



## Mary Gray

February 16, 1929 - November 14, 2025

Mary Virginia Gray (nee Reilly) was welcomed into eternal life on November 14, 2025. Born February 16, 1929 in St. Louis, Mary's rich life was guided by her deep Catholic faith. It infused her serene demeanor, gracious hospitality, familial love, and joie de vivre for which she was known. Raised in University City, Missouri with her revered parents and beloved six siblings, her family was a source of life-long pride. Mary attended All Saints Parish Elementary School where she graduated at the top of her class. Known for her cheerful loquaciousness, Mary graduated Rosati Kain High School in St. Louis where she was elected senior class president. She earned a scholarship to college but was unable to attend because she needed to support her family, as did many young women of her era. Always able to pivot hopefully, Mary enjoyed her five years of employment at Dolan's Real Estate office. Ever involved in her parish, Mary met her future husband at a church Eighteen-to-Eighties Club where they performed together on stage.

Mary's marriage to Edward Wallace Gray of St. Louis was the cornerstone of her life. Together they had nine children of whom they were immensely proud. Vital to their commitment to each other was their involvement in parish life which included All Saint's in University City, MO, St. Theresa's in Lincoln, NE, St. Joan of Arc in Toledo, OH, and, most recently, St. Gabriel's in Concord, OH, among others. Mary took positions of leadership in her children's schools and in her community; she served as president of the Mother's Clubs at

McAuley High School and St. John's High School, both of Toledo, OH. She also served as president of St. Vincent Hospital Volunteer Auxiliary Guild in Toledo. She was a Eucharistic Minister for years and she started the program to drive senior parishioners to Mass. Mary delighted in working the polls for local elections and organizing neighborhood festivities. She took countless other roles which were not titled but were instrumental in imbuing her extended family with a sense of service to others.

Mary's home was a sanctuary for family and friends. A place of legendary feasts, robust story-telling, and spirited cocktail hours, her home was once described as a "bubble" because it was so relaxing, warm, and welcoming. Her kitchen and dining room tables were frequently populated not only by family but also by traveling salesmen, clergy, and friends. She was described as a "baby whisperer" because of her soothing golden touch. Grandchildren often preferred a visit to Grandma's in Toledo rather than to more far-flung exotic destinations. She entertained all with her quick wit and sense of humor. Her faith in God influenced every aspect of her life. Meals and significant life events were preceded by gratitude and centered in prayer. Always proud of her family, it was not uncommon for a stranger to learn that Mary had two brothers and a son who were priests or about recent accomplishments of her children or grandchildren. A revered brother-in-law once said that two of the best educated people he knew were women who did not go beyond high school with their education and one of them was Mary Gray, "a contemporary house wife who is the whole ball of wax – family, friends, faith, wisdom, broad interests, multiple responsibilities – and with it all a lot of fun. No narrow considerations, no narrow trade-offs. Just a Catholic education, fidelity to values, a grasp of what is important, and a constant concern for people. It's possible even in today's world. Try it, you'll like it."

Sagacious and practical, Mary was a constant source of advice. She kept meticulous financial records, stayed abreast of current events/politics and,

before her eyesight failed, enjoyed reading and crossword puzzles. Many family members treasure a tablecloth, quilt, sampler, or pillowcase that Mary embroidered. She was a social tennis player and golfer, good ice skater and graceful dancer. She performed in a tap-dancing troupe well into her 70s. Her home was a revolving door to a myriad of pets which she treated like family. Everything she did was punctuated by her sense of joy.

Mary embraced her most recent home at Vista Springs Quail Highlands in Concord Township, Ohio where she made numerous friends, joined a book club, enjoyed outings with family, and participated in music programs despite her limited sight. Her joy was infectious. In her last week, Mary expressed, "Every day of my life has been wonderful."

Mary is survived by her brother Dr. Richard Reilly (Betty) of Tucson, sister Margaret Burns (Hugh) of Sarasota, her children Edward Gray (Jane), Rev. James Gray, Steven Gray (Nancy Grant); Tish Gray Varraveto (Dominic), Jean Gray Napoli (Chaz), Margaret Gray (Danny Spina), and Kate Gray Barrera (Patricio); adored grandchildren Elizabeth Gray (Rob Shellito), Reilly Gray, Hannah Gray (Scott Vokes), Caroline Gray, Patricia Varraveto (Arturo Castellanos), Katherine Varraveto, Ginny Varraveto (Jon Thormann), Michael Varraveto (Colleen Thibeault), Ellen Napoli (Stephen Koch), Abby Napoli, Jack Napoli (Kate Harbinson), Bridget Napoli, Jimmy Napoli, Frances Barrera, Margot Barrera, and Audrey Barrera; great-grandchildren Hunter Shellito, Hailey Shellito, Victor Castellanos, and Bruce Varraveto. She is also survived by first cousin Brigid Browne and numerous nieces and nephews. Mary was preceded in death by her beloved husband Edward W. Gray; precious daughter Mary V. Gray, infant daughter, Mary Immaculate Gray, siblings Monsignor Edward W. Reilly, Rev. Lt. Colonel F. Joseph Reilly, Catherine Harig, and John L. Reilly.

Mary's legacy is her inspiration to willingly embrace change and to live life with joy, gratitude, and faith. She chose to see the extraordinary in the ordinary.

A celebration of Mary's life will begin with visitation on Thursday, Nov. 20 from 4-8 p.m. at McMahon-Coyne-Vitantonio Funeral Home in Mentor, Ohio at 6330 Center Street. Mass of Eternal Life will be celebrated on Friday, Nov. 21 at 10 a.m. at St. Gabriel Catholic Church, 9925 Johnnycake Ridge Rd., Concord, OH 44077, followed by burial at All Saints Catholic Cemetery on 480 W. Highland Road, Northfield, OH 44067.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Hospice of the Western Reserve at <https://www.hospicewr.org/> or Saint Martin de Porres Cristo Rey High School at <https://www.saintmartincleveland.org/>

# Tribute Wall

JR

“ To Mary Gray's Family & Mary Galvin (honoree part of the family), you all are in my thoughts and prayers. Your Mom was such a wonderful, joyful person. She always had everyone laughing. Mary would spread her joy everywhere. A beautiful person. Your Mom & Dad - Special people. Love Joanne Root



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**Joanne Root** - November 17, 2025 at 10:36 PM

MC

“ To Mary's family, We will miss her smiling face and her kindness. She was a wonderful woman and such a blessing to so many. Peace to you, her family , at this time of loss. Sincerely, Megan Coyle

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**Megan Coyle** - November 17, 2025 at 10:35 AM