



## Mary Lezza

July 25, 1925 - October 22, 2021

Mary Lezza, 96 passed away on Friday, October 22, 2021, at the Raritan Bay Medical Center in Old Bridge, surrounded by her family.

Born July 25, 1925, in Molfetta, Italy, Mary was the daughter of the late Vito and Benedetta Minervini.

Mary was raised in Molfetta until the age of 14, when she immigrated to the United States where she and her family resided in Hoboken, NJ. It was there she met the love of her life, Sabino Lezza. The couple would marry and start a family of their own and eventually settled in Carlstadt, NJ. Mary stayed active in the Hoboken community as a member of St. Francis Church and the Madonna Dei Martiri Association. After working many years as a seamstress Mary eventually retired with her husband in Toms River.

Mary was the matriarch of the family. She enjoyed cooking, sewing, watching soccer, playing the penny slots, giving spaduzzis and baking her world-famous 'Nonna's Cookies'. Her children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren were her life. She will be missed by all those that were blessed to have her in their lives.

Mary was predeceased by her beloved husband of 57 years, Sabino (2002), her loving son, Joseph (2013) and her siblings Corrado, Isabella and Lucrezia.

Mary is survived by her loving daughters, Maryanne Cicero and her husband David, and Bernadette Conahan and her husband James, by her caring daughter-in-law Maria Lezza, by her cherished grandchildren, Pamela Mullery and her husband Jonathan, James Conahan and his wife Marta, Joseph Lezza, Natalie Cicero, Brian Conahan, Melissa Cicero and Jessica Conahan, and by her adored great-grandchildren Jocelyn and Dubhlainn Mullery.

There will be a small private family gathering on Wednesday, October 27, 2021 at Michael Hegarty & John Vincent Scalia Home For Funerals and Cremation Service, 3377 US Highway 9, Old Bridge, New Jersey.

A Private Funeral service will be on Wednesday at Michael Hegarty & John Vincent Scalia Home For Funerals and Cremation Service located at 3377 US Highway 9 Old Bridge, New Jersey 08857. Interment will be in Holy Cross Cemetery North Arlington, North Arlington, NJ.

In lieu of flowers donations in Mary's memory are being accepted by the family.

# Cemetery Details

## **Holy Cross Cemetery North Arlington**

340 Ridge Road  
North Arlington, NJ 07032

# Tribute Wall



“ *Mary Lezza*

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October 05, 2023 at 11:16 AM

“ This year I lost my grandmother. We lost our Nonna, yes. But, just the same, we’ve lost a constant. And that is a different sort of loss, altogether. Constants are those blocks toward the bottom of the pile, the ones that hold up our castles and forts. They’ve been there since the start. They give our lives shape and meaning and, without knowing it, we come to accept that they’ll always be there, holding us up...until they’re not.

*Nonna was a constant. Nonna was many constants. With Nonna, you could constantly count on the shhhh clop of slippers against tile and a single, inquisitive eye out the sidelite after you’d rung her doorbell. You could constantly count on being asked when you were going to get married. I believe the first time she asked me was just after my first communion. You could constantly count on her screening your calls before picking up. “Hi Nonna, it’s Joey, pick up if you’re-“ And, you could constantly count on a heaping plate of Swiss cheese if you were visiting and hungry. Even if you weren’t hungry.*

*That cheese was always there. In truth, I think Nonna only ever bought Swiss cheese once in her life. From then on, she’d just chisel some shards off that original block whenever she had a visitor. But, it never went bad. It just got tougher and tougher on the outside because that’s what it took to survive life in the fridge. You accepted that cheese because it was given with love and, with a little gnawing, you’d always find that soft center. You accepted it because that cheese, forgive me, was Nonna.*

*Nonna who helped dress the tri-state area, hemming and sewing and spinning garments for hours on hours, all to help keep a roof over her family. Nonna, who learned to drive as an adult - despite the fear, the ever-shifting landmarks and a few rogue mailboxes – because her husband no longer could. Nonna, who offered her shoulder to Pop Pop so that he could stand and walk with dignity. Who lost her husband, then her siblings, and then her son. But who, despite all that, never lost love for those around her.*

*That love was constant. As constant as Swiss cheese. That love was Nonna: a woman who got tougher and tougher on the outside...because that's just what it took to survive.*

*- Joseph Lezza*

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**Joseph Lezza** - October 31, 2021 at 09:35 PM

“NONNA’S EULOGY  
by, Melissa Cicero

*Nonna was the pillar of our family, the matriarch, the glimpse into our ancestry, the link to our heritage. The woman whose Italian blood, full of compassion, generosity, almighty stubbornness, and above all, endless love, flows through every one of us. It flows through our veins and tethers us to her; she’s in a better place, but she is never far from our hearts.*

*I remember her and Pop-pop’s home in Toms River. I remember us stopping at the local market to pick up some dessert to share with her over a cup of coffee, only for her to raid her freezer for the cookies she’d been saving for us all the while.*

*I remember her slipping money into our hands as we said goodbye for the night, her wagging a finger at us in warning, to keep it a secret from our parents. And to remember that we were never sick, we were just in love. That Italian mischievousness knew no bounds.*

*I remember gazing out the car window, her waving to us from her porch, never leaving the steps until our car was out of view.*

*Above all else, I recall her kindness. How her inquiries into our lives, every question on our day to day or our love lives, was really her asking if we were happy. She, who suffered so much heartbreak in her life wanted to make sure we were happy in ours; truly a selfless woman through and through.*

*Today is not a goodbye. Right Nonna? It is a “see you later”. A “take care for now” for we will meet again some day.*

*It’s a thank you. A thank you for being a part of our lives and blessing us with the abundance of your love; for the laughs we’ve shared and the memories you gifted us.*

*Though you have since left this earth, you will never leave our hearts. The love you have gifted us all these years will forever remain within us, spreading warmth in an everlasting embrace.*

*Our memories of you will be cherished, your life forever engraved on our hearts. May you rest peacefully now. We love you Nonna.*

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**Melissa Cicero** - October 30, 2021 at 10:09 AM

MD

“ My Dear Mom 🌹

*I want to thank you, my dear Mom, for your love and unwavering loyalty.*

*Your love of your entire family was sealed for eternity*

*Life is full of happiness but also tears.*

*But you helped me to be strong and brave*

*I will try to continue to walk the road you have paved*

*Your proud words:*

*“Maryanne, good job on the Fritelli”*

*or “You made my cookies!?”*

*Will always lift my spirit whenever I feel doubtful of my abilities.*

*You were a loving “Nonna” to all my girls...that’s so true*

*Your love and joy was even greater when your great-grandchildren endearingly called you “Nonna Coo-coo”.*

*You worked hard all your life, so strong were your hands*

*Even through pain,*

*I was amazed how much you were able to withstand,*

*All without a word of complain.*

*Because you were doing all from love,*

*That faith, strength and love comes from the Lord above.*

*Though it’s never long enough,*

*I will always cherish our time together.*

*And I will love you, my dear Mom,*

*Forever and ever.*

*Rest In Peace Mom*

*with Daddy and Joey*

*One day we’ll be together again*

*because real LOVE never dies...*

*it goes on for Infinity. ❤️🌹*

*Your loving daughter, Maryanne and Family*

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**Maryanne, Daughter** - October 24, 2021 at 11:55 AM

YB

“*Mom, we will miss you beyond words. You were the hardest working woman and loving Mother and Nonna. From working hard in the coat factories to help support the family to learning to drive at the age of 60 so that you could take Daddy to his doctor appointments because you didn't want to burden us to always being the first to help with anything anyone of us needed, and always sending us home with a care package filled with all kinds of food.*

*You have taught us by example to always be your best and that family always comes first. You lived a life filled with both joy and hardships. During those joyful times, you were always cooking, making your famous cookies, going to Atlantic City, watching soccer but mostly you always wanted to be around family. When you had to deal with hardships, you always tried to be strong on the outside, yet crying on the inside. You tried to hide your hurt because you didn't want us to see your pain. You have left an impact on everyone you left behind. Each of us has special memories of you, all unique to our own hearts.*

*Your legacy will be with us forever. What you have taught us all is priceless.*

*For the past 2 weeks, you kept asking when am I going home.*

*You're home now Mom, with Daddy and Joey, La Non, U Non, and your brother and sisters. Our love and memories, of you, will live in our hearts forever.*

*May you rest in eternal peace and watch over us.*

*Love always,*

*Bernadette, Jimmy, James, Brian, Jessica, Marta, and Taylor*

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**Your daughter Bernadette** - October 24, 2021 at 09:24 AM

MM

“ Dear Mary Ann and Family,  
Please accept our deepest sympathy on the loss of your dear Mom. It doesn't matter how old they are it hurts the same. You go through every emotion when this happens. You want them to stay but go at the same time, so they are at peace. You and your family were always there for her. Knowing that she is in God's loving arms should give you some comfort. In our prayers.

Love

Greg and Marie Mullery

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Marie Mullery - October 23, 2021 at 04:38 PM

KC

“ Dear Cicero Family,

Please accept our condolences on the passing of your beloved Mother and Grandmother Mary. Mary Ann you can take comfort in knowing that you took wonderful care of her when she needed you the most. You are all in our prayers.

Love

Ronald and Kathleen Carrier

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Kathleen Carrier - October 23, 2021 at 04:28 PM