



Martha Ellen McCaffray Dodd

November 12, 1941 - April 2, 2020

Martha Ellen McCaffray Dodd entered into eternal rest on April 2, 2020 due to complications from a long battle with Alzheimer's disease. Born on November 12, 1941 in Baltimore, Maryland, Martha was the second of six children born to Charles and Martha (Pat) McCaffray.

Martha graduated from Notre Dame Elementary School, Preparatory School, and College - a total of fifteen years at the same Notre Dame campus in Baltimore. When in high school in 1956, she met Billy Dodd through her cousin Mary Corrigan. This meeting began what would become a 63-year love affair. Billy went off to college at the University of Notre Dame in 1958. The following year, Martha began her college studies at Notre Dame College of Maryland.

After graduation in 1963, Martha was awarded a scholarship to study in Florence, Italy to earn a Master's degree in Fine Arts in Painting at the Pope Pius XII Institute. She set sail on the Leonardo da Vinci cruise ship to Italy where she was educated with twenty-four other young women by Dominican nuns and Italian artisans at the Villa Schifanoia. The Villa was a beautiful 15th century former residence owned by the Vatican, on a hillside overlooking the city of Florence. While there, Martha spent an idyllic year, taking in the sights, sounds, and life of Firenze while her painting style evolved from figurative to vibrant and abstract. She completed her studies with boldly colorful paintings and received her MFA. For years, original and giclee copies of Martha's avant-garde 'Villa' oil paintings have enlivened the homes of her children and extended family with brightness and color.

Martha returned from Italy in the summer of 1964 and married Billy Dodd. Twelve months later, they welcomed Alycia (Muffin), then eleven months later, Lindsay, and eleven months later, their son, Laurin. Martha traded her paintbrushes and sophisticated lifestyle to raise Irish triplets. Nine years later, Martha gave birth to twins, Amanda and Lacy.

After living in South Carolina and New York, they finally settled in Clearwater, Florida in 1974 and have lived there ever since.

Martha and Billy have been parishioners at Espiritu Santo Catholic Church for over 46 years and steadfastly held to their Catholic faith with an ever-growing devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary.

They raised their five children amid a backdrop of love, laughter, happiness and color. Her energy was boundless; she was never without a project. She creatively channeled her artistic skills into her family's everyday life. She could draw, paint, build, or sew anything -- the Halloween costumes she made year after year were legendary!

Martha made friends wherever she went. She had a loving and warm personality with a wonderful sense of humor. She was active throughout her community and never shied from taking positions of leadership and coming up with creative ideas and initiatives. Martha served as the president of the PTA at Clearwater Central Catholic High School. She was a great supporter of the U.S. Military and volunteered in efforts to help the troops, including Operation Shoebox. Martha loved our country and was a true patriot.

The blessing of the first of seventeen grandchildren began in 1995. Seven more followed within four years! Martha was always eager to be with her grandchildren and they all likewise adored her. The youngest three grandchildren were born in Clearwater between 2015 and 2018 and were a source of great joy for her to see and hold during the last years.

The onset of Alzheimer's disease began way too early for her. In 1998 she battled and survived cancer with surgery later that year. Not long after, Martha began showing signs of forgetfulness that continued to erode her memory over the next twenty years.

Despite her failing memory, she knew Billy to the very end. She was always happy, she always smiled and winked, and was full of life and expressions. Martha defied all the odds with Billy caring for her 24/7. With his devoted and loving care, she was able to remain at home during all the years of her illness. Billy included Martha in every phone call, text, and email. They have been partners for life, in good times and in bad, in sickness and in health.

There was a host of angels who assisted Billy in his full-time care of Martha. Patty, Theresa, Beth, Mercedes, Julia, MJ, Melissa and many others provided care beyond expectation and have truly become members of the Dodd family. They were the front line of all the love and care that she received on a daily basis. They experienced, with Billy, all of the wonderful and funny events that naturally came with caring for Martha.

She will be missed beyond measure. Eternal rest grant unto Martha Ellen and may perpetual light shine upon her.

A private Mass of Christian burial will be offered at 10:30 a.m. on Wednesday, April 8th at Espiritu Santo Catholic Church in Safety Harbor, Florida. A memorial Mass will follow at a later date.

Martha Ellen McCaffray Dodd is survived by her loving husband, William (Billy) A. Dodd Jr, daughters Alycia (Muffin) Dodd, Lindsay Dodd Gannon, Amanda Dodd Miller, Lacy Dodd Miske and son Laurin Kirkpatrick Dodd; sons-in-law William (Bill) Gannon IV, Jacob (Jake) Miller and Robert (Bobby) Miske; daughter-in-law Sophia Rose Santy Dodd; grandchildren Bennett Tullos, Henley Tullos, Hayden Tullos, Gracie Tullos, Caroline Gannon, William (Liam) Gannon V, Andrew Gannon, Luke (Finn) Gannon, Elizabeth (Seton) Gannon, Kathryn Miller, Winston Miller, London Miller, Revell Miller, Mary-Logan Miske, Wilson Miske, Jackson Miske and Liadan Miske. She is survived by her brother Charles (Ned) McCaffray Jr, and four sisters, Susan van den Toorn, Melinda Rose, Margaret (Margee) Zemarel and Virginia (Ginny) Byrnes and brothers-in-law Rudolph (Rudy) Rose, Jonathan (Jon) Zemarel, and Norris Byrnes and Michael Dodd; sisters-in-law Patricia Dodd and Maureen Dodd. She is also survived by too many nieces and nephews to count. She is preceded in death by her beloved parents, Charles and Martha McCaffray, her cherished parents-in-law, William and Louise Dodd, her sister-in-law, Theodora (Theo) McCaffray, and brother-in-law Willem (Bill) van den Toorn.

Comments



“ The '50s, Club Rd, Roland Park, That big house with all my cousins most of which were girls! All those steps, Charles Smith, 5 beautiful sisters, all loud! South Rd, Pot Springs & Cinder(?). All the aunts and uncles. What great memories. What a great family.

Martha at the center.

Billy, we love you all, prayers and serenity,

Owen & Kim McFadden

Owen McFadden - April 08, 2020 at 10:42 AM



“ Colleen (Phillips) & Nate Isley purchased the Small Garden Dish for the family of Martha Ellen McCaffray Dodd.



Colleen (Phillips) & Nate Isley - April 07, 2020 at 05:36 PM



“ 12 files added to the album Martha's Paintings 1964



Lacy - April 07, 2020 at 12:25 PM



“ 27 files added to the album Villa Schifanoia 1964



Lacy - April 07, 2020 at 07:04 AM



“ 9 files added to the album Villa Schifanoia 1964, 2004, 2014, 2020



Lacy - April 07, 2020 at 06:04 AM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Martha Ellen McCaffray Dodd.



April 06, 2020 at 02:59 PM



“ The Encomium is a tribute worthy of Martha—A loving cheerful, talented woman who graciously welcomed us and our family into the Dodd family. All of this, inspite of the fact, that we had fully confessed to being Hudson County Democrats. With love and affection Rosemary and Bill Gannon

we had

Rosemary Gannon - April 05, 2020 at 05:52 PM



“ Chris, Saskia, Erik, Marisa and Kyle Souchak purchased the Full Of Love Bouquet for the family of Martha Ellen McCaffray Dodd.



Chris, Saskia, Erik, Marisa and Kyle Souchak - April 05, 2020 at 12:34 PM



“ 1 file added to the album Martha - High School Senior



Lacy - April 05, 2020 at 10:06 AM



“ 1 file added to the album Martha's Wedding Portrait



Lacy - April 05, 2020 at 10:05 AM



“ 1 file added to the album Martha and Billy's Wedding Portrait



Lacy - April 05, 2020 at 10:05 AM



“ 3 files added to the tribute wall



Lindsay Gannon - April 04, 2020 at 10:22 PM



“ Uncle Billy, Laurin, Sophia, Muffin, Lindsay, Bill, Lacy, Bobby, Amanda, Jake, and all the grandkids,
We loved our Aunt Martha, your mom and Mama. She brought smiles and love wherever she went and being with her during our summers in Baltimore and visits to Tampa are great memories. Aunt Martha, her sisters, brother, Memom and Bong, all built the wonderful family we all love being a part of, the McCaffrays. Our love will always be there for you all, even though we cannot be together at this time. Uncle Billy, your love and care for Martha these many years have been inspiring to us all. Thank you for all you did to provide her with comfort, security and happy times even during the hardest moments.

We love you, Dodds, and Aunt Martha will forever be with all of us.

Love, Mindy

Mindy Rose McCue - April 04, 2020 at 09:09 PM



“ I remember when Martha was taking care of me at Sea Island, Georgia when I was a Kid. She made me a Halloween Costume (a sea gull of all things) which won first prize.

Thank you Martha for all of the creativity, joy and humor you brought to the world.

Patricia Dodd

Patricia Dodd - April 04, 2020 at 08:13 PM



“ Patricia,
I have never heard that story! Whenever we were in a costume contest, we would win, too!
XOXO Lindsay

Lindsay Gannon - April 04, 2020 at 09:32 PM



“ Ned, Susan, Linda, Rudy, Margee, Jon, Ginny, Norris purchased the A New Sunrise Spray for the family of Martha Ellen McCaffray Dodd.



Ned, Susan, Linda, Rudy, Margee, Jon, Ginny, Norris - April 04, 2020 at 08:03 PM



“ Joyful Memory was purchased for the family of Martha Ellen McCaffray Dodd.



April 04, 2020 at 08:03 PM



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Martha Ellen McCaffray Dodd.



April 04, 2020 at 08:02 PM



“ Doug & Shirley Gasque purchased the Sweetest Sunrise Bouquet for the family of Martha Ellen McCaffray Dodd.



Doug & Shirley Gasque - April 04, 2020 at 07:21 PM



“ The realization that I introduced Martha and Billy was very exciting for me. Don and I are responsible for a number of successful relationships but this one was the best.

Watching them was such a treat. The kids are terrific and always a joy to be with. Our summer with Muffin was a treat and getting to know Jake and Amanda a complete pleasure.

Billy -you were a dear from the beginning and your love and care of Martha was magnificent. We may never see it's equal.

Love to all the Dodd clan.

Mary Dambrogi - April 04, 2020 at 07:21 PM



“ Beautiful, Mary!

Mindy Rose McCue - April 04, 2020 at 09:02 PM



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Martha Ellen McCaffray Dodd.



April 04, 2020 at 07:11 PM



“ Sentiments of Serenity Spray was purchased for the family of Martha Ellen McCaffray Dodd.



April 04, 2020 at 06:44 PM



“ Fiery Lily and Rose was purchased for the family of Martha Ellen McCaffray Dodd.



April 04, 2020 at 06:32 PM



“ Sweet Tranquility Basket was purchased for the family of Martha Ellen McCaffray Dodd.



April 04, 2020 at 06:29 PM



“ Dear Bill, Muffin, Lindsay, Laurin, Lacy, Amanda& all your beautiful families,
I will always remember Martha's beautiful sense of humor, her incredible artistic talent & her fantastic zest for life. I know she is receiving her just reward in heaven.
God bless you all, we are heartbroken.
Love, Bridget

Bridget Phillips - April 04, 2020 at 05:56 PM



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Martha Ellen McCaffray Dodd.



April 04, 2020 at 05:51 PM