

## *Temporary*

Your tears may fall like rain, now that I am gone.  
At times, you may dream of me  
or miss me with every dawn.  
You may hear a whisper of a memory  
that reminds you of a time,  
Where things were less complicated  
and a laugh was not a cry.

I want you to continue to be  
more than what I ever could be.  
You have made me so proud to call you  
my beautiful family.  
The love we shared is eternal, forever, and true.  
Continue to put God first in everything you do.

I want you to find comfort in knowing I am free  
From all the pain I felt and any misery.  
It will take time for understanding  
of the reasons, of the why.  
You don't have to be strong, it's ok for you to cry.

You may still hear my laughter  
and feel my presence close.  
Hold onto the memories  
and reminisce when needed most.  
You can still talk to me, my reply may be a breeze.  
Just open up your heart, I don't need a key.

The sun is setting on me, allow yourself to mourn.  
Our time we knew was limited,  
this we knew for sure.  
All the memories created  
were the best I've ever known.  
This isn't goodbye but Heaven is now my home.

By Mario Johnson

## *Acknowledgment*

We deeply appreciate the prayers, phone calls,  
text messages, visits, and many other acts of  
kindness shown during this difficult time.  
Thank you for your love and support.

# In Loving

# *Memory of*



# *Sonia* *Noemi Rios Baez*

May 6, 1960 - July 15, 2023

# Obituary

Sonia Noemi Rios Baez, 63, passed away in her home in Fayetteville, NC on Saturday, July 15, 2023. She bravely fought a hard battle against cancer and never gave up hope. Her family is deeply grateful for how long she held on and for the additional memories they shared with her because of her immense strength and courage.

Sonia was born on May 6, 1960 in Ponce, Puerto Rico to the late Dionicio Baez and Sixta Maldonado. She spent most of her childhood in Puerto Rico with her beloved maternal grandmother Natividad "Nati" Maldonado, but she also spent part of her youth in New York.

In her mid-teens, Sonia met the love of her life, Nestor. He eventually wooed her with snow cones he sold in their neighborhood. Five years later, Sonia and Nestor married and started a family. Through Nestor's military service, they lived in Germany, Texas, and Illinois.

Besides creating a loving, supportive home for her husband and children, Sonia worked at the local Golden Corral restaurant in the prep and bakery departments. In her youth, she enjoyed performing gymnastics, going to salsa parties, and playing cards & dominoes. She was everyone's cheerleader, and she openly embraced any opportunity to make a friend. Her favorite pastimes included going to the beach, watching reality TV competitions, listening to R&B/soul and pop music, cuddling with her jackweenie dog Sky, and spending time with her loved ones. She especially enjoyed weekly family game nights.

In addition to her husband Nestor and mother Sixta, Sonia is survived by her daughter Cynthia; son Nestor Jr. and his son with Terri: Ricky; son John and his daughters with Alicia: Alena and Aliya; sister Miriam Baez; brother Jose Baez; honorary sons Mario Johnson, Shawn Farmer, and Sharell Farmer; and a host of cherished extended family & dear friends. She is preceded in death by her grandfather Natalio Maldonado, her grandmother Nati, her brother Danny Baez, her best friends Nora Johnson and Brenda "BJ" Johnson, and other adored family & friends.

## Order of Service

Words of Welcome

Prayer of Comfort

Reading of Scripture:  
2 Corinthians 4:16-18

Eulogy/Life Tribute

Musical Reflection:  
"Footprints in the Sand"  
by Leona Lewis

Reading of Obituary

Poem: "Temporary"  
by Mario Johnson

Condolences & Tributes

Acknowledgments

Closing

*Service led by  
Pastor Keith Bagwell*

Sullivan's Highland Funeral  
Service & Crematory  
610 Ramsey St.  
Fayetteville, NC 28301  
July 21, 2023

