



## Maria José de la Camara

April 28, 1940 - September 19, 2025

Maria José de la Camara, age 85, of Willoughby Hills, passed away Friday, September 19, 2025 at home. She was born April 28, 1940, in Madrid, Spain, and emigrated to the U.S. to attend Lake Erie College in Painesville, OH in 1961.

Maria earned her B.A. in English from Lake Erie College and her M.A. and Ph.D. in Spanish Literature from Case Western Reserve University. She joined Lake Erie College as Professor of Spanish Language and Literature and was named Associate Dean of Arts and Sciences and International Programs. She served as Dean of the School of Arts and Humanities at the College of Saint Rose in Albany, NY, moving on to become Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and later Provost at Benedictine University in Lisle, IL. She retired in 2017.

Maria was an avid reader, an enthusiastic world traveler, and enjoyed spending time in the garden and at parks, especially Morton Arboretum in Lisle. She loved attending the theatre and movies, especially Italian cinema. She treasured the time she could spend with her grandchildren and great-grandchildren, as well as with her many nieces and nephews in both the U.S. and Spain.

Survivors include her children: Aurora, John and Ralph Martinez;

grandchildren: Steven (Mariah) Barnes and Daniel Barnes; great-grandchildren: Ezra and Eleanor; sister: Cristina de la Camara Gonzalez.

Preceding Maria in death are her parents: Juan and Josefa de la Camara, sisters: Ana Rosa (Jaime) Rodriganez, and Maria Victoria (Antonio) Carnicero; son in law: Matthew W. Barnes, and former husband: Charles Martinez.

A celebration of Maria's life will be held from 2:00 - 4:00 p.m. on Saturday, November 15, 2025 at Brunner Sanden Deitrick Funeral Home & Cremation Center, 8466 Mentor Ave., Mentor, OH 44060.

The family request contributions be made to St. Procopius Abbey, 5601 College Rd, Lisle, IL 60532. <https://www.procopius.org/giving>

Offer condolences at [www.brunners.com](http://www.brunners.com)

# Previous Events

## Celebration of Life

NOV 15. 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM (ET)

Brunner Sanden Deitrick Funeral Home & Cremation Center

8466 Mentor Avenue

Mentor, OH 44060

(440) 255-3401

[ajs@brunners.com](mailto:ajs@brunners.com)

<https://www.brunners.com/>

# Tribute Wall

CL

“ Thought I would search Maria Jose but wasn't prepared for this news. We were students together at LEC, Aunt Suzi our family and teacher. She was my maid in honor at my wedding and my father-in-law walked her down the aisle when she married Charlie. We knew Aurora as a baby. Maria Jose joins my husband Patrick in heaven. Love you !

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**Carolyn Lawrence** - March 29 at 11:47 AM

MK

“ Deepest condolences from Mark and Kim Kindler

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**mark kindler** - November 13, 2025 at 07:23 PM

CC

“ Cindy and Mark Chalachan purchased the Laver Reflections Spray for the family of Maria José de la Camara.



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**Cindy and Mark Chalachan** - October 21, 2025 at 02:47 PM

MR

“ *Maria was an exceptional woman.*

*While I never overlapped professionally at Benedictine University with her, she became a close friend after my retirement. I looked forward to our almost weekly phone calls. She was so proud of her children and grandchildren and adored her twin great grandkids. While she was still living in Naperville she was friends with so many, including my husband and our foster granddaughters. I will always remember our trips together to eat Tapas at Meson Sabika in Naperville, to shop at the Christkindl market in Chicago and to enjoy her excellent seafood paella.*

*Maria was so joyful, loving and caring to everybody, but what I admired most was how she handled her medical problems without complaining. She accepted it, but we both regretted that we could not meet in person during the last few years.*

*We will miss her greatly. She will always be in our hearts. Our thoughts and prayers will be with you during the next difficult months ahead.*

*Margaret and Warren Roth*

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**Margaret Roth** - October 12, 2025 at 03:51 PM

MR

“ *1 file added to the album Benedictine University Colleagues*



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**Margaret Roth** - October 12, 2025 at 03:45 PM

CL

“ *Maria was a client of mine. Such a great lady, she will be missed. Prayers for your family.*

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**Craig Leslie** - October 07, 2025 at 09:34 AM

RL

“ *I'm so sorry to hear the news. My deepest condolences to her family. May she rest in the loving embrace of our heavenly Father, awaiting that joyful reunion with all of her loved ones.*

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**Rita Lunardi** - October 01, 2025 at 03:53 PM

DL

“ *Maria was one of my favorite professors, a dear friend, and a trusted advisor. I learned so much from her and we shared many laughs. I have so many great memories of her! My heartfelt condolences to Aurora, John, Ralph, and the rest of her family.*

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**David Lunardi** - October 01, 2025 at 12:49 PM

LB

“ *Aurora and family, I'm so sorry for your loss. Maria was one of my favorite professors and she was a lovely person. I know she will be missed.*  
*Laurie Boldrin, LEC '86.*

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**Laurie-Anne Boldrin** - September 30, 2025 at 09:06 PM

MN

“ *First in my role as LEC Bookstore Manager and then later as an LEC Adjunct Professor, I spent time well spent with Maria. Her professionalism I respected; her humanity I will always treasure. My prayers are with her family. With love, her fellow Alum, Michael John Norris LEC MBA 1996*

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**Michael John Norris** - September 29, 2025 at 11:41 PM

BS

“ *Oh my, there's a hole in my heart. Rest in peace my dear friend.  
Barbara Juster Shore*

Barbara Juster Shore - September 28, 2025 at 11:58 AM

RI

“ *María de la Cámara seguramente es una de las personas y colegas más interesantes, auténticas y humanas que he conocido en mi vida. Que descanse en paz.*

Rafael Iglesias - September 26, 2025 at 01:42 AM



“ *A fabulous individual and friend. We often went with a foursome to the racetrack on Saturday. I studied Spanish with her. She was an excellent teacher. I assume she was equally excellent in administrative matters. I will miss her.*

Ernest Pick - September 25, 2025 at 03:20 PM

MF

“ *Querida tita, gracias por hacernos reír tantas veces con tu humor, tu inteligencia y tu espíritu de aventurera. Eres inventora de palabras que ya forman parte del diccionario familiar. Me llevaste a conocer el mundo, y me hiciste leer bellos libros que me han marcado. Un abrazo inmenso a toda la familia y amigas y amigos.*



Maria Folguera - September 24, 2025 at 06:02 AM

HF

“ Dear Maria, your kindness and warmth were a beacon of light, especially during my difficult first weeks in the US with the FLTA program. Your encouraging words and genuine care comforted me immensely. You will be dearly missed. My heartfelt condolences to her family and all who knew her.



Helen Feng - September 24, 2025 at 03:33 AM

MF

“ My dearest Maria, a friend indeed, always with a loving and welcoming smile. Thank you for your kindness and friendship during your tenure at BU. Rest in peace my friend



Marie Francois - September 23, 2025 at 09:00 PM

FO

“ Loving and missing María's bubbling personality for life, I send my deepest condolences to the family. Sincerely, Fr. Becket. St. Procopius Abbey, Lisle, IL.

Fr. T. Becket A. Franks, O.S.B. - September 23, 2025 at 07:05 PM

TN

“ to us. Love, Celestino & Nancy purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Maria José de la Camara.



to us. Love, Celestino & Nancy - September 23, 2025 at 06:12 PM

SG

“ *Sunni Gothard purchased the Serene Retreat for the family of Maria José de la Camara.*



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**Sunni Gothard** - September 23, 2025 at 12:30 PM