



## Nattie M. Mondragon

October 20, 1932 - October 1, 2022

The Spiritual Legacy of Our Dear Mother, Nattie Mary Mondragón, Child of God and Faithful Soldier of Christ

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Today, October 20, 2022, on the 90th birthday of Nattie M. Mondragón, I am here to give testimony of our Mother's spiritual life of faith, hope and charity. I am the eldest. My name is Maria and along with my two sisters, Mercedes and Marguerite we we're given the privilege to assist Mom, in her dying into new life. In mom's last days, we believe that we received many graces and wish to share some of the fruitful insights that we received from this experience. It is our hope that in sharing these insights that you will receive comfort.

Our Mother's faith was being formed before she was born. The fertile soil of her family foundation in Mexico, being forced to seek the freedom to practice their Catholic faith, led our grandparents to leave their small villages under the persecution of the Mexican government upon the Catholic Church in the 1920's. They came to the United States legally with documentation; to later become citizens of this country. They worked hard, for a time as migrant farmworkers and later at the steel mills of Chicago. Our Mom was born at Mother Francis Cabrini Hospital into a multi-ethnic neighborhood that was

united by each group's strong Catholic faith.

Mom's parents gave her the gift of receiving her sacraments and enriched by the strong Catholic customs of the Mexican culture, a love for Jesus, Mary, and the Saints. Mom's faith was nurtured with the prayers of her parents and extended family; particularly, her Tía Serafina Sordia, who helped raise our Mom and her brother John in their teen years. Mom went to Catechism, at a time when Catholic students were dismissed early from public school, to attend faith formation classes at her parish St. Kevin's, in South Deering, Chicago. IL.

As Mom grew up and graduated from Bowen High School, she had hoped one day to have a large family of her own. Our Mom and Dad were childhood friends; and both families aspired with God's providential hand, that they would marry; and eventually did - on June 4th, 1955 on the 25th wedding anniversary of Dad's parents. Our Mom likes to tell of how she prayed to the Blessed Mother on her wedding day. She brought her wedding bouquet to the Virgin Mary requesting for the gift of many children. She was pro-life.

Well, our Mom had eight children, and she called each one of us her blessings. We are Raul Jr., who was a stillbirth at 7 months; me, Maria, then; Martin, Marguerite, Michael, Michelle, Mercedes and her "bonus" Linda. Linda always appreciated our Mom expressing to her that she was especially loved and wanted by the entire family; during a time when the culture was beginning to have its negative influence from Roe vs. Wade and the overpopulation myths.

Mom and Dad wanted their home in California within walking distance of a Catholic Church, as a priority in their life. God blessed their search with a home across the street from the Church of the Visitation Catholic Parish in Westchester, a suburb of Los Angeles, five miles North of the LAX. This

beautiful, traditional Catholic Parish became the heart of Mom's teaching us our Faith with the help of the charisms of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Mom always said, "if we ever got lost, to look up toward the church steeple and follow it safely home," a meaningful metaphor for us to ponder today.

Mom and Dad sent us all to Catholic School at a sacrifice. Mom intentionally wanted, to have us in an educational environment that would envelop us with our "Catholic Faith throughout the day," as she tells it. Mom was very involved with the support of the school and parish, where she made many lifelong, faith-filled friends. Our parish and school were the center of our family's life. On Wednesdays, Mom made a weekly effort to attend the evening of Eucharistic Adoration and Benediction- praying for spiritual sustenance, to help raise her family. This was her hope. Mom purchased saint books for us to read from the church gift shop and we never missed mass ever- growing up. We made all of our sacraments at the appropriate time. Mom hoped that in giving her children a Rock-solid Catholic foundation would help us sustain a strong devotion to Our Lord Jesus, Mary and the Saints as practicing Catholics throughout our entire lives.

Mom's daily prayer time with God gave her the extra energy to share her talents with others. Mom was motivated by our pastor, Monsignor Thomas O'Sullivan's preaching on, "What will you leave your children?" pointing to giving them the inheritance of a robust Catholic Faith. Mom answered God's call to become a Catechist- which she faithfully kept up for several different parishes throughout 40 years. It was Mom, who also mentored me into becoming a Catechist, which later led to my missionary work as a public school teacher.

Mom's faith was tried throughout many parts of her life: the death of her father at age 9, the loss of a mother, sister, brother, a first-born child, and her

spouse. Throughout it all, she relied on her faith and her trust in God for help. At a low point in Mom's life, she was particularly despondent and challenged - dealing with anger and depression. As she tells it, "I cried out to God one night. You made me. Tell me what to do!" God answered her cry. As she always retold this turning point, "God told me to pray, fast and give alms." And mom did. She empowered herself with the Word of God, Bible study, read many more books written by and about Saints, prayed and fasted to save the souls of loved ones and even gave more money away to the missions: the Propagation of the Faith, Passionists and the Salesians, to name a few.

It was during this time, Mom discovered the power of intercessory prayer and intercessory suffering. Our world says to, (pardon the expression), "suck it up!", but our Catholic Faith and Traditions say to, "offer up your sufferings and unite them to the Crucified Christ on the Cross" for the salvation of souls. This is what Mom did for the remaining years of her life. Mom was very concerned for loved ones and friends. Mom intentionally offered up all of her sufferings on her deathbed to save these souls from being lost to hell. This was Mom's mission now.

Mom was very persistent with her Spiritual Works of Mercy with the intention to save souls. She would talk to people about God often. At times, her words fell upon ambivalent ears and at other times inspired souls to start again. Either way, she persisted to share about God in all that she did with family or parish ministries such as St. Vincent de Paul, Faith Formation or Young Ladies Institute. In her letters to family and friends, she would always include something special. Perhaps a spiritual booklet or a holy card about God along with a loving handwritten letter. Her most recent project was a Guardian Angel card that she made to remind others about their Guardian Angel. Mom even made crafts to sell at craft fairs that included a heavenly reminder, too. Her "JOY" fan or magnet, for example, was an inspiration given to her from a retreat that she creatively shared. Mom had said that, "true 'JOY' comes when

we serve: Jesus first, Others second, and You last. JOY. Jesus, Others You.”

Mom's last home was with me and was dedicated to Our Lady: we signed the contract to build the home on December 12th, the feast of La Virgen de Guadalupe; we had escrow close on August 15th, the Solemnity of Our Lady of the Assumption, and then, we had our house blessed on December 8th the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception. Every room in the house is dedicated to some heavenly reminder. Our front parlor is dedicated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, which is enthroned there. It was mom's favorite room to say her prayers. It was in this room, that mom had her last days gazing upon the image of the face of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, along with, as she put it, “the relatives.” One of the relatives was a photograph of her favorite saint, St. Therese of the Child Jesus and Holy Face.

In her later years, mom lived a life of untold suffering. Mom didn't like to talk about her aches and pains, but I observed, as she later did tell me, that she, “was always in pain.” Mom never liked to take adult doses of medications: for example, Tylenol, it was always the least dose that she preferred to get by. Mom refused opioid painkillers for dental work saying she, “didn't feel pain.” Mom even waited until her gallbladder burst to have it removed. The doctor asked her, “didn't you feel any pain?” Mom replied, “no, but there was a little bulge on my abdomen.” That was Mom, and all of her disciplined suffering prepared her for her final hours at death. When told of prayer needs, Mom made an intentional, concerted effort to offer even more suffering for the benefit of other souls too, during her last days. This was mom running for the prize!

About two weeks prior to Mom's death, Mom shared a worn and marked publication folder about suffering. Mom explained and prayed about the gift of suffering to Marguerite and I and concluded with praying the Memorare Prayer together.

Assisting Mom in her death opened to us, “the fragrance of the Gospels about our Lord's suffering” writes St Therese. We were three sisters, like the three apostles at Mount Tabor to witness Mom’s transfiguring into new life. We were like the three keeping company beneath Mom’s cross as she suffered. Our Mom's death progressed over two weeks: a slow decline, a brief hospital stay, and during her own Passion week, hospice.

While in the hospital, although weak, Mom managed joyful FaceTime visits or phone calls to many family members, for we were told mom was very ill. The exhaustion of the calls gave her a rapid breathing pattern. When Mom was asked to try to slow down her breathing, she replied, “I can't - I'm running!” The scriptures from Saint Paul, “burned in our hearts” (St. Luke 24:32). “Run, then, in such a way as to win the prize.” (1 Cor 9:24) and our Mom was running to win the prize! Later, Mom vocalized her own self-motivation, “Lady, there's no turning back!”

Mom decided she no longer wanted to be probed or resuscitated so we brought her home for hospice care and prepared the Sacred Heart Parlor room. There, Mom began her own Passion Week. Up until Wednesday, we had hoped that she would get better, but by Thursday, pain and sleep overcame her for periods of time - we never left her side and witnessed our Mother’s struggling like a babe, to be reborn to new life.

Mom entered into her Good Friday too. from 10-11:30pm. Mom fearfully anguished, as we held her hands and sang the Divine Mercy Chaplet and prayed the Rosary in between hymns until she fell back into an exhaustive rest, and on her lips whispering, “mercy, mercy” – (and she was not calling out to my sister, Mercedes). We reflected upon Our Lord’s death upon the Cross. Jesus had anguished, crying out, “My God, My God, why have you

abandoned me?” (St. Matthew 27: 46). St. Therese writes about how the Lord hid himself from her in darkness and that she had to persevere to trust in God that He is still present. St. Therese also suffered in the last weeks of September until her death on September 30th. Our Mom was following St. Therese’s lead. Mom thirsted too, without verbalizing, under her oxygen mask. We were able to swab her mouth with mini sponges on a stick, which we recalled was like Our Lord’s call for, “I Thirst” (John 19:28) and instead, “and taking a sponge, he filled it with sour wine and put it on a reed, and gave Him a drink” (St. Matthew 27: 48).

“My soul waits for the Lord, as a sentinel waits for the dawn.” (Psalm 130:6) At dawn at 6:52am, on the First Saturday of the month, October 1st, a day dedicated to Our Lady of the Holy Rosary, our Mom breathed her last breath on Earth. Mom’s “Strife was O’er, and the Battle Won!”

As we opened the front door to let in the morning air, we noticed an abundance of new budding roses, where ten days previously the rose leaves had become as brittle as potato chips from the heat. St. Therese, the Little Flower, had sent a “shower of roses” as Mom made her way to the Eternal light on the feast day of her favorite saint: St. Therese of the Child Jesus and Holy Face.

St. Therese writes, to “never give up an opportunity to offer a suffering for others with love.” Mom didn’t waste a moment or a suffering! We await many more revelations from her gift of suffering for others and anticipate God’s mercy for those intentions. We mourn the loss of our Mother and we truly have much to be grateful for because Mom gave us such a rich spiritual inheritance by the example of her life and as she strove to always live out her Catholic Faith: in faith, hope and charity– “the greatest of these being charity” (1 Cor 13:13), charity, another word for love.



# Cemetery Details

## Turlock Memorial Park

575 N. Soderquist Rd.  
Turlock, CA 95380  
(209) 632-9111  
<http://turlockmemorialpark.com>

# Previous Events

## Visitation

OCT **20**. 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM (PT)

Turlock Funeral Home  
425 North Soderquist Road  
Turlock, CA 95381  
(209) 632-9111  
<https://turlockfuneralhome.com>

## Recitation of the Rosary

OCT **20**. 12:30 PM - 1:00 PM (PT)

Sacred Heart Catholic Church  
1200 Lyons Ave  
Turlock, CA 95380  
(209) 634-8578

## **Funeral Mass**

OCT **20**. 1:00 PM (PT)

Sacred Heart Catholic Church  
1200 Lyons Ave  
Turlock, CA 95380  
(209) 634-8578

## **Interment Following Funeral Mass**

OCT **20**. 2:00 PM (PT)

Turlock Memorial Park  
575 N Soderquist Rd  
Turlock, CA 95380-3749  
(209) 632-9111

# Tribute Wall



“ *Turlock Funeral Home created a Webcast in memory of Nattie M. Mondragon*



---

**TURLOCK FUNERAL HOME** - October 20, 2022 at 11:31 AM



“ *Nattie M. Mondragon*

---

January 28, 2023 at 09:01 AM



“ *I hope that the Lord brings our Mondragon family the much needed Peace during this sad . Most heartfelt condolences to family and friends. Deem, I will never forget your kindness!*  
*Gaetane & Michael Butcher*

---

**Gaetane Butcher** - October 18, 2022 at 10:17 AM



“ *Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Nattie M. Mondragon.*



---

October 18, 2022 at 08:28 AM



“ *Reflections of Glory Wreath was purchased for the family of Nattie M. Mondragon.*



October 18, 2022 at 12:04 AM



“ *Days of Sunshine Bouquet was purchased for the family of Nattie M. Mondragon.*



October 17, 2022 at 08:21 PM

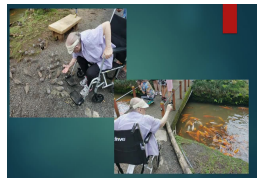


“ *You mom and always talked about running away from home. We were going to meet somewhere between California and Chicago. We never did, but on days when you wonderful children were especially naughty. We were both very tempted. Love all of you.  
Aunt Virg*

**Virginia Mondragon** - October 16, 2022 at 08:53 PM



“ *1 file added to the album Memorial Video*



**Delaney** - October 14, 2022 at 12:27 PM



*Love seeing you mom in so many different stages of her life. So sorry I can not be with all of you. Aunt Virg.*

---

**Virginia Mondragon** - October 17, 2022 at 12:48 AM