



Joan Lynch

September 5, 1929 - January 22, 2025

Joan Lynch

Our beautiful, brilliant and deeply spiritual 95-year-old mother, Virginia Joan Lynch died in San Luis Obispo, CA, on January 22, 2025.

Joan was born at home, the fifth of six children of Catherine and John Long, Jr. in the coal mining town of Lafayette, CO, on the front range of the Rocky Mountains. She was a second-generation Irish American. Joan's family relocated to Richland, WA in the early 1940s when her father joined the workforce at the Hanford nuclear site that was part of the Manhattan project.

She graduated from Columbia High School in 1947, and attended Marylhurst College in Lake Oswego, OR, where she was very active in campus life and made lifelong friendships during her treasured time there. At Marylhurst, Joan was elected president of her sophomore, junior and senior classes and was a representative to the US

National Student

Association (NSA) convention at the University of Illinois in the summer of 1949. It was

there she crossed paths with Don Lynch, who was representing the Illinois Institute of

Technology. Many of Joan and Don's lifelong friends were among those they met while

active in the NSA.

Joan postponed her senior year at Marylhurst to serve as staff associate at the NSA

headquarters at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, for the 1950-51 school year. Two

months after graduating, Joan and Don were married in August 1952 and eventual

became the parents of 10 children, grandparents of 17 and great grandparents of nine,

during their 70-year marriage.

Joan created homes in Chicago, Stamford, CT, and Huntington, LI, NY, and moved to

Los Angeles in 1964 with Don's career in the aerospace industry.

Joan and Don became staunch supporters of the Immaculate Heart religious community

in the mid-1960s, initiated by their children's enrollment in Blessed Sacrament School in

Hollywood. This connection brought them long friendships with others supporting

positive changes in the Catholic Church. Their advocacy of the IHMs grew stronger as

each of their six daughters attended Immaculate Heart High School (IHHS).

In 1972, Joan began working at IHHS in the development office and took a short break to work with the Angeles Girl Scout Council before returning to IHHS in the college and career counseling group (with a short interruption to act in the same role at Providence High School in Burbank). Following her retirement from IHHS, Joan opened her own firm, Lynch Clark Associates Educational Consultants, retiring in 1992.

In 1994, following Joan and Don's retirements, they moved to the Bishop Peak neighborhood in San Luis Obispo. They found a very welcoming neighborhood, joined in local neighborhood events, and also were active members of Nativity of Our Lady Community Catholic Church.

Joan was a voracious reader which provided her informative narratives to passengers accompanying her on the many road trips that she loved to take. She seemed to know the geological, political, and natural history of every location visited. And, as importantly, the location of all the A&Ws along the route to stop for root beer floats or hot fudge sundaes.

Joan possessed a terrific sense of humor, great people skills, an effortless

elegance and the ability to connect with a wide variety of people, always being conscious of treating others fairly. She was an excellent cook no matter the occasion-- nightly dinners, special birthday menus, holiday favorites, picnics at Will Rogers beach (lifeguard tower 16!) or "just a little something I whipped up!" to enjoy at the Hollywood Bowl.

She was a generous hostess who never hesitated to set an extra place at her table for unexpected visitors and any number of her children's friends who have declared themselves to be the "11th Lynch". Additionally, she was a skilled seamstress, making many of her own and her children's clothes and creating Halloween costumes that survive to this day.

She possessed boundless energy and found time while chauffeuring children to Little League, music lessons, dance lessons and scouting events, to volunteer for organizations such as the League of Women Voters, Angeles Girl Scout Council and the United Way.

Joan was a great and loyal friend. Living in the Hollywood Hills in the Oaks neighborhood, and having children in local parochial and public schools and scout troops, led to lifelong friendships with other area families. A memorable group was the self-titled "Crazy Ladies" who were all connected to IHHS in some capacity,

and who
created happy adventures together.

Happily for Joan and the family, son Terrence and daughter Mary Pat live in San Luis Obispo and have provided her with wonderful, generous, loving, patient care and support. Terrence has lived with Mom for the last few years and, as a professional chef, has kept her very well nourished and the house in order. Mary Pat's nursing expertise has been put to frequent use. Our family is deeply indebted to Terrence and Mary Pat for their outstanding daily support and care of Joan that allowed her to continue to live at home surrounded by the love of her family, with the beautiful views of Bishop Peak and the hummingbirds just outside her windows. We are forever grateful to them for their selfless generosity.

Joan was pre-deceased by the love of her life, Donald Lynch, who died at 93 in 2022;
her parents Catherine and John, sisters Mary Katherine Haug, Patricia O'Donnell, Honora (Peggy) Long, Nancy Soderstrom, brother John (Bud) Long; and daughter-in-law Ilsa Branch.

Joan leaves behind her children Larry (Charlene), Maureen, Rita (Bill) Speck, Terrence,

Mary Pat, Thomas, Jack, Nora (Jack) MacKenzie, Ann (Robin Morhar), and Kate (Mark) Castonguay; grandchildren Sean (Ana), Aaron (April), Max (Melissa), Charlie (Mya) Lynch; Cary (Claire) and Hayden Speck; Nicolette (Andrew) Benson; Ryan (Hannah), Matthew, John, and Mike Mesick; Eli and Owen Lynch; Madison and Maggie MacKenzie; Jack and Christopher Castonguay; and great grandchildren Gabriel, Izabella, Patrick, Elliot and Olivia Lynch; Fiona and Liam Benson; Rowan and Ember Mesick; and nieces and nephews from the O'Donnell, O'Keeffe, Haug, Long, Soderstrom, Lynch and O'Gorman families.

A funeral Mass will be held at Nativity of Our Lady Catholic Church, 221 Daly Ave San Luis Obispo CA 93405, (805) 544-2357, at 3 pm on Friday, March 28, 2025 with a reception to follow. The service will be live streamed if you are unable to attend.

Donations in honor of Joan can be made to Immaculate Heart High School, 5515 Franklin Avenue, Los Angeles, CA, 90028; The SLO Food Bank, 1180 Kendall Road, San Luis Obispo, CA 93401, or the Nativity of Our Lady Catholic Community Church, 221 Daly Avenue, San Luis Obispo, CA 93405.

Previous Events

Funeral Mass

MAR 28. 3:00 PM (PT)

Nativity of our Lady Catholic Church
221 Daly Ave
San Luis Obispo, CA 93405

Reception

MAR 28. 4:00 PM (PT)

Nativity Parish Hall
221 Daly Ave
San Luis Obispo, CA 93405
<http://www.nativityslo.org/>