



Helena Rowe Frey

April 11, 1934 - June 30, 2025

Helena Rowe Frey

Died peacefully on Monday June 30, 2025, while residing at Schenley Gardens Memory Care Unit, one of the Vincentian communities. She had previously resided in the Pittsburgh Bloomfield neighborhood. She was born April 11, 1934 as Antoinette Rowe Omar and celebrated her 91st birthday this year.

She began life in Portland, Maine. She is predeceased by her father, Walter Ivory Omar and her mother, Helen Johnston Gow Omar as well as her younger sister, Emily Omar. She also had an older half-brother, Stanley Gow.

As a child, Helena lived in Maine, New Hampshire and New Jersey before moving to Hilo, Hawaii where she experienced a tsunami in 1946 which was a story she enjoyed sharing. She moved to San Francisco with her mother and sister as a teen in 1950 and attended high school and culinary school at San Francisco City College. She married Ernest Frey in 1957 eventually moving to Detroit Michigan where her children grew up. She is survived by her four children ("The best thing that ever happened to me"): Roberta (Gerard) Gilboe of Royal Oak, Michigan; Eric (Regina) Frey of Pittsburgh, PA; Lewis (Barbara) Frey of St. Louis, Missouri and Daniel (Edwina) Frey of Peekskill, N.Y. Following her divorce and a name change, she remained single and moved to

Pittsburgh in the 1980s. She was active in the Catholic social justice movement as a secretary and member of the Thomas Merton Center and was proud to be arrested during a peaceful protest of nuclear proliferation. Throughout her life, she was an early adopter of living a healthy lifestyle, always walking (she didn't own a car), juicing and eating organically before it was fashionable or easy to do. She was a member of several food coops and part of a chemically sensitive support group.

She was a secretary in several organizations including for the Detroit Roman Catholic Diocese and retired from the Biology Department at Carnegie Mellon University. In her retirement, she was a Mercy affiliate, participated in the Scribe program of Oasis, and the Race and Reconciliation ministry of St. Paul's Cathedral where she was a parishioner for many years.

She was a fun-loving grandma to Regis (Dilara), Ian (Colleen) and Joshua Frey, always interested in their lives and is also survived by 2 great grandchildren, Ada Anders and Riley Ender Frey.

As a family, we are thankful for the care she has received this past 15 months from the compassionate staff at Vincentian Schenley Gardens. Our goals for her to be safe and happy were well met there.

In lieu of flowers, we suggest donations be made in Helena's name to one of the following charities: East End Cooperative Ministry, Vincentian Schenley Gardens or the Thomas Merton Center.

A Mass Of Christian Burial will be held on Monday, July 7, at 10am, at St. Jude Parish, Sacred Heart Church, 310 Shady Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15206. Interment at Calvary Catholic Cemetery to follow.

Professional services trusted to D'ALESSANDRO FUNERAL HOME &

CREMATORY LTD., Lawrenceville. www.dalessandro.com.

Previous Events

Mass

JUL 7. 10:00 AM (ET)

Sacred Heart Church
310 Shady Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15206

Graveside Service

JUL 7. 11:00 AM (ET)

Calvary Catholic Cemetery
718 Hazelwood Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15217

Tribute Wall

BH

“ *BRYAN HOWELL lit a candle in memory of
Helena Rowe Frey* ”



BRYAN HOWELL - July 03, 2025 at 10:59 AM