



Mary Ann (Norman) Wilkowske was born March 21, 1943, in Willmar, Minnesota, the daughter of Lester and Dorothy (Kelly) Norman. She grew up in Willmar, graduated from Willmar High School in 1961, and attended St. Cloud State University earning a bachelor's degree in Education.

Mary began her teaching career in White Bear Lake and met her husband, Doug. They were married July 25, 1970. In 1974, they moved to Willmar. Mary substitute taught and later became a Title 1 Teacher, tutor in area group homes and a teacher of English

Language Learners all while raising two accomplished sons. After retiring from teaching in 1999, she became a successful sales representative for Jostens.

Mary loved life and fought hard to live it. After surviving cancer in 2004, she lived to meet and love each of her four grandchildren. Each of them enjoyed a special relationship with their Grammie and shared hundreds (maybe thousands) of bedtime stories and special moments (and secrets). This is a great blessing.

Mary treasured every moment with her family. She kept the family in green for St. Patrick's Day and went (only slightly?) overboard each Christmas. We have Santa Bears to prove it. She loved playing games (even LIFE), watching movies, looking through EVERY piece of school work and hearing every last detail of the recent happenings – choir concerts, sporting events, work trips – you get the idea.

She invested in her community as a Barn Theatre board member (and presence on the stage), and as a member of the Willmar Arts Council and the Church of St. Mary. Her work with English Language Learners created lasting friendships and broad understanding and commitment to human potential, especially EVERY child's potential to learn and succeed.

She reveled in time with her friends (Cheers!). Her friends spanned generations, backgrounds, and walks of life. Whether shopping or lunching, sipping a G&T (in a tall glass) or just catching up over the phone, they kept her going and stood by her – always.

She enjoyed music, art, theater and a good laugh. She was witty, sharp and opinionated and had a great sense of style. She knew how to have fun AND make a difference. She was a gift to all who knew her.

She is survived by husband, Doug; sons, Chris (and Hannah) Wilkowske of Moab, Utah, and Andy Wilkowske (and Erika Taibl) of St. Paul; grandchildren, Magdalena, Ingeborg, Annika and Jack; one sister, Patty Radabaugh of Willmar, and many relatives and friends who already miss her.

She was preceded in death by her parents and siblings, David Norman and Barbie Norman Colburn.



# *Celebrating the Life of*



## *Mary Ann Wilkowske*

*1943 - 2023*



## *Old Irish Blessing*

*May the road rise up to meet you,  
may the wind be always at your back,  
May the sun shine warm upon your face,  
the rain fall soft upon your fields.  
And until we meet again,  
may God hold you  
in the palm of his hand.*



In Loving Memory Of

# *Mary Ann Wilkowske*

March 21, 1943

Willmar, Minnesota

February 15, 2023

Willmar, Minnesota

### **Mass of Christian Burial**

Monday, February 20, 2023 - 11:00 a.m.

Church of St. Mary

Willmar, Minnesota

### **Celebrant**

Fr. Steve Verhelst

### **Music**

Pianist & Cantor: Tim Cayler

St. Mary's Resurrection Choir

Gathering Song: *Gather Us In*

Responsorial Psalm: *Psalms 122 – I Rejoiced*

Preparation of the Gifts: *Ave Maria* – solo by Tim Cayler

Communion Song: *The Servant Song*

Post Communion Song: *The Burning Cry*

Song of Farewell: *The Hand of God Shall Hold You*

Final Blessing: *Old Irish Blessing* – solo by Tim Cayler

Going Forth: *Blest Are They*

### **Interment**

St. Mary's Catholic Cemetery

Willmar, Minnesota