



Lilia Serratos

November 5, 1958 - April 29, 2021

SERRATOS, Lilia (nee Goertzen). Was called home unexpectedly on April 29, 2021 to be with her Lord and Savior whom she loved so dearly and served sacrificially. Beloved wife of Miguel and loving Mami to Marielena and her husband Argelio Tamayo. Doting and nurturing Abuelita to Eliezer and Juan Miguel. Lilia will rejoin her predeceased parents Wilhelm and Maria Goertzen and two of her brothers Guillermo and Enrique. Dearest sister to Juan & Tina, Heriberto, Rogelio & Karina, Sara Passement & Guillermo, Maria Elena Colucci & Jose, and many nieces and nephews.

Lilia moved to Canada from Mexico with her family in 1972. She married the love of her life Miguel in 1980. Mari, her Mija and pride and joy was born in 1988. Oh, how she loved spending time with her two little angels – Eli and Juanito. She will be greatly missed by her little companions. In 2015, Lilia together with her husband helped start Cristo La Roca church in Detroit. Through the years she was a pillar of strength and love to the weary and thirsty souls of Detroit. All children had a very special place in her heart and she loved teaching them about Jesus and guiding them through their first steps with the Lord.

A special thank you to our church family, and friends for all their prayers and support. Lilia was a gift to everyone that knew her. All that met her loved her we will all miss her.

Visitation at the O'Brien/Sullivan Funeral Home, 41555 Grand River Avenue, Novi, 248-348-1800 on Sunday, May 2, 2021 from 2:00 PM - 8:00 PM. Funeral service will be held at the funeral on Monday, May 3, 2021 @ 1:00 PM.

Memorial donations to the charity of your choice.

The Impact of a Woman of Faith

My mom was a woman of God with immeasurable faith. She was soft spoken and shy but the impact she caused people everywhere she went will leave a footprint forever. She was a selfless, generous soul always putting others before herself. I could write an entire book

filled with stories and lessons given to me by my mother. I'm sure many would say the same. I want to share some things with you so that you can see what an amazing woman she was and always will be. If you knew my mom she loved telling her story and I want to do the same.

My mom was born on November 5, 1958 in a small town called Colonia Alvaro Obregon in Chihuahua Mexico to Maria C. Villalba and Wilhelm Goertzen. She was the fifth child of eight siblings. Her oldest brother is Guillermo (who she is now with in heaven), followed by Juan, Heriberto, and Enrique (who is also with her in heaven). Her younger brother is Rogelio, followed by her younger sisters Sara and Maria Elena. She was born very petite and had to be taken care of very carefully to make sure she was eating and growing stronger. Growing up in a lower income household, my mom had to help her mother take care of the house as the oldest daughter. She always said that her mom didn't let her cook but had her be her personal assistant heating up the tortillas and washing the dishes. She would always talk about how frustrated she got as a young 12 year old girl heating up tortillas to no end and her brothers had a bottomless stomach and never stopped eating, so my grandma would just keep on making more. When it was time to wash the dishes, my mom would feel so annoyed she had to store the food from the pan to a smaller dish, so she would just eat the leftovers if it wasn't a lot but then realized she was gaining weight so she stopped. She always worked really hard to help her mom around the house.

At the age of 14 my mom and her family immigrated to Canada. Due to the English language barrier, she dropped out of school at the age of 17 and began working with her father in a tobacco plant company. She said it was a hard job but worked hard to make some money and help her family. She didn't have a typical childhood in school with friends but she enjoyed going out with her family and spending time with them. She always went on walks to the park with her mom and sometimes with her sisters. She talked about how they would have extra cash and buy these delicious poutines sometimes. She was so proud that she bought her parents new furniture and helped her sister get braces so she could have a beautiful smile. She always said she realized later in life she probably should have got braces too because she did not like her smile. I told her it was never too late but she said she was too old to be concerned about cosmetic stuff anymore.

On my mom's 19th birthday, her family decided to cross over to the United States and attend a dance in the city of Luna Pier Michigan. She said a young gentlemen approached her toward the end of the night and asked for a dance. She said yes without thinking too much of it and after the song was over, the young man asked her for her number and asked her if he could visit one day. She said yes and gave him her number and address because she thought, poor guy, he looks so young and probably can't even cross the

border to go see me. She lived two and a half hours from the border so she never expected to see him ever again. Christmas Eve rolled around and my mom's sister Sara answered the phone. She said, Lilia!!!! Someone's calling for you. She said, Who is it? Her sister said, It's a guy!!! My mom was very confused but she picked up anyway. The young guy said, hi remember me? You said I could visit and I'm here. She said no way, you're kidding. He said yes I'm here by the KFC. My mom started panicking because she hadn't even showered yet and was still in her pjs. She went running to go get ready and as any good woman knows, beauty takes time. The guy showed up with a friend and knocked on the door. They were invited inside and lo and behold my mom's five brothers were sitting in the living room with smug faces because as you remember it was Christmas Eve. After hours passed by, my mom came outside to meet the guy and went to the movies with her sister, friend, and the guy and his friend. That same day, he bravely asked my mom to be his girlfriend. My mom decided to go for it and to sum it up, two and a half years later became husband and wife. My dad took the risk and found his soulmate until death do you part. They moved to Detroit to start a family.

Marriage wasn't always easy. Without God they would not have made it together for 41 years. Most people would probably never imagine but my mom struggled with self-esteem. Why do I share this? Because I know she would share with others her story: the good and the bad. There came a point in her life she decided to take her life. God had other plans. She was able to be hospitalized and recovered because her purpose had not been fulfilled. God saved her brother Guillermo and through him, she found Jesus as her personal Lord and Savior. She served God with her whole heart from start to finish. Not once did she walk away from Him.

Her brother Guillermo, along with several brothers in the faith began a Spanish speaking church in Windsor Ontario Canada. She began to attend in 1984 and became part of the church helping in many ways. She was a beautiful young woman and attended church alone as my dad had not found Jesus yet. She invited him to go with her when he would drop her off and he declined. My mom decided she needed to give him a little push because she knew he was missing out on something so beautiful. If you know my mom, she was a persistent woman when she wanted something. After much thought, she decided to tell my dad, "I've been attending church alone for some time now and the young men think I'm single. I mean if I go alone that's going to happen." My dad did not like this idea so he said, "Ok, I'll go check it out with you but if they talk about anything else besides the Bible, I'm never going again." Let's just say my mom's devious plan worked and my dad never looked back. As the saying says, "Behind every successful man there is a strong woman." Even though God is always the one that touches our hearts, my mom played apart in helping him establish a relationship with Jesus.

The church Asamblea Cristiana de Adoracion was starting and they needed a lot of help in the ministry. As you recall, my mom was born into a large family so children were not her favorite. She was always loving but she preferred to see them from far. They asked, "Who can help with the children's ministry?" My mom said she ducked down so low so they wouldn't pick her out but sure enough they asked her to help out. She said no I'm ok but after talking and praying she decided to help. Little did she know her ministry would continue until the very end. Her passion and dedication to the ministry was astounding. She put in so many hours preparing and buying things because she said it was so important to touch a child's heart. She said it was something that you never forget because as a child she remembers people driving through her town and reading the Bible and giving them activities to do. She always ministered in the Super Church and was part of Sunday School for many years. She had so much love and patience for the children. She always spent her money to buy things needed for the children's class and never once thought twice about how much she was spending. It is something I will always admire.

On May 31, 1988, my mom had her firstborn daughter, me. If you only knew how many times she told me her labor and delivery story. Her bad experience is the reason she only had one child. Growing up she was very strict but loving. She had many rules but I know they were to mold the person I am today. As I was growing up, she always told me I was a good child but as any little girl or boy we can act up. I faintly remember how she would warn me to behave if I wasn't quiet or paying attention. She gave me the look. If you ever met her you would know what I'm talking about. Her piercing hazel/green eyes disciplined me more than words. I faintly remember times when I decided not to behave and she was taking me to the bathroom to discipline me and I would throw myself on the ground and she dragged me all the way to the bathroom while I cried and screamed. By the time we got to the bathroom she would say, "I wasn't going to spank you but since you made it worse then you will have to get spanked this time." I will always be grateful for her strong discipline because it always kept me in check.

In the year 1999, my mom and dad felt God calling them to help with a ministry in Leamington Ontario Ontario. During the course of approximately 6 years, they were there every single weekend giving their time and dedication. When my mom began the children's ministry at the church there was one student. You would think she would just give up because why bother for one student. Well she did the complete opposite. She would take a whole bag of candy because she said it wasn't the young boy's fault there were no other students. If there was only one student then he would get to keep the whole bag of candy. This young boy began to tell his friends who did not attend church and show them how much candy his Sunday School teacher was giving him. Slowly his friends

started attending the church because they wanted in on the candy. It was one small thing but it helped these young children come and learn about Jesus. The seed was planted in their hearts. Eventually more families began to attend and my mom was so happy that her class was growing. She always prepared the best crafts and snacks for the children, while always remembering that the Bible stories were the most important to leave an everlasting imprint on each child's heart.

My mom had a special gift of compassion and generosity. Growing up, she decided I was not going to be receiving Christmas gifts. She explained to me that we wanted to remember Jesus coming to this earth and being born in a manger so he could eventually become an adult and die on the cross for us and resurrect on the third day. What she began to do with me is take me to a toy store and with so much joy she would have us pick toys throughout the store to put in bags. She would buy children's bibles and tracts with the message of the gospel to add to the bags as well. Every single year we drove to Mexico on a 2-3 week trip. I would always ask her why we couldn't fly and she would say it was because she enjoyed the road trip and seeing the scenery and people around us. I know it was also because as we drove throughout Mexico, she would stop in poorer communities and give the toys to the children while expressing God's love to them. I still remember one time there was a girl who didn't have much and she saw I had my stuffed animal. She said that's so cute I want one. My mom looked at me and I thought oh no I know that look. Sure enough she said, Why don't you just give her the stuffed owl (Yes I still remember what it was). I didn't want to because it was my favorite stuffed animal. She insisted and said she would buy me one when we got home. The little girl was so full of joy and sadly I never found another one but my mom was just trying to teach me something very important. She was so selfless and a giver. People did take advantage of that at times but she never once held a grudge and it never stopped her from being a generous person.

My mom enjoyed the outside. She enjoyed going for walks and seeing nature. She always took me to go walking every day after school. I was always dreading to go but she would say, "It's very healthy to go for walks, come on you can do this." She put up with me nagging the entire way every day while she kept pushing me to go with her. I am grateful for those moments. We went camping for many years with family where she enjoyed hiking and riding her bike. I will say one thing she did not enjoy was the packing. She finally decided we shouldn't go camping because she said packing for the 3-4 days of camping was worse than moving. She always packed enough things for a whole month. Always wanted to make sure we had enough food and clothes. She always enjoyed being around family and having long deep conversations. She ultimately always talked about God to everyone around her. No matter what the conversation was, the main topic was

always God and the importance of having a personal relationship with Him.

In 2005, my mom and dad began an outreach in Detroit alongside Pastor Oscar Calito and his family. My parents never once imagined they would end up being the pastors of the church. You see it's never what we plan or how we want things to happen. The important thing is to let God guide every step of your life. I saw how much patience and kindness she showed to all the brothers and sisters in the church. I have always been one to rush home after service, but there was my mom since I can remember, sitting or standing with other people while listening to their problems, lending them a shoulder to cry on, or giving them words of advice. She never once rejected someone from speaking to them and always showed the love of Jesus to everyone.

Around 2006 my grandma was getting older and my mom began to watch her more frequently. She would spend weeks and eventually months at a time at my house. My mom never once complained that she had to watch her mother. From taking her to doctor's visits to dealing with her severe dementia, she was always there for her with so much love and patience. My grandma eventually had to be put in a nursing home because of a health situation but I remember my mom always saying she was going to watch my grandma until the end and she really did.

My mom had an accident in 2011. She was painting the garage walls and put the ladder against a wet wall and she fell and smashed her face and wrists against the ladder. I remember I had stepped inside to go get a phone charger and heard a loud noise. When I ran to the garage she was sitting on the floor with blood pouring out of her nose from top and bottom and she said please help me. I started panicking but tried to remain calm at the same time and ran to find some stuff to stop the bleeding. I kept insisting we take her to the hospital but if you knew my mom, she was one of those people that said Jesus would take care of her. To some this might sound irresponsible or neglectful, but to my mom this was her faith in Jesus. She had a broken nose and messed up wrists but managed she recovered from the accident.

God gave my mom an extra ten years to spend with us. She helped with everything she could at church. She had an amazing ministry of preaching on Fridays. She put so much time and dedication preparing every weekly Bible study. She always typed up her sermons carefully so that people would be able to take it home and meditate on God's Word. Sometimes one person would show up to the service and she still preached as if it was a full house. She was never discouraged by the amount of people. Her main concern was that she could share God's Word and let God touch even one heart. I am so grateful that I was able to enjoy as much time with her as I did. As I stated before, I could write an entire

book about how much she did for people. Her compassion and generosity touched every person she encountered. I pray to God that He will help me be even half of the amazing woman she was.

If you are still listening or reading this story I want you to know this. My mom prayed for everyone that had a need or prayer request. She was a woman with such immense faith that touched so many people. I will forever miss her but I know one day I will see her in heaven along with all my other loved ones. As my mom would always tell people, God has a day destined for us to die and it is our job to be ready. Don't wait until it is too late. If my mom had any positive impact in your life then know you still have a chance to one day see her in heaven. I love you so much Mami. I know you are rejoicing with the angels and your family in God's presence but I will forever have a missing piece in my heart.

Cemetery

Oakland Hills Cemetery

43300 W 12 Mile Rd,
Novi, MI, 48377

Events

MAY **Visitation** 02:00PM - 08:00PM

2

O'Brien-Sullivan Funeral Home
41555 Grand River Ave, Novi, MI, US, 48375

MAY **Funeral Service** 01:00PM

3

O'Brien-Sullivan Funeral Home
41555 Grand River Ave, Novi, MI, US, 48375

Comments



“ 1 file added to the album Mrs. Lilia Serratos Service



O'Brien-Sullivan Funeral Home - May 10 at 12:52 PM



“ Nuestra queridísima hermana, amiga, mentora Lilia, tu memoria siempre vivira en nuestros corazones.

Te queremos,

- Antonio Sr. & Mercedes Urdaneta
- Luis, Antonio Jr., Vanessa y Mario Urdaneta



Mercedes Urdaneta - May 02 at 01:39 PM



“ Familia Urdaneta lit a candle in memory of Lilia Serratos



Familia Urdaneta - May 02 at 01:27 PM



“ Familia Urdaneta Pozo lit a candle in memory of Lilia Serratos



Familia Urdaneta Pozo - May 02 at 01:26 PM



“ Antonio & Vanessa Urdaneta lit a candle in memory of Lilia Serratos



Antonio & Vanessa Urdaneta - May 02 at 01:25 PM



“ Antonio Urdaneta Jr. lit a candle in memory of Lilia Serratos



Antonio Urdaneta Jr. - May 02 at 01:24 PM



“ Serene Retreat was purchased for the family of Lilia Serratos.



April 30 at 07:29 PM



“ A Full Life was purchased for the family of Lilia Serratos.



April 30 at 07:26 PM