



Maria Merlino Perkins

July 14, 1943 - April 4, 2026

Maria Merlino Perkins, 82, of Salisbury, North Carolina, passed away April 4, 2026, at her home.

Born July 14, 1943 in Burlington, New Jersey, she was the daughter of the late Joseph Merlino and Elizabeth Palombi Merlino. She was a member of the inaugural graduating class of Holy Cross High School in Delran NJ, graduating in 1961. She continued her education at Rowan-Cabarrus Community College where she earned an Associated Degree in Business Computers with a Certificate in Accounting. She had been employed at Sacred Heart Catholic School, where she was a teacher and creator of the first computer lab at the school, and also served as a Reliv Independent Nutritional Supplement Distributer.

In addition, she was a 50 plus year member of the American Association of Fertility Care Practitioners where she taught natural family planning and the Creighton Model Fertility Care System. Also served as a past president of the board of directors along with many executive committee assignments through the years.

Maria was a devoted member of Sacred Heart Catholic Church for 57 years where she was involved in numerous activities throughout the years. She was an extraordinary minister and lector, a longtime member of the Catholic Daughters where she served as regent, was a member of the Order of Dominicans, attended Cursillo and marriage encounter, while also being devoted to several prayer and bible study groups. In the community, she

served as a docent during October tour and at the Rowan Museum, was Girl Scout Troop leader for 23 years, was a member of the Italian Heritage Club and volunteered at the Piedmont Players Theater.

Along with her parents, Maria is preceded in death by her husband, Samuel Budd Perkins and granddaughter, Isabelle Perkins.

She is survived by four daughters, Charlene Sunding (Richard), Catherine Bone (Deron), Patricia Perkins and Maria Thomson (Jack); two sons, David Perkins (Hollie) and Christopher Perkins (Tora); eleven grandchildren, Clayton Sunding (Amber), Donovan Perkins (Kelly), Hannah Sunding, Morgan Stamps (Will), Benjamin Sunding, Ansley Bone, Cody Bone, Tristin Perkins, Trinity Perkins, Rylin Deacon and Jaedyn Deacon; four great-grandchildren, Jonah Rackley, CeCe Rackley, Micah Rackley, and Margaux Stamps; sister, Frances Doherty; brothers, Joseph Merlino (Patti), and Jimmy Merlino (Donna).

Maria was a devoted wife, beloved mother, cherished grandmother and great grandmother, fantastic big sister, loving relative and lifelong friend. If you knew Maria, you loved her. She was a devout catholic and always committed to Jesus and his mother Mary. Her favorite place on the planet was Fatima, Portugal where she enjoyed the time of her life over a couple pilgrimages. Prayer service will be held on Friday, April 10, 2026, at 6:00 PM with visitation following from 7:00-9:00PM at Summersett Funeral Home.

Funeral Mass will be held Saturday, April 11 at 11:00 AM at Sacred Heart Catholic Church with Father John Eckert officiating. Burial will follow in the church cemetery.

Memorials may be made to Sacred Heart Catholic Church 375 Lumen Christi Lane, Salisbury, NC 28147 and to Catholic Daughters, Court 1759, 375 Lumen Christi Lane, Salisbury, NC 28147.

Summersett Funeral Home is serving the Perkins family. Online condolences may be made at www.summersettfuneralhome.com.

Cemetery Details

Sacred Heart Catholic Church Cemetery

Salisbury, NC

Previous Events

Prayer Service

APR 10. 6:00 PM (ET)

Summersett Funeral Home
1315 W. Innes St.
Salisbury, NC 28144
(704) 633-2111
<https://www.summersettfuneralhome.com>

Visitation

APR 10. 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM (ET)

Summersett Funeral Home
1315 W. Innes St.
Salisbury, NC 28144
(704) 633-2111
<https://www.summersettfuneralhome.com>

Funeral Mass

APR 11. 11:00 AM (ET)

Sacred Heart Catholic Church
375 Lumen Christi Lane
Salisbury, NC 28144

Tribute Wall



“ *Summersett Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of Maria Merlino Perkins*



Summersett Funeral Home and Cremation Center - April 24 at 12:49 PM

PC

“ *Thoroughly enjoyed my friendship with Maria while studying at Holy Cross High School, Class of 1961. Indeed a wonderful person. My sympathies to all who knew and loved her.*

Pat Lajkowicz Conover - April 10 at 06:03 PM

RF

“ *Ronnie and family purchased the Serene Retreat for the family of Maria Merlino Perkins.*



Ronnie and family - April 10 at 01:54 PM

RF

“ *Ronnie and family planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Maria Merlino Perkins.*

Ronnie and family - April 10 at 01:54 PM



“ *Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Maria Merlino Perkins.*



April 10 at 10:10 AM



“ *My deepest condolences. May she rest in peace.*

Theresa Buccigrossi - April 10 at 09:52 AM



She was one of the sweetest girls in our class.

Geraldine krassner - April 25 at 09:55 PM



“ *Maria was a great inspiration to me. I had the honor of accompanying her through her Candidacy as she was discerning the Dominican Order. She was always cheerful, even as the study was often rigorous. Her pleasant and cheerful demeanor would brighten up a room. I count it a great privilege to have known her kind soul and to have been able to visit her one last time with Fr. Dimock. I pray for the peaceful repose of her soul, and I rest assured knowing she received incredible graces at the end of her life.*

Mr. Matthew W. Dimock, Sr. O.P. - April 10 at 09:31 AM

JR

“ Jason, Kristi, Shane & Ryker Ridgway purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Maria Merlino Perkins.



Jason, Kristi, Shane & Ryker Ridgway - April 09 at 08:29 PM

PR

“ Oh my gosh! I used to tell Maria that she was the most Catholic Catholic than anyone I knew! Thanks for the memories and just being you! ❤️❤️🙏🙏🙏 great neighbor time too: 1:



peggy Ricke - April 09 at 05:19 PM

AE

“ Andy, Jackie and Eric purchased the Blue Caribbean Bouquet for the family of Maria Merlino Perkins.



Andy, Jackie and Eric - April 09 at 02:30 PM

AJ

“ Andy, Jackie and Eric Jones purchased the Crystal Cross Bouquet for the family of Maria Merlino Perkins.



Andy, Jackie and Eric Jones - April 09 at 02:20 PM

AJ

“ Andy, Jackie and Eric Jones planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Maria Merlino Perkins.

Andy, Jackie and Eric Jones - April 09 at 02:20 PM

TA

“ Tom, Kim, Rob, Theron, Ashley, Bob, Adam purchased the Beautiful Heart Bouquet for the family of Maria Merlino Perkins.



Tom, Kim, Rob, Theron, Ashley, Bob, Adam - April 09 at 08:41 AM

CM

“ Prayers for All of the Family. Your Dad and Mom were very Special People. Working with your Dad at Granite Knitwear gave me the Pleasure of knowing your Mom also and your Family. May God give you Wonderful Memories! Hugs, Love and Prayers. Carol McCombs

Carol Sutton McCombs - April 09 at 08:07 AM

MP

“ Maudie P. purchased the Sweetest Sunrise Bouquet for the family of Maria Merlino Perkins.



Maudie P. - April 08 at 07:59 PM

MP

“ Maudie P. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Maria Merlino Perkins.

Maudie P. - April 08 at 07:59 PM

CC

“ Carolina Family Connections purchased the Full Of Love Bouquet for the family of Maria Merlino Perkins.



Carolina Family Connections - April 08 at 02:11 PM

LH

“ Luminaries of Sacred Heart purchased the Dawn of Remembrance Basket for the family of Maria Merlino Perkins.



Luminaries of Sacred Heart - April 08 at 01:20 PM

LH

“ Luminaries of Sacred Heart planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Maria Merlino Perkins.

Luminaries of Sacred Heart - April 08 at 01:20 PM

SH

“ *Seven Sisters Apostolate of Sacred Heart purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Maria Merlino Perkins.*



Seven Sisters Apostolate of Sacred Heart - April 08 at 12:59 PM

SH

“ *Seven Sisters Apostolate of Sacred Heart planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Maria Merlino Perkins.*

Seven Sisters Apostolate of Sacred Heart - April 08 at 12:59 PM

YS

“ *Your PERKINS brothers and sisters purchased the Rays of Light Spray for the family of Maria Merlino Perkins.*



Your PERKINS brothers and sisters - April 08 at 12:14 PM

YS

“ *Your PERKINS brothers and sisters planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Maria Merlino Perkins.*

Your PERKINS brothers and sisters - April 08 at 12:14 PM



“ Sentiments of Serenity Spray was purchased for the family of Maria Merlino Perkins.



April 08 at 09:56 AM



“ Medium Dish Garden was purchased for the family of Maria Merlino Perkins.



April 08 at 08:41 AM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Maria Merlino Perkins.

April 08 at 08:41 AM



“ With sincere sympathies we extend our heartfelt condolences and love to the entire Merlino and Perkins family...they were our first friends at Sacred Heart and we love your Mom so much...and you Dad...may they rest in God's peace always...Colette & Greg Miller

Colette - April 08 at 08:08 AM

MF

Marie, a special cousin with such kindness and faith. Growing up together was so special and I'm very grateful we had such a good conversation last week. May you rest with love & happiness with your family gone before you. Thank you for your love toward everyone. May your family be guided and feel the strength of your love. We will meet again; love to all the relatives there for you. Thank you Marie for coming to Destin with family few years ago. Until we reunite, Love & much peace to you; you are deeply missed. Love, cousin Cathy ❤️🙏

Marie's Cousin Cathy from Florida - April 08 at 05:35 PM



“ *Crystal Cross Bouquet was purchased for the family of Maria Merlino Perkins.*



April 07 at 11:06 PM



“ *A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Maria Merlino Perkins.*

April 07 at 11:06 PM

AR

“*Maria was such a gracious, lovely lady. She just had a way with people that brought out the joy. Maria was one with Sacred Heart of Jesus parish. Wherever one turned, there she was! She always told me she loved the Church. She loved the liturgy, devotions, and all the parish activity. She was willing and able; supportive of every good endeavor to benefit the priests and parish family. She knew how to build bridges of love and community. I especially appreciate her sacrifice of time and prayerful support with Seven Sisters Apostolate at Sacred Heart and I enjoyed her input at Luminaries meetings. Maria was incredibly joyful in affliction. In her last months faith, hope, and love remained strong and evident. She demonstrated true respect and God’s love for people; Above all, she loved Our Lord and Our Blessed Mother.*”

Alice Reynolds - April 07 at 10:43 PM

MV

“*MaryAnne Buccigrossi, Fredericksburg, VA purchased the Sweet Liberty for the family of Maria Merlino Perkins.*”



MaryAnne Buccigrossi, Fredericksburg, VA - April 07 at 07:31 PM