



Vincena P. Malec

October 10, 1929 - August 20, 2015

Vinnie Malec, a longtime resident of Blawnox, faithful and dynamic congregant of St. Edward's in the parish of St. Pio of Pietrelcina, and an inspired activist on behalf of homeless veterans died peacefully early Thursday morning, August 20, 2015. A native Pennsylvanian, born in 1929 to parents who had emigrated from Sicily, Vinnie attended Meadville High School, and Edinboro State Teachers College (now Edinboro University), where she met her husband, rising college football star and Blawnox native, Robert J. Malec (1925-1972). The Malecs made their home in Blawnox, and Vinnie joined the faculty of St. Joseph School in Verona, where she taught generations of star-struck sixth-graders, including renowned mystery novelist, Dennis Palumbo. She also assisted in the family business and was a founder of the Blawnox Business Association.

After Mr. Malec's untimely death, she completed graduate degrees at the University of Pittsburgh and Duquesne University, and began a distinguished career in Social Work. In her position as social worker at the Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center at Highland Drive in Pittsburgh, she united her two great passions—assisting homeless veterans and the Pittsburgh Steelers— in a special moment when she was photographed explaining to Chuck Noll and Joe Greene the first of its kind homeless program of the then Veterans Administration and the American Legion, initiated through her team's efforts. The program went on to become a national model, and continues presently.

Although Vinnie retired from the VA in 1995, she continued her advocacy on behalf of Veterans. She especially prized her work as one of the dedicated leaders of the St Vincent de Paul ministry for the St. Pio of Pietrelcina parish. She drew on her talents to enhance life. Her musical ability—from voice to piano—and her zest for performance, made an afternoon with her a highlight for everyone who knew her—from her sixth graders in the 1960s to the present day elders who enjoyed her piano concerts when she cared for her sister, Rosemarie Petruso (1925-2014), a former resident of Amber Woods. In addition to her life-long devotion to music, Vinnie was an avid bridge-player, golfer, and fervently dedicated Pittsburgh sports fan. She followed closely every game of Pitt Panthers football, basketball, and of course the Steelers. Her octogenarian siblings knew to expect her call when their own resident NFL teams fell to the skill and speed of Vinnie's beloved Steelers. She brought this same high energy and vivacity to everything she did, and was a constant spur of activity for everyone around her.

Vinnie was predeceased by her husband Robert J. Malec, and is survived by her two children, Martha Mary Sproul (Thom) and Robert J. Malec Jr. (Wendy), her grandchildren, Brian Sproul, Christopher Sproul (Nicole), and Michael Malec, step-grandchild, Robert Christopher Austin, (Angela), step-great grandchild, Wyatt Austin, her two sisters, Josephine Bartley, Fort Lauderdale; Anne Lombard, Los Angeles; and her brother Sandy Petruso, Charlotte; as well as two generations of nieces, nephews, grandnieces and grandnephews. Visitation Sat. 6-8 PM, Sun. 2-4 and 6-8 PM at the THOMAS M. SMITH FUNERAL HOME AND CREMATORY LTD., 930 Center Ave., Blawnox, PA 15238 where family and friends will gather Mon. at 9:30 AM, followed by Funeral Mass St. Pio of Pietrelcina Parish, St. Edward Church at 10:30 AM. Memorial Contributions may be made to St. Pio of Pietrelcina Parish St. Vincent DePaul Society, 450 Walnut St., Pgh, PA 15238.

Cemetery Details

St. Mary's Cemetery

1019 Sharps Hill Road
Sharpsburg, PA 15215

Tribute Wall



“ *Vincena P. Malec*

October 09, 2023 at 09:55 AM



“ *Vincena P. Malec*

October 06, 2023 at 11:36 AM



“ *45 years ago it was when I was in Ms. Malec 6th grade class at St. Joes and I will always remember her. She had a knack for teaching us the right stuff. I'd like to think I'm a better person because of her.*

Mike Connolly - August 24, 2015 at 01:00 PM



“ *To Bob and Family, Please know that our thoughts are with you in this time of grief.*

Dave & Patty Shively

Dave Shively - August 24, 2015 at 12:09 PM



“ *Very sorry to hear of Mrs Malec passing into heaven. The memories are faded from sitting in her sixth grade class of 1967-68, but after looking at her smile the memories of her sitting at the piano in our class have returned. May GOD bless her forever.*

Bob Suchevid

bob suchevid - August 23, 2015 at 09:41 PM

HM

“ Hai Giap MD lit a candle in memory of Vincena P. Malec



Hai Giap MD - August 23, 2015 at 08:24 AM

RN

“ A wonderful person who set the standard for "giving of self". Vinnie was an inspiration to all of us who served veterans. I would not be surprised if she starts a homeless program for those waiting to get to heaven.

Rick Newell - August 22, 2015 at 03:37 PM

Bruce
Bostjanick

“ I am sorry to hear about the passing of Ms. Malec. She was a wonderful teacher that I had the pleasure of having during our time at Saint Joeseph's in Verona. She will be missed.

Bruce Bostjanick - August 22, 2015 at 03:22 PM



“ Enchanted Cottage was purchased for the family of Vincena P. Malec .



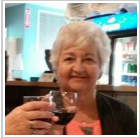
August 22, 2015 at 12:19 PM

DG

“ *Diane and Frank George purchased the Basket of Joy for the family of Vincena P. Malec .*



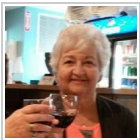
Diane and Frank George - August 22, 2015 at 09:30 AM



“ *I have many wonderful memories of my friend Vinnie. She was so full of energy and cared very much for family and friends. I am so blessed to have Vinnie as a friend. I will miss you my dear friend but I will never forget you. I'm sure God needs you to get a few things organized and done in heaven. Love and prayers, Diane George*



Diane George - August 22, 2015 at 08:41 AM



“ *Diane George lit a candle in memory of Vincena P. Malec*



Diane George - August 22, 2015 at 08:33 AM



“ *Sweet Tranquility Basket was purchased for the family of Vincena P. Malec .*



August 21, 2015 at 10:53 PM