. Of course our greatest Cub memory was 2016. Marilyn had a great sense of humor and I would always look forward to a joke or any comment she would make to get a laugh. What a wonderful lady, George and family are saints for all the care they gave her to let her live her best life. Rest in Peace, Marilyn.

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**Mark Sundstedt** - December 29, 2020 at 10:47 AM



“ I loved Marilyn the minute I met her. Then I had the opportunity to spend time with her in Texas in 2007. My memories are very precious of that time, the shopping trip I took with her and Lou Ann. I will always remember the kindness. Also, the courtesy both George and Marilyn had when we would show up at their house after traveling and stopping by, (after we called first), was wonderful and very amazing. My love to George and his family.

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**Mary Turley** - December 27, 2020 at 08:00 PM



“ Mary Turley lit a candle in memory of Marilyn Mae Kress



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**Mary Turley** - December 27, 2020 at 07:24 PM