



Joan D. Ottolenghi

July 3, 1934 - April 15, 2026

Joan Frances Farrell DeNezzo Ottolenghi passed away peacefully on April 15, 2026, at the age of 91.

Joan was born in Hartford, Connecticut in 1934. Her undergraduate years at McGill University in Montreal, Quebec, Canada, were among her happiest, especially her time camping and canoeing with the Outing Club. Later, while earning a master's degree in Roman History at The University of Pennsylvania, she met and married Abramo (Abe) Ottolenghi. Along with three young children, Joan and Abe moved to Worthington, Ohio, and had their fourth and final child. A life of education, community service, support of the arts, gardening, and family time in nature and through sports and creative pursuits followed. Joan and Abe celebrated their 68th wedding anniversary this year.

Known for her compassionate, joyful and gentle presence; deep Faith; love for family; belief in the good of others; happiness in nature and with children; and fierce passion for education, politics, social justice, and peace, Joan dedicated her personal and professional lives to championing others and working for

equal rights and equitable opportunities for all. She brought her love for learning and sharing, unending curiosity and creativity, and beliefs in "The Golden Rule" and being an active, positive community member to all that she did. Fueled by the infinite strength extended through the verse including, "With God all things are possible," Joan, a self-described shy introvert, attributed her courage to act on her relentless calling to serve others to her trust in God, and encouraged others to act despite their fears. Through her work as a co-founder of Sunshine Headstart preschool in an underserved area, decades of teaching foreign languages and mentoring students, years as a Girl Scout leader, nurturing "Grandparent" in her children's former elementary school, St. Vincent de Paul board member, and former member of the Newman Center, Joan will be remembered for the love, enthusiasm, giving nature and perseverance she demonstrated, even when recruiting others to serve alongside her.

Joan's family was a known source of great joy for her. Her gentle uplifting words, loving support, and quick dry wit, often accompanied by a sparkle in her eye and a playful twist to her smile, provided comfort, strength, and laughter to many. She is survived by her husband and fellow community partner, Dr. Abramo (Abe) Ottolenghi, and children, Carol Ottolenghi (Kevin), David Ottolenghi (Kim), and Gina Ottolenghi Saltz (Jim), and beloved grandchildren, great-grandchildren, nieces and nephews, and friends. Joan was preceded in death by her daughter, Diane Ottolenghi (Thomas), parents Frank and Katherine DeNezzo, and sister Mary Egan.

A family and friend visitation is scheduled for Rutherford-Corbin, 515 High St., Worthington, Ohio, on Thursday, May 14, from 6-8 p.m. A Catholic service will

be held on Saturday, May 16, from 2-3 p.m. at St. Josephine Bakhita, 6077 Sharon Woods Blvd., Columbus, Ohio.

In lieu of flowers, tax-deductible donations may be made to the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul, <https://ssvpusa.org/>

Cemetery Details

Walnut Grove Cemetery

5561 Milton Ave.
Worthington, OH 43085
(614) 885-5033

Previous Events

Visitation

MAY 14. 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Rutherford-Corbin Funeral Home
515 High Street
Worthington, OH 43085
(614) 885-4006
info@rutherfordfuneralhome.com
<https://www.rutherfordfuneralhomes.com/>

Tribute Wall

SA

“ Scott A. planted a grove of 3 [Memorial Trees](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Joan D. Ottolenghi.

Scott A. - May 12 at 11:51 PM

AT

“ Andrea Tomonaga sent a virtual gift in memory of Joan D. Ottolenghi



Andrea Tomonaga - May 06 at 10:58 AM

AT

Sweet and kind. I will treasure the time I spent with her 💕.

Andrea Tomonaga - May 06 at 11:03 AM

MD

“ Mary D. planted a grove of 3 [Memorial Trees](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Joan D. Ottolenghi.

Mary D. - April 30 at 03:07 PM

TH

“ *The Hepners lit a candle in memory of Joan D. Ottolenghi*



The Hepners - April 28 at 07:35 PM

DE

“ *Doug Irene Egan lit a candle in memory of Joan D. Ottolenghi*



doug irene egan - April 22 at 08:08 AM

GM

“ *G & J For Mamacita lit a candle in memory of Joan D. Ottolenghi*



G & J for Mamacita - April 21 at 09:23 PM

BF

“ *Barga Family lit a candle in memory of Joan D. Ottolenghi*



Barga Family - April 21 at 08:12 PM

MM

“Michelle McCarthy lit a candle in memory of Joan D. Ottolenghi



Michelle McCarthy - April 21 at 09:18 AM

MM

May dear Aunt Joan rest in eternal bliss in God's loving embrace. And may she know her beautiful light made a lasting mark on her Earthly family.

Michelle McCarthy - April 21 at 09:19 AM

RB

Joan was a treasure.

I will miss that “sparkle in her eye and that playful twist to her smile”.

My condolences to the Ottolenghi Family.

--Doug Barga

R. Douglas Barga - April 21 at 07:53 PM

SS

Joan was a student in several classes of mine at Ohio State University and was always a sweet, delightful presence. She loved to talk after class about the authors we were reading, and she also conveyed her interest in social activism. Over time, my wife and I also met her dear Abe, with whom we also shared many interests. We are deeply sorry, Abe, for the loss of your great partner. Also, to your children. She is deeply missed.

--Steve and Gail Summerhill, St. Augustine, Florida

Stephen Summerhill - April 22 at 04:24 PM

CA

“ Carol lit a candle in memory of Joan D.
Ottolenghi



carol - April 21 at 09:11 AM