



*In Loving Memory*

*Nancy Irene Kern*

January 22, 1947 - October 11, 2017



With her unending devotion to her family and her unwavering faith as her cornerstone,

*Nancy Irene Kern*

significantly impacted the world around her. Life was not always easy for Nancy but she faced her challenges with a quiet strength coupled with a graceful courage that was truly inspirational. She had her own family to care for, but her door was always open to anyone in need; she epitomized what it means to be the hands and feet of the Lord she loved. Life will

never be the same without Nancy here, but she leaves behind a timeless legacy that her loved ones will proudly carry on as they follow the path she set before them through her example.

Though in 1947 the US and the Soviet Union were facing off during the Cold War, not every house allowed this frightening time to govern their home life; on January 22 of this year, in a Cincinnati home, Ora Violette and Cecil Osborn, along with brother Cecil "Butch," welcomed baby Nancy Irene with optimism and affection. Cecil worked at Columbia Oldsmobile while Ora worked as a bookkeeper. Though the Osborn family worked hard, they spent their free time with family. Nancy relished her time with her extended family on Main Street in Walton, Kentucky, and she enjoyed weekends and summers in the country or on Williamstown Lake.



Nancy attended Woodward High School, followed by dental hygienist school at University of Cincinnati. One New Year's Eve, Nancy took a chance and went on a blind date to a party to meet ex Jesuit seminarian Michael E. Kern. Though he would be joining the US Army and shipping off to boot camp at Fort Dix, this moment changed his life forever. Michael felt that Nancy embodied everything he could ever want in a person: she was fun, loving, compassionate, vivacious and faith-filled. Their time together was short, only ten days before Michael left, so they began corresponding by mail. Their bond was so strong that even with distance, they knew they were meant to spend their lives together. Michael actually proposed over the phone to Nancy, and she eagerly accepted. They were married on November 15, 1969, and immediately following, Michael once again shipped out, this time to NATO headquarters. The newlyweds spent the following year sending one another recorded messages and letters until they were finally reunited.



Together at last, Nancy and Michael settled into an apartment on Short Hill Lane in Erlanger. Nancy worked as Bud Humphrey's dental hygienist while Michael attended Xavier University on the GI Bill. Soon, the couple began welcoming children with the arrivals of Erin in 1972, Kevin in 1974, and Joey in 1976. As the family moved to a Misty Creek subdivision, then Catalpa Lane in Independence and finally Crestview Hills, Kentucky, Michael provided the financial backing as Nancy showed off her talents as the consummate mother. Always present and deeply invested in her children's lives, Nancy creatively scoured the newspaper for growth opportunities for her children. Michael would be astonished to find out that when Nancy took Erin to try out for a play at the Cincinnati Playhouse, Kevin snagged the lead at just six years old, initiating him to a world of acting that led him all the way to Broadway. Nancy looked for ways to encourage all of her children with activities, and to fuel their passions including dance, acting, singing, theater, soccer, basketball, student council, musical instruments. It wasn't that she just drove carpools to these activities, but she sought out unique ways to be exposed to different opportunities to find these passions in her children. This led to all three children being successful adults.



The Kerns joined Summit Hills Country Club which allowed her to spend time with a group of mothers affectionately called "The Sewer Ladies" she engaged in her children's activities around the swimming pool with others that were also nurturing their children as they grew. Nancy also took advantage of the golf course, playing with friends in her limited free time.

Nancy also had talents as a visionary, whether she was considering her home or planning a holiday. Often she would decide something needed redecorating and she would make it happen. She always had a home improvement project going on. This type of vision also allowed her to perfectly plan gifts and special cakes for holiday celebrations, which Nancy loved because her life revolved entirely around her family.

Nancy ran an efficient household, but she also shared her time and talents outside her home. When the children attended St. Xavier, she rallied around the Bombers and volunteered for the annual Xtravaganza. Always eager to grow in her faith, she volunteered at Blessed Sacrament with the Parish Pulse newspaper, as a room Mom, Eucharistic minister, PTA, Cub Scouts and Bible study activities.

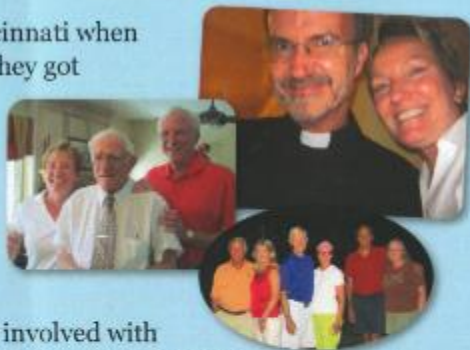


Mike and Nancy moved to Cincinnati when Joey was entering St. Xavier. They got involved with Saint Peter and Paul Church in Reading, Ohio because of a vibrant priest, Fr. Jim Willig. Father Jim was a long time speaker but was diagnosed with cancer, suffered and died.

But before his death Nancy got involved with his Ministry which distributed Father Jim's homily's, writings and Bible reflections. This organization is called Heart to Heart and it became a big part of her life from that point on. She made many friends there and continued Father Jim's ministry with the help of Sr. Mary George. She was active with her involvement at Heart to Heart until her death.

Then later Mike and Nancy started attending St. Maximilian Kolbe Church in West Chester. In her desire to always be involved in the church she joined a Bible study. It was there that she met a group of ladies who came to be known as "The Faith Friends." Michael always said Nancy was "the best convert on the planet!" The group would celebrate each other's birthdays and create scavenger hunts, talent

shows and pranks to surprise one another. Loyal, faith-filled friends, they shared religious goals and their vision.





When Nancy became a grandmother she truly shined as she spent quality time with each of her precious grandchildren. She intuitively understood how to make each child feel special, making their time together unique and valuable. One day, she took Theo to an arcade that she had researched in West Chester because she knew he would love it. Another time, she took Lila for her first fancy dinner with Grandma at Bob Evans. Nancy didn't let distance separate her from her out of town grandchildren.



Mike and Nancy regularly traveled to NYC/NJ to spend meaningful time with the grandchildren there. As the kids grew older she texted and FaceTime with all of the kids. She fostered personal relationships with each of the kids regardless of how much time she got to spend with them in person. These types of experiences cemented her bond with her grandchildren, making their relationships indispensable and unbreakable.



Michael and Nancy enjoyed traveling when the children were raised. They mostly took special pilgrimages to the Holy Land, but they also toured Austria, Germany, Poland and Europe. They also traveled around the US, locations often decided by Michael's business meetings and conventions. There were many family trips to Disney World with the kids and grandkids. They were extravagant trips which embraced all of the magic of Disney. These were important times spent together as a family. Kevin and Joey and their families also made it a priority to travel home often. Although Joey made his life in LA, Nancy continued to be involved with his life, helping him set up life in new apartments and she helped plan his wedding to Gillian. Distance never separated Nancy from being involved.





While Erin's husband Kevin was suffering from terminal cancer, Nancy supported her in every way. Nancy's selflessness truly made her special, and even as she was diagnosed with a rare liver cancer in August of 2016, she remained present for Erin and devoted to her family; she never complained to her family about her illness as she supported Erin through the loss of Kevin. Strong in her faith, Nancy said she was not afraid to die. However, she decided to fight her three-month prognosis with alternative therapies to increase her time with those she loved. This extra time has truly been a priceless gift to her family.

Nancy Irene Kern died at home on October 11, 2017, with Michael at her side. She would want to be remembered as a woman who tried to live her faith fully and as a servant to her family and others. She is surely celebrating with our Lord!

*His lord said unto him, well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.*

*Matthew 25:23*

Story Written By: Marsha Linnemann

