

# Barbara Ann (nee Lentz) King

Sep 30, 1942 – Jan 23, 2019



July 23rd is the six month anniversary of my mother's death. July 28th will be my 56th birthday, and it's my first one without her. I have deeply regretted that we had not placed a more detailed obituary back in January in honor and in memory of Mom, whose life was lived so fully and with such class. It was just so very sad at that time, that the mere thought of putting her life into words that would do her life justice seemed near impossible. The best birthday gift I could ever get this, or any year, would be to talk about this beautiful woman that I had the complete and humbling honor of calling my "Ma". Jean McKenna, her best friend, wrote the Eulogy for Mom's funeral Mass so meticulously and perfectly, I only hope I can do an iota as well as she did.

Barbara Ann Lentz was born on September 30th, 1942 in the Hell's Kitchen's section of Manhattan, at St Clare's Hospital to my grandparents, Dorothy (nee Bergin) and Frederick Lentz. Mom was baptized into the Roman Catholic faith at Sacred Heart R. C. Church in October of that same year, and her godparents were Evelyn Bergin and Charlie Lentz. Nine years later, her younger sister, Audrey, was born, almost to the day. Mom attended St John The Evangelist grammar school, and then graduated to Cathedral High School, both in Manhattan. Her yearbook states that she belonged to the Sodality of the Blessed Virgin Mary as well as the Glee Club. At her cousin George Lentz's wedding, when she was 15, she met my father, Gerald (Jerry) King. Their first date was to the screening of the movie, Gigi. She worked at Woolworth's on the East Side after school and often told us as we drove past it that my dad would meet her there after school and make sure she got home safely. They loved to bowl too, and eat at Pizza King on Ninth Avenue in later years. After high school, Mom

was a key punch operator working with her Aunt Peggy Wingler. Mom and Dad were engaged in November 1960 and married on August 25th, 1962 at Sacred Heart R.C. Church. Their first apartment was in Corona, Queens. Mom had 2 sons while living there with my father, Gerard Anthony (1963) and Kevin Patrick (1964). Mom and dad moved back to the West side of Manhattan, and became the building superintendants of the 10th Avenue building right next door to my grandparents. This helped them save money to buy a house. Here Mom gave birth to her 3rd son, John Joseph (1965). At night Dad would come home and my mother, after being home all day with us, would go to work at Bell Telephone as a telephone operator.

We moved to Rockaway Beach in September, 1967, and here Mom had son #4, Brian Edward (1970). Mom was very involved in our Church and grammar school, St Rose of Lima. Mom was the VP of the Mother's and Father's Club, on the Home School Association, a lector at Sunday Mass, a member of the Parish Council, a classroom lunch mother and the bookkeeper for many years for the biggest fundraiser for St Rose school: Friday night and Saturday Afternoon BINGO. She was also an annual cast member of the St Rose Fall Shows, singing solos and doing comedy skits with her endless heart and soul. My grandfather taught her how to drive our Mercury Park Lane car when we first moved to Rockaway, and she was then able to drive us all over, and naturally all of our friends too. To this day, so many of them remember us all piling into the green station wagon. Mom was very independent. We loved when she'd cook brownies and cakes, as well as her veal cutlets in brown gravy. Most of all, Mom was known for her perfect Sunday breakfasts. Even my aunt and uncle, who were excellent cooks themselves, would marvel and say she cooked the best breakfasts around.

Mom took great pride in her religion and raised us in a Catholic household. We were taught by her to be good, kind, generous, responsible and loving men. She did run a strict household, and you followed the rules of the house, but that never meant we were ever short on laughter, fun times, many vacations, multitudes of memories and endless happiness! We also learned many family traditions, most of which we still keep today, "because that's the way Mom did it". Mom went back to work so that she could offer us Catholic High School educations. She felt her parents offered it to her and it was only right that she offered it to us. She started working at Columbia Savings and Loan Association in Rockaway, as a teller and then a Customer Service Representative. She loved her job. Our mother worked in so many different locations through her 29 years of service to NYCB: Woodhaven Main Office, Lindenwood, and Rockaway Park mostly.

Mom was not blessed with good health. She was so sad about having to retire in 2006 but her health had begun to deteriorate to the point where just wasn't able to work anymore. Through the years she had battled many medical conditions that she endured and suffered through. She never, ever complained. She never let it get her down or keep her from living her life. Even after retiring Mom was like the energizer bunny. Mom would go to BINGO nearly every Wednesday night. She took cruises to the Caribbean, Canada, Alaska, the Panama Canal, the Mediteranean, as well as numerous vacations to Ireland, London, Scotland, California, Florida, Las Vegas and so many others. In recent years, she was a member of the Red Hatters organization, with her high school longtime friend Juliana (Riggs) Aiken. She was always ready and available to be on the "go". The mind was always sharp and willing but at times the body was weak. But, she always fought the good fight. Mom belonged to all of the Golden Age and Senior Groups throughout Rockaway and Broad Channel: St Rose of Lima, St Camillus, St Virgilius and St Francis de Sales.

My mother didn't have any grandchildren, but she adored her niece Cara's (Nick Walker) and godson Danny's (Amy Gigliobianco) children: Nate, Addison, Harrison and Madeline. She loved to hear about them from my aunt, and would laugh when relaying back the stories and antics of these little ones that brought her such absolute and total delight!

Mom was such a giver. She never needed the praise, or the acknowledgement of her many, many good deeds. She always looked out for the welfare of those she loved, as well as caring for the conditions of many of those she didn't even know. She did her good deeds most times behind the scenes and without hesitation. She had a heart of gold. Mom loved pet foundations also, and Ninji and Paddy, the dogs we had as pets. Not all people took the time to sit and chat with her but if you did, you realized what a wonderful sense of humor she had. Speaking from experience, she made me laugh all the time. One of my favorite pictures is me with her and we are hysterically laughing.

On January 23rd, 2019, our Mother passed away at South Nassau Communities Hospital in Oceanside, NY. She fought until the end. It was unexpected, right after the Christmas holidays, when she had all 4 sons home with her! A quick illness that her body just could not ward off was the culprit. But again still, she fought until the end. There are things that will always remind me of my mother, her favorite things like corsages at the holidays or for her birthday, Breyer's cherry vanilla or coffee ice cream, playing Bingo, watching the Game Show Network, Downton Abbey, Dancing with the Stars, Kohl's, Rock Hudson/Doris Day movies, jelly candies, QVC, Lays potato chips, tea with honey, Perry Como's Ave Maria, Connie Francis, Christmas Eve/Day, watching the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade, praying to the Blessed Mother, St Anthony's Bread, St Jude, saying the rosary, Kevin's picture/slide presentations set to music, visiting Brian and Karen in Florida, her red 1995 Toyota Corolla, buttercream cakes, her mother's kidney stew and biscuits, calves liver dinners, Kennedy's restaurant, Freddy Fender's song "Before The Last Tear Drop Falls", or Willie Nelson's "Always on my Mind", or just a Nathan's Hot Dog. I could go on and on and on, and my brothers could as well I am quite sure...

As Jean said back on 1/28/19 at my mother's funeral, the "(dash) between her date of birth and date of death is so much more than that... it's about how you lived it. Was my mother perfect? Of course not. But, to me she was, and that's really all that matters in my world. My mind is so full of 56 years of memories... I could talk about them for hours and even days and weeks. They will fill my mind and keep me smiling always.

My mom was the "Queen of hearts" in our King household. My mother was the best person I've ever met, and the strongest woman I've ever known. She was the best friend I've ever had. The confidante I trusted the most. She was my heart. Anything I could do for her, was my absolute pleasure. It is because of her, I am the man I am today. She provided me with the best foundation for life that I could have ever imagined. Because of her, I've known what it is like to have the unconditional love and generosity and protection of a mother who only knew how to be selfless. I can easily say she never put herself first. I miss you so much, Ma. I am so glad that I wrote this for you. I believe in my heart what Deacon Dan told me at my Church in a conversation recently. He said that, having known her from attending Church at St Joseph's in Hewlett every week, and her perpetual adoration devotion, he firmly believes that as she entered the gates of Heaven, St Peter said to her, "Welcome Home, Barbara! Well done!"

I love you, Mom. You're always in our hearts ....  
Love always, your boys, Gerard, Kevin, John and Brian ....  
and of course Jerry too.

