



## Kathleen "Kathy" Louise Perzynski

June 15, 1953 - June 12, 2020

Kathleen "Kathy" Louise Perzynski age 66 of Toledo, Ohio died peacefully this past Friday, June 12 h in Cleveland, Ohio at the Cleveland Clinic in the company of her husband Tom. Kathy was born the seventh of eight children to her parents Paul and Mary Evelyn Raitz (Kimmet) on June 15th, 1953 at Tiffin Mercy Hospital in Tiffin, Ohio. She grew up in New Riegel on her family's farm and graduated from New Riegel High School in 1971. During her early nursing studies she met Thomas C. Perzynski, her soulmate, and they were married at the farm, celebrated afterward with Arnold's Dance Band performing on September 7th 1973. She became a Registered Nurse in 1973 at Toledo's Mercy School of Nursing; then worked as a staff nurse on a Neurology unit at The Toledo Hospital until 1978, when she also completed a Bachelor of Education, Public Affairs and Community Services at the University of Toledo. She earned a Master of Science in Community Health Nursing at the University of Michigan, with a concentration in Home Health Administration and a Specialty Certificate in Aging in 1986. While at the University of Michigan, she received the Emilie Gleason Sargent Award for outstanding leadership in Community Health Nursing.

Her distinguished career in nursing included hospital care and home health nursing. Kathy served as the Director of Home Health Services at the Visiting Nurse Service of Toledo from 1986 — 1989. Her career eventually evolved to a focus on community health nursing and nursing education. Notably, she was the Camp Nurse at the University of Michigan's Camp Davis in Jackson

Wyoming in 1989 and 1990, where she developed a passion for the outdoors, national parks, and new adventures. Kathy achieved the rank of Associate Professor in the Department of Nursing at Lourdes University in Sylvania, Ohio, where she was first hired as an instructor in 1989, served as interim chairperson (2001-2003; 2006) and Interim Dean (2006). In 2011 after a sudden illness, she transitioned to become Associate Professor Emeritus, and continued to actively support nursing scholarship at Lourdes, where her innovations in curriculum and pedagogy are felt today in RN to BSN, LPN to BSN and RN to MSN programs that she helped design.

As a nursing scholar she was an active presenter, educator and grant writer, with publications in various professional public health nursing journals. She gave dozens of presentations at professional conferences including the American Public Health Association. Her teaching, research and scholarship included notable awards for substantially increasing nursing workforce diversity (Health Resource and Services Administration), promoting independent living among older adults (Retirement Research Foundation) and the development of Northwest Ohio's first

network of neighborhood wellness centers (Department of Health and Human Services Division of Nursing). In 2006, she was recognized by Lourdes with the Faculty Excellence Award.

Her professional memberships included Sigma Theta Tau (Rho Chapter and Zeta Theta Chapter), Sigma Phi Omega (Beta Theta Chapter), the American Public Health Association, The National League for Nursing, the Ohio League for Nursing, the Mercy School of Nursing Alumni Association, the University of Michigan School of Nursing Alumni Association and the University of Toledo Alumni Association.

She was an active contributor to schools, community based and civic organizations, having organized several school and community health fairs. She served in the Lucas County Medical Reserve Corps and as a volunteer for Life Connection of northwest Ohio. For three decades she sang beside her

husband Tom as a member of the Folk Choir at the Blessed Sacrament Parish Community in West Toledo. She also was a volunteer usher at the Toledo Museum of Art Peristyle for a decade.

In 1998, she survived a rare and terminal liver disease, by having a liver transplant at the University of Michigan. At the time of her death, she was the longest surviving transplant recipient of that transplant program. Out of gratitude of the gift she received, Kathy routinely gave guest presentations to persons considering organ transplant for The Gift of Life Foundation, Universities, and other agencies.

She absolutely loved her family and friends and especially enjoyed her grandchildren. One of her passions was developing and maintaining a beautiful garden (which was featured in 2008 as part of the Friends of Toledo Day Nursery Annual Garden Tour). She was always happy to give away plants from her garden to friends, family and strangers. She is known for so many talents, one of which is baking. Kathy would deliver freshly baked cookies to the Bureau of Motor Vehicles to help promote organ donation. She is also known for her extensive variety of delicious Christmas cookies, a tradition started by her mother on the farm. Her family and friends remember her as being strong, kind, loving, and generous.

She is survived by her husband Tom, children Adam (Maureen) and Rita (Brian), grandchildren Holly, Sophie, Edward, Theodore and Paul and her sisters Mary Jane, Nancy, Charlene, Joyce and Janet. She was preceded in death by her brothers Paul and John and parents Paul and Mary Evelyn.

Her family appreciate the care, love and support given to her by so many from the nursing community, family, and friends.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests contributions in her honor be directed to the Kathy Perzynski Commitment to the Profession Award at Lourdes

University or Sisters of St. Francis in Sylvania, OH.

Friends are invited to visit from 4:00p.m. to 8:00p.m. Friday (All social distancing and face covering recommendations will be strictly observed) at Ansberg-West Funeral Home, 3000 Sylvania Avenue, where the Rosary will be recited at 7:00p.m. A private Mass will be celebrated at 12:00pm Saturday at Christ the King Church and will available to viewed via a livestreaming link at [cktoledo.org](http://cktoledo.org) for those not invited to attend. Private interment in Calvary Cemetery.

# Cemetery Details

## Calvary Cemetery

2224 Dorr St  
Toledo, OH 43607

# Previous Events

## Visitation

JUN 19. 4:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Ansberg-West Funeral Home  
3000 W. Sylvania Ave  
Toledo, OH 43613

## Rosary

JUN 19. 7:00 PM - 7:30 PM (ET)

Ansberg-West Funeral Home  
3000 W. Sylvania Ave  
Toledo, OH 43613

# Tribute Wall

TP

“ I am so sorry to hear of Kathy's passing. It was pleasure serving with her at Lourdes College. She was dedicated to her profession, and I remember her with a smile on her face, always. Praying for all her family at this difficult time!  
Tony Pisano

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**Tony Pisano** - June 23, 2020 at 08:54 PM

ES

“ So sorry to hear of Kathy's passing. She was a classmate of mine at New Riegel. She always came to our class reunions and was a joy to see. Full of smiles and even when she just had a knee replacement! She was a very active lady! Prayers for all her family.

*Elaine (Coleman)and Dave Staib  
P.O. Box 92  
New Riegel, Ohio*

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**Elaine Coleman Staib** - June 23, 2020 at 07:44 PM

LC

“ Sorry to hear about Kathy's passing, may she rest in peace.  
Lenny and Lynn Clouse and family

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**Lenny Clouse** - June 23, 2020 at 08:48 AM

NW

“ So sorry for your loss. My thought and prayers are with you all.

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**Nanette Warnecke-Flood** - June 20, 2020 at 01:59 PM

BA

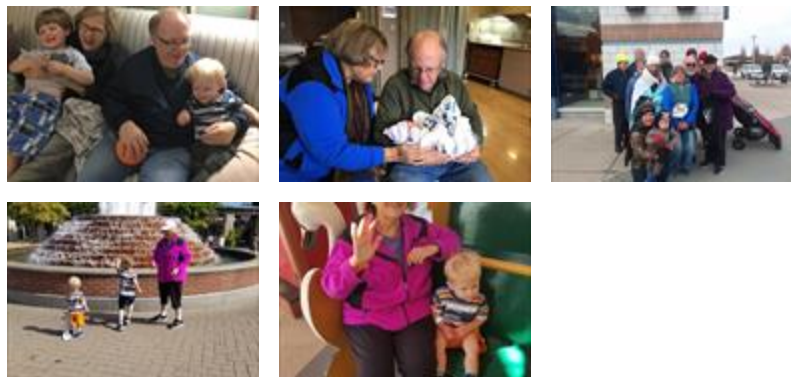
“ I remember Kathy as kind and gentle. Our paths crossed at Lourdes and again at U of M. She touched the lives of so many nurses, making us better. My thoughts and prayers are with you.  
*Beth Albitz, RN, BSN, CCM*

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**Beth Albitz** - June 18, 2020 at 07:02 AM

RK

“ 16 files added to the album Memories Album

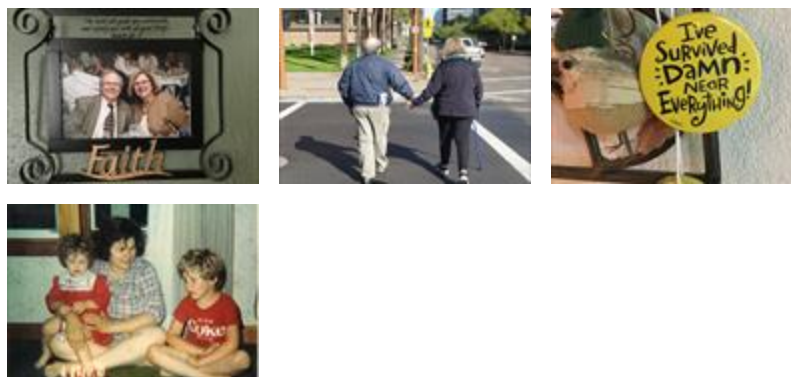


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**Rita Kostielney** - June 16, 2020 at 06:15 PM

RK

“ 4 files added to the album Memories Album



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**Rita Kostielney** - June 16, 2020 at 06:01 PM

JM

*Tom and Family ..*

*We are so sorry for your loss.*

*Kathy was certainly an amazing lady. She will be with you and beside you for all the days to come. May God always Bless your family.*

*Janet & John Madigan*

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**Janet Madigan** - June 19, 2020 at 06:52 PM

TP

“ While I watch in sadness of folks sharing negative FB posts about policing, violence, hate, racism, and arson...and positive posts about acts of kindness for justice and equality...I have been holding my mother's hand every day as she has held mine my entire life. She is at the end of her physical presence here on earth.

*My mother is a farm girl, one of 8 children. She held hands with the love of her life. She grew up catching mice for 5cents (rats for 10cents) and had one dresser drawer for her clothes. I repeat, one dresser drawer. She can eat more corn on the cob than anyone I know! (Ok, maybe her older brothers could eat more, haha). Our family and friends are full of different personalities, different colors, different shapes and sizes, different educations, and different religions. Yet, we all share a common bond of humanity, compassion, and love.*

*This farm girl made a positive impact on every single person she met. She cared for the sick and homebound as a home health care nurse, she cared for people from all walks of life and all stages of life; all without judgement. She sang at the front of church every Sunday with the love of her life. She treated every single person as her own. She didnt hold back, she challenged you, she encouraged you, she comforted you, she fed you, she laughed with you, she cheered you on, and she loved you with all her soul. She knew you could do more than what you thought you were capable of doing. She is the definition of resilience.*

*My mother received a liver transplant from a selfless Michigan woman in 1998, almost 22years ago. We do not know the age, the race, or the religion of the generous donor. Our lives have all been blessed by one selfless human who shared the gift of life as an organ donor. That donor and donor family made a difference. The average life span of liver recipients is 7-10yrs, at best. She is the longest surviving liver recipient at UofM. Just think of what has happened the past 22 years of your life and who was there with you. She has endured extreme medical issues. She has shocked and*

*astonished doctors with how long she has survived. To this day, she continues to amaze doctors. After disconnecting all the tubes and medicines, docs said she would not survive the night. Well, that was Monday (6/8) and she continues to show off her strength and resilience. Haha! Yup, that's my mom for ya!*

*My mother worked her booty off to not only provide for the best children ever (haha), but to also make a difference and enjoy life to its fullest. She did not do this by supporting violence. She did not do this by hating people or by looting or by instigating and throwing rocks at people. She made a difference through her daily interactions of compassion and love. At times, she may have seemed too vocal, pushy and blunt, but she made you think and challenge yourself; often keeping you grounded and reflective of your own words, ideas, and actions. She challenged policies and procedures. We could always do better, we could always be a better person. She was passionate about educating lower income and disadvantaged families about public health, including safe sex, drugs and smoking, and basic nutrition. She co-authored university text books. She increased the diversity of nurses and university students. Yes, a white farm girl wanted and successfully pushed for diversity.*

*When she departs her physical being, she leaves a legacy of resilience, determination, honesty, compassion, and love. I challenge you to reflect on how you can impact your own community and politics without violence or negativity. How can you be a better person? How can you cheer others on? How can you care for others?*

*\*\*\*\*\*After I finished writing this, she took her last breath and rose up to the pearly gates. She has exemplified to all of us of how strong we can be and how we can be a better person for others. \*\*\*\*\**

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**Tom Perzynski** - June 16, 2020 at 12:12 PM



*What a beautiful tribute.*

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**Nanette Warnecke-Flood** - June 20, 2020 at 02:03 PM

“ Generosity is telling my dad and I to go buy 5 lbs of cookies for the ICU staff...before the end of the day. And make sure there's enough for both shifts.

Kindness is calling my father-in-law, Jim, just to see how he was doing and give him some company while she was hospitalized in the COVID unit just a few floors upstairs, as he was facing his own illness battle.

Generosity is seeing that someone's coat or shoes are a little too small, waiting til they leave, making a few secret phone calls to find out their size and then handing them a new coat or shoes the next time you see them.

Kindness is. Kindness is telling me that I really don't need to work so hard, but she's proud of me anyway.

Generosity is a birthday cake for every grandchild, made to their exact specifications after careful review, sketches and approval and exceeding all possible expectations.

Kindness is even being kind to people you don't like very much.

Social science research shows that most people can maintain only 5 strong friendships. Generosity is making everybody feel like they are one of those 5 people.

Kindness is baking a ridiculously intricate variety of delicious Christmas cookies for 50 or more people, even if you can't stand or walk too well. Just so you can share your delicious cookies.

Generosity is driving a hundred miles or more to provide backup childcare for sick grandkids a dozen or more times in a year.

Kindness is a firm neck rub for anyone with a sore neck.

Generosity is always buying nicer things for others than you ever had yourself.

Kindness is telling a person who is wrong that they are wrong in a way that ensures they understand.

Generosity is, well I think this one is kindness too. Making sure your children and grandchildren are kind and generous to others always.

You know I could keep going like this a very long time. I think you get the idea. I am sure most of you have many more beautiful examples that I don't even know about.

Just one more thing. The more I have been thinking about it, it

*seems like you have to be kind and generous in order to be strong. As I sat with her writing this out, my mom was breathing a few last precious, strong breaths. In her memory, be kind. Be generous. Be strong.*

*Thank you all so very much.*

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**Tom Perzynski** - June 16, 2020 at 12:10 PM

“ My mom, Kathy Perzynski died today. My sister shared some genuine and loving memories in a separate post. It's unlikely we will all get together for a memorial service, so I thought I would share a draft of a eulogy I might give if I could be with you all.

I get to tell you about my mom, Kathy, today. I feel like there are so many important things I should say. I want to focus on just a few things that really matter.

You all probably know how strong my mom is. Was. I can't get used to it. Talking about her in the past tense. What you might not have considered is how strong she made all of the people around her. I am looking at you Eddie and Sophie and Holly. You might not know it yet, but your grandma helped make you strong.

Sometimes when I would think about my mom's strength, I thought about this corny line from the game of thrones books. The character Syrio Forel asks rhetorically, "What do we say when death comes?" "Not today."

She must have had something to that effect going on in her mind on Monday this week when the doctors told us she wouldn't last another hour. Or Tuesday when they said the same thing. Or the week before when she consented to an emergency surgery on her hip. Or 4 weeks before that when she survived having Coronavirus. She said "not today" for 120 days in a row back in 2011 when she had severe acute necrotizing pancreatitis, and survived a condition that has a less than 1% survival rate. Before that, all the way back in 1998, on National Recycling Day, she survived a liver transplant for an incurable disease called primary sclerosing cholangitis. I have a little of her strength.

But as impressive as my mom's strength is, it might be the least remarkable component of her character that I can talk with you about. You might be thinking now, that I will say she was strong in her faith. She was that too.

There are two things about my mom that you and I probably took a little for granted during her life. Her kindness and her generosity. The best way to talk about her kindness and generosity is through some examples. I thought I could share a simple list of definitions of each, just short examples. Maybe some of you have your own

*examples you'd like to share. I would love it if you send them or share them here.*

*Kindness is calling me from the ICU to make sure that my children Eddie and Sophie and Holly know how much she loved them*

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**Tom Perzynski** - June 16, 2020 at 12:09 PM

SK

*It is so sad to see such a wonderful angel on earth has been taken too early. You and your family are in my thoughts and prayers.*

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**Sandy Konwinski** - June 17, 2020 at 10:00 PM

BM

*The world has lost a true jewel- Remembering Kathy from both VNS and Lourdes, I feel her kindness, warmth, positivism, and creative genius. God bless her family, and PEACE to all.  
Betty Masiulaniec, MSN, RN*

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**Betty Masiulaniec** - June 18, 2020 at 10:30 AM

CV

*I was in choir with Kathy and she had a beautiful voice. Spent 18 years in choir with Kathy and Tom. Two of the kindest people I know. God bless her wonderful family!*

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**chris vankoughnet** - June 18, 2020 at 06:30 PM

CP

*Tom and family: my sympathy as you say goodbye to a wonderful wife, mother, grandmother, friend. I had lost contacts at Lourdes and did not know Kathy was failing. When Kathy was Interim Chairperson at Lourdes, she was instrumental in my getting hired as the Administrative Assistant to the Dean and Chair. I had the privilege of working with Kathy for 11 years. What a compassionate, intelligent hard worker. She knew how to write grants. She helped prepare the College of Nursing for accreditation visits. She was compassionate about her chosen career. I think of Kathy when I wake up during the night and make a note of something on my mind. She mentioned she did that often. May you cherish all your wonderful memories. Sincerely,*

*Candy Postlewaite*

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**Candy Postlewaite** - June 19, 2020 at 08:11 PM