



Carina Espejo De La Torre

November 3, 1940 - March 7, 2021

Carina Espejo de la Torre, age 80, passed away peacefully in her sleep on March 7, 2021, at a hospice care facility in The Villages, Florida. Her death came after a brief battle with colorectal cancer.

Born Nov. 3, 1940 in San Fabian, the Philippines, Carina was fondly called "Nina" by her husband and siblings. She was the fourth of nine children born to Jose and Nieves Espejo.

Carina lived in the Roxas District neighborhood of Quezon City, in Metro Manila. She started college at a young age and worked while she pursued her formal education. She earned a Bachelor's of Business Administration and majored in Accounting at the University of the East in the Philippine capital, Manila.

She began her career path by working for several years at a law firm and thereafter served in securities and accounting positions with the Development Bank of the Philippines.

It was there that Carina met the man who would become the love of her life, Charlie de la Torre. The two began dating and it didn't take long before they decided to get married. The couple decided to start a family and the first child to arrive was a daughter, Gigi. A few years after that, their first son, Joey,

arrived.

As a married couple, Carina and Charlie set their sights on the United States, envisioning their own version of the American Dream. They experienced wonderful joy when the beginning of this dream became a reality. They received permission to immigrate to America as established professionals. When immigrating in 1970, it was necessary to leave their minor children in the Philippines in the care of Carina's parents.

Carina and Charlie decided to begin living out their American Dream in San Francisco, where they stayed for two years. They then moved to New York and established a permanent residence. After three years, they were overjoyed to be able to welcome Gigi and Joey to join them in the United States.

In the U.S., both Carina and Charlie stayed gainfully employed in a series of positions in the fields of Accounting and Budgeting. Their careers spanned many productive years, taking them to major corporations in California, New York and Pennsylvania. Each time Charlie moved locations to accept new positions, Carina willingly followed and sought new employment as well. Each time this happened, Carina easily got a similar or better position because of her excellent job record and her ability to easily embrace new career opportunities.

The next child to arrive was their second son, Patrick, who was born in Suffern, New York.

Family members and loved ones remember Carina as someone who was tirelessly devoted to family and stood as a pillar of faith and service to God. Many relatives saw her life imitating that of her beloved mother, Lola Bess, who also put family and faith above all else. Lola Bess became a big part of Carina's immediate family and ended up staying with them for more than 20

years.

Of the many examples of Carina's love and devotion to family is her care of her beloved granddaughter, Evelyn. Carina took over the primary care of Evelyn at the tender age of 3. For many years, she raised, taught and nurtured Evelyn, who has special needs. Carina sacrificed so much of herself to provide for, help and endlessly encourage and support Evelyn. All of this selfless service came with enormous patience and love, without complaints, anger or resentment.

The experience embodies who Carina was, and always strived to be - a nurturing mother, devoted wife and faithful religious servant. She was also a cheerful spirit prepared to give her undying love and everything else she could to those around her.

Carina's legacy magnified her love of the Catholic Faith, her devotion to Blessed Mary and her son, Jesus Christ. Both she and Charlie became charismatics after being baptized in the Holy Spirit in Philadelphia and they continued to stay active in the Charismatic Movement. Like her mother, Carina lived a life that showed her love to family, close friends, even strangers. This is the same kind of love described in 1 Corinthians 13 of St. Paul. "Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres." These were some of the mottos Carina lived by. As a faithful daughter in Christ, Carina was surely greeted with open arms and divine love in heaven to meet God and the cherished family members who passed on before her.

Like many Filipinos, she had a sense of humor and loved to laugh - and eat good food. In her spare time, Carina enjoyed reading, praying and singing religious songs. One of her favorite places was the beach and she especially

loved taking walks along the shore. She was also an avid watcher of dramatic teleseryes on Filipino TV.

She enjoyed many hobbies but one of her absolute favorites was gardening. As persistent and successful as she was in her gardening endeavors, she must have had not one, but two green thumbs. When she moved to her home in Wildwood, Florida, which has a sprawling yard, Carina expanded her passion of growing vegetables and fruits - including many exotic varieties of plants and trees - in her oversized garden.

Carina was preceded in death by her parents, Jose and Nieves Espejo, her brother Gerry, and sister Thelma. She is survived by her husband, Charlie de la Torre, and six siblings, Manuel, Hector, Philip, Rolly, Linda and Rosemarie. She is also survived by her children, Gigi, Joey and Patrick, and three grandchildren, Jared, Noam and Evelyn.

A verse from Carina, from May 3, 2020:

"Hope in Life with God"

Grace is when God gives us good things that we don't deserve.

Mercy is when He spares us from bad things we deserve.

Blessings are when He is generous with both.

Truly, we can never run out of reasons to thank Him.

God is good all the time!

Thank you Lord for your grace, mercy forgiveness, protection, guidance, friendship, peace and unfailing love.

Thank you for being my Lord and Savior.

- Carina de la Torre

As a final homage and tribute to Carina, and to celebrate her wonderful life, the following events will be held:

Tuesday March 16, 2021 - A private viewing by the family and close friends in Christ of Carina at Beyers Funeral Home, located at 134 N. Hwy 27/441, Lady Lake, FL 32159. 10 am-12 noon

March 17, 2021 (St. Patrick's Day-Wed) - Funeral Mass at St. Vincent de Paul Church, 5323 E CR 462, Wildwood, FL. 34785. 10 am-12 noon

March 17, 2021 - Reception at LAUREL MANOR RECREATION CENTER, 1985 Laurel Manor Drive., THE VILLAGES, FL. 32162, phone 352-7561-7100. 12:00 pm-4:00pm (limited capacity due to COVID-19 restrictions)

If you wish to make a donation in Carina's name, please send to:

St. Theresa Catholic Church

11528 SE Highway 301, Belleview, FL 34420

Please specify the donation is for Carina de la Torre.

Here are some recollections and impressions of Carina, given by various members of her family:

"One thing I love about her is her inability to hold any grudges on anyone. She can be mad one minute, then calls you next day because she's telling you she sent you vegetables from her garden."

"She was never jealous of me, rather, very supportive of me. She is very generous to everyone, not just me."

"She's one of the most generous human beings I know. Always providing for

my mother whenever my mother went on trips with her. She did things out of love, and not expecting anything in return."

"She was selfless and kind. Always thinking what was best for others, whether you liked it or not. But in reality, it was always her thoughts and conviction and she always had their best intentions at heart."

"I can remember that at a young age, when I would be home alone in New York, calling my mom every 15 minutes asking if she was coming home. She always answered. When I would make her late for work when I got older because I didn't want to take the bus, she always took me to school."

"She always there for you, always giving of herself to make your life better. She unwaveringly kept the family together, no matter the adversity we faced, never asking anything for herself. If you asked her how she was, she would simply say, 'I'm Okay.'"

"I hope to think her traits rubbed off on me. I hope people see me in her. I hope when people think of me, they think of me as my mother's son. It would be my honor, and through everyone she has touched, I see a little bit of her in them."

"Although I'm turning 50 this year I can remember memories as a very young boy. Some of these treasured memories are of my aunt Carina. She made our visits from Canada to her home in Rockland and New Jersey a home away from home."

"She was full of smiles, and brought a kind and caring disposition everywhere she went. To me, she was also a generous giver of her time, presents and compliments. She was an encourager and seeker of fun things to do."

"I will miss her deeply. As time passed by and she moved with her family to Florida, I saw less of her. This made me sad but she continued to reach out to me and share prayers, food recipes and health tips on Facebook. She left me uplifting comments and I always felt her warmth and love despite the distance. She is a woman of virtue and the world has lost such a beautiful soul. But I know she looks down from Heaven and is smiling."

"She was kind, generous and loving. She was the rock of the family who always knew how to keep us together. She did everything for us and never expected any type of recognition. She was selfless, virtuous and righteous."

"'It's Fine' - this is something most family members and friends have heard often from Carina 'Nina' de la Torre. When sharing difficult life experiences and hardships with mom, she would always respond 'It's fine'. It used to drive me crazy because I felt she minimized the pain and suffering, but now I realize it's the truth - 'God will heal, keep you safe and see you through the pain and suffering we feel.'"

"She has always been a lighthouse for me to draw strength; at times the light was dim and others bright but I always know the direction to her and it's given me so much comfort. I will try and carry the torch and be this for others in the family and friends."

"Unfaltering Love - this is one of mom's strongest attributes that has never wavered through her life. Despite disappointments she has had with me from the decisions I've made in the past, I never felt I've lost her love."

"My mom recently told me to watch a TV series called 'Iron Fist.' I decided to watch it and started to realize the pearls of wisdom in it about family that appealed to my mom. 1) A single arrow can break but a quiver of arrows is strong - strength of family. 2) Unsurmountable odds can only be overcome by

collecting warriors - family can overcome anything life has in store."

"Prayer & Hope is Powerful - She never saw the difference between prayer and hope - it was intertwined or the same. Through the difficulties and pain she has felt through her life and even the medical condition that took her away from us, the smile on her face was attributed to the prayer/hope she had."

Online condolences may be left at www.beyersfuneralhome.com

Arrangements entrusted to Beyers Funeral Home and Crematory, Lady Lake, FL.