



## Clarita Opiela

March 4, 1942 - November 5, 2021

Clarita Opiela, loving wife, survived by her husband Thomas. Dear daughter of Lázaro and Maria Velez (deceased), Clarita was born in Fundación, Colombia on March 4, 1942. She is survived by her dear sisters Nelly, Maria and Luchy. Much loved by her brother-in-law Victor Lopez and her sisters-in-law Carol Opiela and Estilita, Conchita and Gladys Vélez. She was adored by her deceased siblings: Alberto Hugo, Fanny, Ruth, Amparito, Antonio and Lázaro Rafael. All of her nephews and great-nephews enjoyed her great love and care.

Clarita was born in Fundación, Colombia. She moved to Medellín, Colombia to continue her studies, later she began her working career in Barranquilla, Colombia.

In 1971 she moved to the United States. In the spring of 1974, in the city of Chicago, she met the love of her life Thomas Opiela. They were married on May 22, 1976 at St. Peter's Catholic Church in Skokie, Illinois. During their first 25 years together, they lived in Illinois, first in Niles, then in 1979 settled in Buffalo Grove until retirement. In December 2004 they retired and moved to Saint Augustine, Florida. This past May, they joyfully celebrated their 45th anniversary.

Clarita had a long career in the pharmaceutical industry. She rode the pharmaceutical merger train with the companies: Baxter, G.D.Searle,

Monsanto, Pharmacia, and Phizer. She worked in accounting and label approval, in coordination with several countries in Spanish, Portuguese and English.

Being active for many years, she decided to slow down just a bit by volunteering at the Church Office a few days a week. She continued to walk 40 to 60 minutes 5 days a week starting at day-break.

Caly, as we called her, was a beautiful person, a great human being and a wonderful aunt. All of her nephews enjoyed the care and love that she always inspired; she always remembered every family member's birthday (and there are many). She was a very spiritual person, involved in different church activities and was characterized by the gift of helping her family and friends.

We appreciate your expressions of affection during these difficult times for our family.

Clarita (Aunt Caly) you will always be in our hearts!

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Clarita Opiela, amorosa esposa, le sobrevive su esposo Thomas. Querida hija de Lázaro y MariVelez (fallecidos), Clarita nació en Fundación, Colombia en el 4 de Marzo, 1942. Le sobreviven sus queridas hermanas Nelly, Maria y Luchy. Muy querida por su cuñado Victor Lopez y por sus cuñadas Carol Opiela y Estilita, Conchita y Gladys Vélez. Fue adorada por sus hermanos fallecidos: Alberto Hugo, Fanny, Ruth, Amparito, Antonio y Lázaro Rafael. Todos sus sobrinos y sobrinos nietos gozaron de su gran amor y cuidado. Clarita nació en Fundación, Colombia, se trasladó a Medellín, Colombia a continuar sus estudios, posteriormente inició su carrera laboral en Barranquilla, Colombia.

En el año 1971 viajó a los Estados Unidos. En la primavera de 1974, en la ciudad de Chicago, conoció al amor de su vida Thomas Opiela. Se casaron el

22 de mayo de 1976 en la Iglesia Católica de San Pedro en Skokie, Illinois. Durante sus primeros 25 años juntos, vivieron en Illinois, primero en Niles y desde el año 1979 permanecieron en Buffalo Grove. En Diciembre de 2004 se jubilaron y se trasladaron a Saint Augustine, Florida. Este año celebraron sus 45 aniversario de un matrimonio feliz.

Clarita tuvo una larga carrera en la industria farmacéutica. Viajó en el tren de la fusión farmacéutica con las empresas: Baxter, G.D.Searle, Monsanto, Pharmacia y Phizer. Trabajó en contabilidad y aprobación final de etiquetas, en coordinación con varios países en Español, Portugués e Inglés.

Siendo activa durante muchos años, solo decidió reducir un poco la velocidad ofreciéndose como voluntaria en la Oficina de la Iglesia unos días a la semana. Siguió caminando de 40 a 60 minutos 5 días a la semana desde el amanecer.

Caly, como le decíamos, fue una bella persona, gran ser humano y una maravillosa tía. Todos sus sobrinos disfrutaron del cuidado y amor que ella siempre inspiró; siempre recordó la fecha de cumpleaños de todos los miembros de la familia. Fue una persona muy espiritual, involucrada en diferentes actividades de la iglesia y se caracterizó por el don de ayuda a su familia y amigos.

Agradecemos sus expresiones de cariño durante estos difíciles momentos para nuestra familia.

Clarita (Tía Caly) siempre estarás en nuestros corazones!

# Previous Events

## Memorial Mass

NOV **19**. 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM (ET)

San Sebastian Catholic Church

1112 FL-16

St. Augustine, FL 32084

(904) 824-6625

# Tribute Wall



“ *St. Johns Family Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of Clarita Opiela*



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**St. Johns Family Funeral Home** - November 16, 2021 at 01:27 PM

CV

*Thank you Tom because Caly was a happy wife for over 45 years. Missing her.*

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**Conchita Velez** - November 18, 2021 at 10:37 PM



“ *Enchanted Cottage was purchased for the family of Clarita Opiela.*



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November 18, 2021 at 11:03 PM

CV

“ *My dear Tom, you know how special Clarita was in our life and we will miss her always. I know it will not be easy for you but remember that our Heavenly Father is there to help you (Isaiah 41:10) . We love you,  
Conchita*

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**Conchita Vélez** - November 18, 2021 at 10:07 AM



“ 1 file added to the album *Life Tributes*



**St. Johns Family Funeral Home** - November 17, 2021 at 03:14 PM



“ Conchita, Veronica, Sandy and Shaun purchased the *Lovely One Spathiphyllum Plant* for the family of *Clarita Opiela*.



**Conchita, Veronica, Sandy and Shaun** - November 15, 2021 at 11:06 PM



“ *Tom Opiela and Family Velez*  
*Our deepest Sympathy and our thoughts and prayers are with you in this difficult time.*  
*Receive our love.* 🙏

**Martha Salebe** - November 14, 2021 at 12:14 PM



“ *Martha Salebe sent a virtual gift in memory of Clarita Opiela*



**Martha Salebe** - November 14, 2021 at 11:58 AM



“ 2 files added to the album *Life Tributes*



St. Johns Family Funeral Home - November 13, 2021 at 04:48 PM



“ 58 files added to the album *Life Tributes*



St. Johns Family Funeral Home - November 13, 2021 at 02:57 PM



“ *Kelley and Heather purchased the Serene Retreat for the family of Clarita Opiela.*



Kelley and Heather - November 13, 2021 at 01:22 PM

HE

“ Our most loved Aunt Clarita, I will always remember your kindness and generosity of heart, your beautiful hands, and that sparkle in your eye that revealed the sassiness and fire you carried so gracefully within you.



You will be so missed. You graced us with your life and love, and for that I will always be grateful.

I love you, Aunt Clarita. May you be in peace.

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Heather - November 13, 2021 at 12:45 PM

KM

“ My Aunt Clarita was always so kind. So gentle. And really funny. I have memories of spending time in Chicago at her house. I'm so grateful I spent a week in St. Augustine and spent time with the family. My heart hurts that she has passed. She was a very loved woman. I wish I could be there at the memorial however I regretfully cannot make it. My prayers and thoughts are with my Uncle Tom and all her friends and family. ❤️

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Kelley Madden - November 12, 2021 at 08:54 PM



“ Cherished Memories was purchased for the family of Clarita Opiela.



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November 12, 2021 at 03:21 PM