



Joan C. Connolley

August 13, 2025

Joan C. Connolley

Surrounded by her loving family, Joan C. Connolley, 91, passed away peacefully on August 13, 2025. She was reunited in eternal life with the love of her life, Edward J. Connolley, with whom she shared 58 years of marriage, devotion, and joy.

Born in Shenandoah, PA, Joan was the beloved daughter of Zigmund Christie and Mary (Ulicny). A lifelong learner and dedicated educator, she graduated from Bloomsburg University in 1956 with a Bachelor of Science in Education. During her college years, she was class salutatorian, held numerous class offices, and was honored as May Queen, Coed of the Year, and a campus leader admired by both peers and professors.

Joan began her teaching career on Midway Island in the North Pacific, where she helped establish a school to educate the children on the base while her husband, Ed, served there as a Naval Officer. She later earned her Master's degree in Education from Kutztown University, further deepening her commitment to the profession she loved.

In 1966, Joan and Ed settled in Allentown, where she taught at St. Catherine of Siena School. That same year, Joan and Ed became founding members of

St. Thomas More Parish, playing an instrumental role in its growth and vitality. For 16 years, she taught language arts and religion before being named the school's first lay principal — a role she held with distinction, vision, and compassion until her retirement in 2000. Even in retirement, Joan remained a devoted servant to Catholic education, faithfully volunteering as a Eucharistic Minister.

Joan's love for the written and spoken word was a defining thread in her life. A gifted writer and eloquent speaker, she inspired others with her wisdom, kindness, and steadfast belief in the power of learning. She cherished family traditions — especially holiday celebrations — and found her greatest joy in time spent with her children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren.

She is survived by her daughters: Kathleen Lindblom of Nokomis, FL; Mary Ellen Kinek and her husband, James, of Macungie; and Maureen Wendling and her husband, Todd, of Allentown. She also leaves behind six grandchildren — Michael, David, Dana, Stephanie, Andrew, and Daniel — and four great-grandchildren: John, Gwenyth, Camden, and Mila. Joan was preceded in death by her sister, Rosemary, and her brother, Bernard.

SERVICES: A Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated at St. Thomas More Parish, 1040 Flexer Ave Allentown, on Wednesday, August 20th at 10:30 A.M. Visitation will begin at 9:30 A.M. in the Church. A Private interment will follow the Mass. Arrangements by the J.S. Burkholder Funeral Home, Allentown. Condolences may be offered at: www.jsburkholder.com

CONTRIBUTIONS: In lieu of flowers, contributions in Joan's memory may be made to Second Harvest Food Bank of the Lehigh Valley & Northeast Pennsylvania or the Bernardine Franciscan Sisters.

Cemetery Details

Private

Previous Events

Calling Hours

AUG **20**. 9:30 AM - 10:30 AM (ET)

St. Thomas More Catholic Church
1040 Flexer Ave.
Allentown, PA 18103

Mass of Christian Burial

AUG **20**. 10:30 AM - 11:30 AM (ET)

St. Thomas More Catholic Church
1040 Flexer Ave.
Allentown, PA 18103

Tribute Wall

SM

“ Dear Katie, Mary Ellen and Maureen and all my cousins,
We have many, many great memories of Joan and we will hold
them close to our hearts always. She was a most beautiful soul.
Many condolences to you all.
Susan and Michael McGinley

Susan McGinley - August 28, 2025 at 07:55 PM

PN

“ Dear Katie, Mary Ellen, Maureen and families, please accept our
deepest sympathy on the loss of your beautiful, amazing mother.
Our cousin Joan was the epitome of a gracious, loving soul who
radiated love to all around her. May she rest in eternal peace.
Sending love from your Schuylkill County family.

Paul and Mary Noon - August 21, 2025 at 09:32 AM

CS

“ Joan you were a very great person. You werei no you like your room
clean. 🧼. I will miss you. ❤️❤️ a good person to talk to. When you
need something if I was there I were be happy to help you. I will
miss you. I will find someone else now to talk to. But you would like
to talk to me call the time. I will keep you in my heart ❤️.

cheryl still - August 20, 2025 at 05:13 PM

FK

“ My sympathy to Joan's family.
I had the great privilege of knowing Joan and enjoying her
friendship during my time at Saint Thomas. I am sure she hears the
words of Jesus, "Well done, O good and faithful servant!" God's
peace! Fr. Jim Kelly,OP

Fr. Jordan Kelly - August 20, 2025 at 09:54 AM

PB

“ *In loving memory of Joan, she was a wonderful lady, with a big and kind heart who smiled all the time and made me laugh, she will be greatly missed at Legend's. Pam Brucker*

Pamela Brucker - August 20, 2025 at 08:22 AM

PU

“ *To Joanie's family, I was going to go, but something came up at the last minute. Sorry for your loss. Joanie was truly one of the very best people I ever met! May she rest in peace. God bless you. Cousin Pete U.*

Pete Ulicny - August 19, 2025 at 06:03 PM



“ *Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Joan C. Connolley.*



August 18, 2025 at 09:32 PM



“ *Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Joan C. Connolley.*



August 18, 2025 at 09:16 AM

JS

“ With my very deepest & heartfelt sympathy & many loving prayers for Mary Ellen, Jim, & Family on your tremendous loss. Joan & Ed were very caring, kind, loving, & special friends of my late in-laws, Fran & Warren & husband, Jim Smith. With deep appreciation to Joan for her never ending kindness & to Ed as well.



Joan Smith - August 17, 2025 at 05:07 AM

JC

“ To my Aunt Joan, who helped to fill my childhood with Easter feasts, summer seashores, Thanksgiving dinners, Christmas joy, and so much more.
Your nephew,
Jeff Christie

Jeffrey Christie - August 16, 2025 at 04:50 PM

DB

“ Doreen B. purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Joan C. Connolley.



Doreen B. - August 15, 2025 at 05:44 PM

DB

“ Doreen B. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Joan C. Connolley.

Doreen B. - August 15, 2025 at 05:44 PM