



## Darlene Gai Kelly

October 28, 1945 - May 31, 2023

Dr. Darlene Gai Kelly, 77, of Rochester, MN, passed away on May 31, 2023. Darlene Kelly was a blessing to all who crossed paths with her.

She was born October 28, 1945, in Eastern Washington to Dorothy Dunkelberger and Ronald Kelly, who proudly raised her on their family wheat farm. She graduated high school in Lamont, WA, in 1963 as the Valedictorian. She went on to receive her BS from Washington State University in 1968 and carried her allegiance to the university for her entire life, go Cougars!

Darlene moved with her mother Dorothy to Spokane (after her father died in 1967) where she decided to pursue her dreams in the medical field. She became a Dietician at Deaconess Hospital in Spokane, WA, and then moved forward to pursue her MS and Ph.D. in nutrition from the Mayo Clinic Graduate School of Medicine. She subsequently received her Medical Degree from the University of Minnesota. A lifelong learner, Dr. Kelly completed her residency in Internal Medicine and fellowship in Gastroenterology at the Mayo Clinic. In November 1990, she joined the consulting staff of Mayo Clinic in the Division of Gastroenterology and Hepatology, and after an accomplished career spanning 22 years, she retired in 2012.

A recipient of numerous professional awards, including the J. Arnold Borgen Award, Dr. Kelly was nationally and internationally recognized for her work in

home parenteral nutrition. Beloved by patients, colleagues, and students, Darlene was never too busy to help a patient or provide advice to a colleague. She also served as Medical Director of the Infusion Center at Mayo Clinic and on the Board of Directors at the Oley Foundation.

Dr. Kelly was a person of many talents and interests - a gourmet chef, an artistic weaver, an international traveler, an advocate for the underserved, and an ever-devoted caregiver to her mother, are just a few. Darlene loved her family, medical colleagues, spiritual community, and the Franciscan sisters and cojourners. Her Siamese cats were an important part of her life.

As a global citizen, Darlene made lifelong friends across the world. A beautiful person in so many ways has been taken away from us too soon. We will cherish the precious times and memories.

Darlene was preceded in death by her parents, Dorothy and Ronald Kelly. She is survived by cousins, Lois (Cal), Wayne (Linda), Jim (Carol); and a multitude of friends who deeply loved her and whose lives she touched.

To honor and celebrate Dr. Darlene Gai Kelly's life, a funeral service will be held at Holy Spirit Church, 5455 50th Avenue NW, Rochester, MN, on Saturday, June 17, 2023, at 11:00 am. The funeral service will be followed by a luncheon at the same venue. A visitation will be held an hour before the funeral service at 10:00 am in Holy Spirit Church. The burial will be in Spokane, WA, on June 19, 2023. In lieu of flowers, the family prefers memorials to the Women's Shelter and Support Center, Rochester, MN.

# Cemetery Details

## Spokane Memorial Gardens

5909 Cheney Spokane Rd  
Spokane, WA 99223

# Previous Events

## Burial

JUN **19**. 10:00 AM (PT)

Spokane Memorial Gardens  
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Spokane, WA 99223