



## Suzanne Laurene Meyer

May 4, 1950 - January 27, 2023

Heaven has welcomed Suzanne Laurene Keester Meyer, 72, of Tyler, Texas, on January 27, 2023, who passed away while surrounded by her loving family, after fighting COVID amidst her courageous battle with cancer.

Known by many as an “angel on Earth,” Suzanne leaves behind a legacy behind for her close-knit family and her many close friends; a legacy of selflessness, resilience, adventure, and loyalty, which has undoubtedly been passed on to those who have known her.

Suzanne is survived by her devoted husband of 50 years, James Lawrence Meyer of Tyler, TX; a daughter, Jennifer Laurene Heinrich, Tyler, TX; grandchildren: Hannah, Jacob, Jackson, and Kylie Meyer, TX; Peyton, Parker, Preston, & Milee Heinrich, TX; son-in law, Jonathan Heinrich, TX; siblings and their families: Marie Catherine & Raymond Sepeta, IN; John & Valerie Keester, FL; Michael & Sue Keester, OK; Stephanie Keester, OK; and Monique & Tim Cowden, KS; brother & sister-in-law’s, Kay & Mike Crocker, FL; Mary Jo & Jim Falvo, TX; John & Jane Meyer, TX; and many nieces, nephews, cousins, long-time friends she considered family, and an abundance of friends.

Suzanne was predeceased in death by her parents, John Frederick Keester and Jacqueline Felicite Rebiere; her son, the light of her life, Jarrod Lawrence Meyer; daughter-in-law, Kristi Carpenter Meyer; mother-in-law and father-in-law, Leona and Larry Meyer; nephew Lee Falvo, and self-proclaimed “twin flame,” friend Penny Collier.

In Suzanne's own words, her "greatest accomplishments in my life were [husband] Jim, [children] Jenni and Jarrod, grandkids, all my family, and many great friends." This sentiment could be echoed and weaved throughout her entire life, as she took great pride and immense joy in celebrating her loved ones, experiencing life in the moment, and going out of her way to lend a helping hand or make someone else's day easier or better.

Suzanne was born May 4, 1950, at Fort Bragg, NC, the second of six "Army brats," as she would proudly say. Her disciplined military upbringing, coupled with the social etiquettes of her French-native mother, paved the way for a lifetime filled with purpose, seemingly to serve others and spread comfort, joy, and forgiveness, as well as ensure that no matter what, every holiday was celebrated to its fullest. From the "Happy Birthday" banner she hung up for every grandkid, family member, or visiting friend, to the specialized themed napkins and plates for graduations, 4th of July, Halloween, Valentine's Day; Suzanne always took great pleasure in celebrating these moments, often dressed in an over-the-top themed shirt, and handing out "goody bags" full of candy and misc. items you didn't know you needed, but if you were there, you got one; everyone was family when you sat at Suzanne's table.

She graduated from Lawton High in Lawton, Oklahoma. When she wasn't breaking the hearts of boys captivated by her "girl next-door" beauty and charm, Suzanne could frequently be seen on the theatre stage, writing letters of support to those she knew deployed overseas, sharing secrets with her best friend Mary, or sharing clothes with her older sister, Catherine. Going on a date with the teenage Suzanne would mean a sibling younger than six would also be tagging along, what some may consider a deal-breaker, but for Suzanne this was one of her fondest memories.

Suzanne attended Cameron College in Lawton and worked as an apartment manager before landing a job as "Miss Liberty" at Liberty National Bank in Oklahoma City. It was here that she met the aspiring attorney whose heart she would captivate, marry, and have a family with; her husband, James Lawrence Meyer. Suzanne & Jim will have celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary

this June. Together, they raised two children, Jenni & Jarrod, took part in raising several grandchildren, and relied on their strong faith with the Catholic Church in doing so. From the exhilaratingly joyous triumphs to the incredibly devastating tragedies, Suzanne often attributed her strength and her successful marriage to the unwavering commitment and constant faith she and Jim had built their lives upon as devout Catholics.

Instead of going separate ways when told they wouldn't have children together, Suzanne and Jim chose to find their own way, and use the time to go see the world first, ultimately strengthening their marriage. They sold both cars, rented out their apartment, quit their jobs, and took off to see all of Europe, with no regrets. One of Suzanne's greatest loves in life was traveling, always accompanied by postcards or letters home to her loved ones. She rarely bought souvenirs for herself, but there was always a keepsake brought home for everyone else, especially if they were a child. She even packed an empty suitcase many times, just to be able to bring home whatever interesting things she could find as Christmas or birthday gifts. In her lifetime, Suzanne has visited nearly every state in America, and most of Europe, as well as gone on several cruises. Some of her favorites were Alaska, Italy, France, Jamaica, Ireland, Hilton Head, Gulf Shores, Winter Park, Tahoe, Mexico beaches and Mayan ruins, Iceland, Reno, San Francisco, Maryland, Bossier City, Honduras, the Bahamas, Disney World, and any place that she could go antique shopping and eat good food.

Suzanne & Jim spent 7 years as parents of a Wire-Hair Fox Terrier puppy named Boomer, Suzanne's Christmas gift with a big red bow, bouncing out from under the Christmas Tree; explaining her love for the breed and her collection of hundreds of small Wire Hair statues she displayed on her shelf at home. She made supporting her new husband with his new law practice look easy, and hated the word "homemaker." She proudly gave herself the title "Home Maintenance Engineer," one which would officially show up on bank, insurance, school, or medical records throughout her life. Eventually, Suzanne

was blessed with the one title she had wanted more than anything in the world: “Mother.”

Suzanne was one of the founding members of MYC, a group of Catholic mothers of young children in the East Texas area. This group became amazing friends, and raised their children together, pulling out all the stops, with Easter egg hunts, visits from Santa Claus and gift-giving, Halloween hay rides, camping trips, and watching their children grow up. Not surprisingly, years later she was also one of the founding members of the Catholic youth group formed for the church they attended during her daughter’s teenage years, hosting the very first event in Suzanne’s living room. Suzanne remained active in the church, serving as a Eucharistic Minister, teaching 6-week long Baptism classes, serving on the Welcome Committee, and as a volunteer in any capacity it was needed.

Her volunteer and philanthropic moments didn’t end at the church. Suzanne was a very proud “Wish Granter” for the Make-a-Wish foundation, a job which did not pay any money, but she was rewarded with seeing the smiles on kids’ faces and being an integral part of a lasting memory and extremely big ordeal that was small by no means, and meant everything to each chronically ill child that was assigned to her. Suzanne spent hours learning about each child’s hopes and dreams, then set out to organize and present to them one special event that might make a dream come true, whether it was meeting a celebrity, redecorating a bedroom, a trip to Disney for the family, or just to ride on a real firetruck, Suzanne loved them all and called each of them “her Make a Wish kids.”

She also regularly volunteered at the food pantry, local shelters, and the women’s crisis center. Suzanne never wanted to throw anything away, for fear that somebody else, somewhere, might need it. She also made it a point to go to her email every single day for years to click on a specific advertisement just because it said “Click here to donate 10 cents to this organization to feed the stray animals.” She was definitely a lover of animals, and once found a litter of stray kittens, then spent weeks looking for homes for the babies. She kept

one, and took the last two kittens to a “no-kill” shelter to drop them off, but then Suzanne couldn’t help but return the very next day to adopt a totally different all-black cat after being told the all-black cats don’t get adopted oftentimes.

The most important adoptions in Suzanne’s life, however, would be her two children, Jenni and Jarrod, who, even though they came from Texas Cradle Society, just days old, the preparations her and Jim made took years of time, hundreds of letters and applications, several home studies, and numerous interviews. If they hadn’t told the kids, they never would have known of their origin, as they always felt their parents’ intense love, all along being told “God made you my baby, and just grew you in another mommy’s tummy,” an explanation simple enough with only positive reasoning behind it. The resemblance between mother and daughter, unwavering perseverance through a teenage son’s rebellion, and the absolute unconditional love between parents and children would have fooled anyone, even God himself, that they were all biologically related.

Suzanne’s “goody bag” list migrated from the whole kindergarten class; to themed birthday parties, overnight slumber parties, and swimming parties with watermelon seed spitting contests; to the baseball team or the cast of a play; to supporting dance recitals, band concerts, girl scouts, swim meets, football game halftime shows, parent-teacher meetings, and showing up as a customer anywhere you had a job as a teen (“not” to embarrass you); and then to supporting nieces & nephews out-of-town at their sports games, visiting family and holiday vacations; then included anyone’s boyfriend or girlfriend as if they were a part of the family too; eventually turning into wedding reception goody bags and then baby shower goody bags.

She is often referred to as being “a second mother” to her four younger siblings, an honor and privilege she adored, but never grew out of. She never hesitated to fly out of state for several weeks to assist with the newborn baby days of many of her nieces or nephews. She was the one to call if you needed help with moving, with a breakup, a wedding; someone who has your back

when others didn't, and sometimes the only one to tell you the cold, hard truth when it was necessary. Suzanne was everyone's biggest cheerleader and the one to tell you "you can get through this." She was the voice of reason and the person to count on for listening and for a hug.

Suzanne was emphatic that she had no "in-laws," and insisted that her siblings' spouses were to be considered her sisters and brothers. The same would ring true for her children's spouses, never considering a son-in-law or daughter-in-law; only sons and daughters, even driving four days out of the way just to watch an Army pinning ceremony, or spending hours in a hospital waiting room to hear about the birth of a baby. When her aging mother and father-in-law moved to Tyler from Oklahoma, Suzanne was so involved in the daily care of them that many people believed it was her own father she was taking to church, making dinner for, or going to appointments with. Suzanne had a very special relationship with Jim's father, often playfully arguing over who won the card game or who took the last cup of coffee.

Suzanne was known as an avid bowler, spending the majority of her adult life in a recreational bowling league, and served as the secretary of the bowling league in Tyler for many years. She attended State Finals and National Finals several times, enjoying the excuse to travel to Austin or to Reno, and spending time with those who she formed long-standing friendships with. She loved winning money at a bowling tournament. Suzanne also loved winning money at the casinos in Shreveport, becoming an absolute pro at gaining a free night or weekend at fancy casino hotels, and prided herself on winning it all by playing slots on the nickel and penny machines.

Suzanne also had no problem with advocating for each nickel and penny to be saved, wherever possible, as if it were her mission to make sure nobody paid more than necessary, while instilling the value of a dollar into her kids and grandkids, if she had anything to do with it. She was sure to let the workers at a national shoe store chain that she would not be buying the overly-priced basketball shoes her 12-year old son wanted, because "sadly, do you know

how much child labor went into those shoes, and what they really cost to make; ” and she had given her daughter’s prom date a coupon for a couple dollars off dinner at the restaurant they were going to. Twice, on two different years. Suzanne’s front yard was the lucky location to house at least 5 different lemonade stands from various kids and grandkids, but each time, she insisted this to be the perfect time for a lesson in economics: Since she provided the paper cups and lemonade mix, 1 cent for each cup and 10 cents total for the lemonade mix should be taken out of the profits, and given back to grandma; a lesson proven valuable much later in life.

Nonetheless, she was the first to sacrifice whatever she wanted so that her children, grandkids, or family could have something first, often splurging on others and never herself, making choices such as using her inheritance on taking her family to Disneyworld, then creating savings accounts for each child, which would be spent on weddings, first cars, and college tuition, instead of what many people might have done first, or on herself.

Unfortunately, in 2007, Suzanne was diagnosed with breast cancer. She put up on heck of a fight, and stayed in remission until 2019. Even in her most challenging times, Suzanne’s selflessness was obvious, as her biggest concern was ruining her daughter’s upcoming wedding because she will have lost her hair (a concern of no importance obviously, to anyone else). However, it is believed to have been the love for her family and the promise of grandchildren she still had yet to meet and hold, along with the support from her husband, family, and friends that gave her the fortitude and tenacity to fight through it all.

Suzanne’s love for her children grew tenfold as her family members grew tenfold, and the involved mother turned into the doting grandmother with ease. She adored being a grandma, and in addition to her children’s 7 biological children, she also had at least 5 more who still consider and call her “grandma” to this day, as well as at least 8 friends who would call her their “other mom,” a testament to the tenderness and involvement with those who came into contact with her. She flourished as the grandma who screamed the

loudest at the soccer games, took the most pictures at the musicals, showed up for grandparents day, and had a stocking hanging on the fireplace for every one of them, each personalized with their names sewn onto it. If she found anything personalized with your name on it, count on Suzanne making sure it would be in your Christmas stocking.

Suzanne never skipped a beat when the kids and grandkids started growing older, and she found a new group to hand out goody bags to. She was a member of the Red Hat Society, a social group of wonderful women, who supported one another and enjoyed getting out in the community and just enjoying the moments life has to offer with good food and good friends. It was not uncommon to see Suzanne dressed from head-to-toe, on her way to a “red hat lunch,” in gaudy jewelry, sparkly purple shoes, a purple dress nobody knows where she could have found it, a feather boa, and a red hat, never wearing the same one twice, but always larger than life, adorned with organza, feathers, jewels, and a theme for whatever holiday was approaching next. It was at these get-togethers she could brag about her family and grandchildren the most, and flaunt the pictures taken of a recent vacation just as much as she flaunted the obscenely fancy, sometimes downright silly red and purple attire, along with her group of friends.

Suzanne always had a competitive spirit about her, and adored playing games. She had a close-knit group of friends she would meet with every Tuesday, aka “game-day,” an afternoon adhered to like its own religion. The continued fellowship maintained with her game group heavily contributed to the positive attitude and strong will that kept her going throughout her last few years. However, for all of her life, her favorite thing to do on a Saturday night would be playing dominoes, tri-ominoes, Mexican train, Phase 10, Trivia Pursuit, or Scrabble; whether it was with her father, siblings, husband, daughter, grandkids, in-laws, or the friends of her kids & grandkids. This may have been because she usually won, but may also have been for the togetherness she held so dear, and the rapport she could build with anyone, given two minutes with Suzanne. It was known that even if her kids were out-

of-town, their friends could come say hi to Suzanne, and they would be welcomed with a soda, a cup of coffee, or a glass of wine, and a seat at the kitchen table to talk about their lives with Suzanne, who would never turn down a friendly visit, many times turning into a round of Yahtzee or a not-so-gourmet meal if it were dinner time.

More recently, the tragic loss of her son, followed by the sudden loss of her daughter-in-law proved to be one of the most difficult, and one of the last few challenges Suzanne persevered through, with the help of her faith, family, and friends. She was adamant that keeping a positive memory of the both of them and speaking of them often was beneficial in her grieving process, and encourages all family and friends to keep all of them in your thoughts and conversations. It is certain that being reunited with her son and parents, among many others, gave Suzanne great comfort in her last days.

One of Suzanne's final wishes was that her family and friends do not mourn her passing with sadness, but instead celebrate a life well-lived. A funeral mass is scheduled for Friday, February 17, 2023 at noon at Saint Mary Magdalene Church in Flint, Texas, with Father Tim Kelly officiating under the direction of Stewart Family Funeral Home. Immediately following the mass, a luncheon meal will be held in the church hall, where friends are invited to share their memories of Suzanne with her family. There will also be a Rosary on Thursday, February 16, 2023, at 7 pm, at Saint Mary Magdalene Church in Flint, located at 18221 FM 2493, Flint, Texas, 75762.

Condolences for the family may be arranged by calling the funeral home at (903) 581-2008, sent to Stewart Family Funeral Home at 7525 Old Jacksonville Hwy, Tyler, Texas 75703, or [www.stewartfamilyfuneral.com](http://www.stewartfamilyfuneral.com)

The family requests that any donations made in Suzanne's memory be made to the St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, [www.stjude.org](http://www.stjude.org).

# Previous Events

## Rosary

FEB 16. 7:00 PM (CT)

St Mary Magdalene Catholic Church  
18221 FM 2493  
Flint, TX 75762  
(903) 894-7647

## Memorial Mass

FEB 17. 12:00 PM (CT)

St Mary Magdalene Catholic Church  
18221 FM 2493  
Flint, TX 75762  
(903) 894-7647

## Visitation following memorial mass

FEB 17 (CT)

St Mary Magdalene Catholic Church  
18221 FM 2493  
Flint, TX 75762  
(903) 894-7647

# Tribute Wall



“ *Fairest of All was purchased for the family of Suzanne Laurene Meyer.*



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February 16, 2023 at 09:29 AM



“ *As a long time member and past president of the knights of Columbus Ladies Auxiliary 1502. She is remembered as a active volunteer and friend. God bless her.*

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**Teresa Nowland** - February 15, 2023 at 08:11 PM



“ *Lloyd &Wanda Rinderer and Families purchased the Divine Peace Bouquet for the family of Suzanne Laurene Meyer.*



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**Lloyd &Wanda Rinderer and Families** - February 15, 2023 at 09:08 AM

SK

“ 7 files added to the tribute wall



Stephanie Keester - February 13, 2023 at 05:58 PM

SK

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Stephanie Keester - February 12, 2023 at 10:00 PM

SK

*Dancing at Elizabeth Keester's (niece) wedding with sister Monique and her daughter Anna.*

Stephanie Keester - February 12, 2023 at 10:02 PM

SK

“ 7 files added to the tribute wall



Stephanie Keester - February 12, 2023 at 09:46 PM

SK

“ Dancing at Elizabeth Keester's wedding

Stephanie Keester - February 12, 2023 at 09:39 PM

SK

See picture above

Stephanie Keester - February 12, 2023 at 10:01 PM

SK

“ She loved the beach! Loved to listen to the waves and watch for dolphins from the balcony of the condo



Stephanie Keester - February 12, 2023 at 09:34 PM

SK

“ 8 files added to the tribute wall



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**Stephanie Keester** - February 12, 2023 at 07:49 PM

SK

“ 7 files added to the tribute wall



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**Stephanie Keester** - February 12, 2023 at 07:47 PM

SK

“ Our beautiful, patient, protective, loyal, courageous, selfless big sister, Suzanne Laurene Meyer, will be so tremendously missed by all of us. She was a 2nd mother to her younger siblings. She was constantly there for us, and would drive up to comfort and help us whenever we needed her. She was always there with sage advice, and loving wisdom. She was our rock. Life will never be the same without our sweet Suzanne. She never missed a birthday, and was usually early with her cards and presents. She always put others first. She was an angel on earth doing God’s work. Though she faced some hardships in her life, she handled it all with grace and class. Such a positive, strong life force. Always and forever in our hearts and minds sweet sister. We love you so much!



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**Stephanie Keester** - February 12, 2023 at 06:40 PM



“ Sweet Tranquility Basket was purchased for the family of Suzanne Laurene Meyer.



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February 11, 2023 at 12:07 PM

DK

“ Don, Pam, Karen and David Keester purchased the Country Basket Blooms for the family of Suzanne Laurene Meyer.



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**Don, Pam, Karen and David Keester** - February 11, 2023 at 09:09 AM

MK

“ 1 file added to the album Suzanne photos



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**Michael Keester** - February 10, 2023 at 01:38 PM

SK

*Her sweet smile*

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**Stephanie Keester** - February 12, 2023 at 06:55 PM



“ Gracious Lavender Basket was purchased for the family of Suzanne Laurene Meyer.



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February 08, 2023 at 08:32 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Suzanne Laurene Meyer.*



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February 08, 2023 at 02:51 PM



“ *Michael and Sue Keester & Family purchased the Pink Tribute Spray for the family of Suzanne Laurene Meyer.*



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**Michael and Sue Keester & Family** - February 06, 2023 at 01:14 PM



“ *We were so sorry to hear of Suzanne's passing. Don has fond memories of visiting with his cousin when they were kids. Our prayers and thoughts are with you all.*  
*Don & Pam Keester*

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**Don Keester** - February 04, 2023 at 10:36 AM



“ *We will miss you beloved friend. Rest in peace. You have earned your wings. Mark and Mary Evans*

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**Mary Evans** - January 30, 2023 at 05:20 PM