



## Mrs. Mary Elizabeth Heffernan

February 27, 1957 - May 8, 2013

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Mary Elizabeth Heffernan (Kovach), 56, of Orlando, was at home with her loving family when she went peacefully to Heaven on May 8th, 2013 after a courageous 5 year battle with cancer.

She was the daughter of Betty L. Kovach of Cuyahoga Falls, OH, and the late Steve P. Kovach. Mary was born in 1957 in Akron, OH and graduated from Copley High School in 1975 then attended the University of Akron. She worked at Babcock & Wilcox Co. in Barberton, OH where she met and later married John Heffernan in 1979. They lived in Pittsburgh, PA for almost 5 years before leaving many friends and relocating to Orlando in 1983.

In Orlando, Mary was a fitness instructor before becoming a regular guest teacher at Conway Middle School. She worked with the YMCA in ClubFYT, the after school program, and as a yoga instructor. She was a volunteer Scout leader and was always an encouraging voice. She was passionate about making a difference in the lives of others but was most aware of the difference others made in her own life.

Mary was an active member of Blessed Trinity Catholic Church. She was a Eucharistic Minister and walked in hand with her Lord. She loved to read, cook, practice yoga, shop, dance, and travel. After her cancer diagnosis in 2008, she logged nearly 10,000 miles on a motorcycle with her husband and

good friends, with separate group rides to New England, Nova Scotia, Yellowstone, and The Grand Canyon as a passenger. Multiple rounds of chemotherapy, radiation, and surgeries were followed by amazing destinations where she often cried in gratitude for the opportunity to intimately witness the beauty of nature with the wind in her face.

Mary is survived by her devoted husband of 33 years, John Heffernan and three children: Megan Heffernan of Viera, FL; Patrick Heffernan and David Heffernan, both of Orlando, FL; her mother, Betty Kovach; and siblings Judy Kovach of Cuyahoga Falls, OH; Barbara Berkowitz (Jay) of Sedona, AZ; and Michael Kovach (Dawn) of Greenville, SC. She was preceded in death by her cherished father, Steve Kovach, and brother John Kovach.

In her final years, she was grateful for the support of family and friends, which along with strong faith and the extraordinary care received at MD Anderson allowed her to truly enjoy her shortened time. She believed a cancer diagnosis was either a reason to live or a reason to die. She chose to make the very best of her condition and enjoyed the precious gift of sharing quality time with others.

In lieu of flowers, Mary requested that donations be made to Teen Challenge of Florida. 3706 S Sanford Ave, Sanford, FL 32773.

Motorcycle escort to the Church will leave the funeral home at 5pm Monday, May 13. Visitation will be held from 6-8 pm Monday, May 13 at Blessed Trinity Catholic Church, 4545 Anderson Rd. Orlando, FL 32812. Requiem Funeral Mass will be held at 10 am on Tuesday, May 14 at Blessed Trinity with reception following. Interment will be private. A Community Funeral Home, Orlando, is handling arrangements.

# Previous Events

## Visitation

MAY 13. 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Blessed Trinity Catholic Church  
4545 Anderson Road  
Orlando, FL 32812

## Funeral Mass

MAY 14. 10:00 AM (ET)

Blessed Trinity Catholic Church  
4545 Anderson Road  
Orlando, FL 32812

# Tribute Wall

AS

“ David,  
*I am so sorry to hear of your mom's passing. Please know that you are in my prayers.*

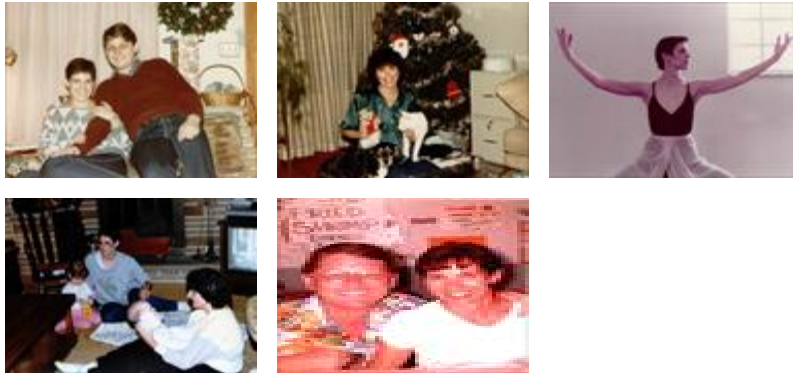
*Ashley Mullins*

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**Ashley** - May 17, 2013 at 05:52 PM

JH

“ 403 files added to the album Mary



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**John Heffernan** - May 15, 2013 at 09:25 PM

WQ

“ *Our thoughts and prayers are with you and your children, John. Words cannot express how she will be missed. She fought a brave fight, and was an inspiration to everyone.*

*Wanda and Curtis Quinn*

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**Wanda Quinn** - May 13, 2013 at 08:44 PM

CH

“*Mary was an strong, loving and courageous woman and an inspiration to us, not only in her fight but also in her faith. We will truly miss her smiling face. Our prayers are with you John and all of your family.*



*Collin and Jan Hiranaka*

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**Collin and Jan Hiranaka** - May 13, 2013 at 08:11 PM

JS

“*Our thoughts and prayers are with John and your family. We will remember Mary for her courage and determination to live life to the fullest. We have made a donation to the Teen Challenge center in her memory per her wishes.*

*Jim and Eileen Stana*

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**Jim and Eileen Stana** - May 13, 2013 at 02:58 PM

PS

“*Dear John, Our prayers are with you and your family! Mary was an inspiration to all that she touched during her time her. She will be greatly missed by all, but, there is some comfort in knowing that she is with our Lord and Savior resting peacefully in his arms. May God bless and strengthen you, Megan, Patrick and David during this difficult time.*

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**Patty and Chris Shenefelt** - May 13, 2013 at 02:55 PM

JM

“ *Our hearts and prayer's are with you and your family! May God's presence be your strength. God Bless, John and Susan Mottola*



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**John Mottola** - May 13, 2013 at 12:13 PM

LO

“ *Lowanda lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Mary Elizabeth Heffernan*



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**Lowanda** - May 12, 2013 at 12:02 PM

RO

“ *Mary was a peaceful presence at yoga. As a teacher, she was strong in a quiet way and encouraging. When she attended class, I loved to sit at the mat adjacent to her because she sent wonderful energy my way. She will be missed. Deepest heartfelt sympathy to her family.*

*Namaste and peace be you,  
Roselle Colapietro*

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**Roselle** - May 11, 2013 at 10:11 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Mrs. Mary Elizabeth Heffernan.*



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May 11, 2013 at 07:20 AM



“ *John and family,  
Jim and I are sending our heartfelt condolences. Thank you to Steve E. for sharing emails about your family. Time passes so quickly. Mary was always kind, thoughtful, and so loving. Know that we have you in thoughts and prayers.*

*Love to you,  
Dina and Jim Hodnichak  
Marysville, Ohio*

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**Dina Hodnichak** - May 10, 2013 at 06:28 PM



“ *Sending our thoughts and prayers to you and the family. Mary was a wonderful friend who's memory will be honored each and every day in my heart and mind. I'm sorry I will not be able to celebrate her beautiful life as I am out of town visiting Miggie. All our love! The Suarez family.*

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**Millie Arias** - May 10, 2013 at 02:48 PM

DF

“ Don & Pat Farmer lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Mary Elizabeth Heffernan



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**don & pat farmer** - May 10, 2013 at 12:19 PM

DB

“ John & Family,  
I know Mary will be deeply missed by all as she was a wonderful person, mother and I'm sure a great life partner. I find it difficult to offer meaningful words of comfort at this time but I hope you will count our prayers as support to you and the family.  
David Brooks

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**David Brooks** - May 10, 2013 at 09:03 AM

PI

“ The dictionary says courageous means brave, fearless, resolute. I say it should say two words -Mary Heffernan.  
My deepest condolences to John, Megan,Patrick and David. I admired her strength and faith.

*Pilar*

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**Pilar** - May 09, 2013 at 03:28 PM

KD

“ Kate Durni lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Mary Elizabeth Heffernan



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**Kate Durni** - May 09, 2013 at 11:39 AM

KD

“ *Kate Durni sent a virtual gift in memory of Mrs. Mary Elizabeth Heffernan*



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**Kate Durni** - May 09, 2013 at 11:35 AM

KD

*Mary was a favorite yoga teacher.... so gentle yet strong, inspirational and courageous... we will miss her and hope her angelic presence will still be looking out for us all*

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**Kate Durni** - May 09, 2013 at 11:38 AM

LU

*Kate- Lurdes here. I was shocked by the news.. I didnt know her well but did get to attend one of her classes. She was extremely sweet and easy to talk to. My condolences to her family.*

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**Lurdes** - May 10, 2013 at 11:11 AM

RO

“ *Dear John and family  
May all your wonderful memories sustain you through this very sad time in your lives. We did not know Mary very long, but for the short time that we did, we certainly could see all the goodness she possessed. RIP Mary in the hands of God. You deserve it, you fought the good fight.  
Lew and Rita Overbaugh  
Peabody, MA*

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**rita overbaugh** - May 09, 2013 at 10:40 AM

MP

“ *A beautiful woman inside and out, and a life well lived, and finally Peace and Presence with Jesus. Our prayers continue for John, Megan, Patrick, David and the rest of the family*

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**Mark and Joan Peters** - May 09, 2013 at 09:39 AM

MF

“ *Mary; You and John, showed me what life is supposed to be. I for one am better for having known you both. Seeing the love you shared is an inspiration. My sympathies to John and the family, now we have a new angle watching over us.*

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**Mike Facella** - May 09, 2013 at 09:34 AM

PR

“ *Such wonderful memories of our children growing up together. Our deepest sympathies. Paula Varnell-Rose, Jenni Hagey-McKeown and Lori Hagey.*

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**Paula Rose** - May 09, 2013 at 08:29 AM