



## Mrs. Olga I. (Rivera) Gagnon-Palczynski

August 2, 1942 - April 2, 2025

UTICA/NEW SMYRNA BEACH, FL – Mrs. Olga I. (Rivera) Gagnon-Palczynski, age 82, passed away peacefully on Wednesday, April 2, 2025, in the comfort and dignity of her home, with her loving family by her side.

Born in Arecibo, Puerto Rico on August 2, 1942, Olga was the daughter of the late Alejandro and Juanita (Millet) Rivera. As a young girl, she came to the Utica area with her family, where she was a proud graduate of T.R. Proctor High School/Class of 1960. She then went on to attend Mohawk Valley Community College and Utica School of Commerce.

Olga married Donald F. “Don” Gagnon on August 8, 1964. They were the best of friends and were blessed with two wonderful sons. They shared over 29 years together prior to Don’s passing on March 29, 1994. She found love again with Russell R. “Russ” Palczynski, and the two wed on June 27, 1998. Russell is a loving man who was so supportive of Olga, and her children and grandchildren. Their marriage was a blessing to them both.

Olga once held employment with General Electric Co. at their Radio Receiver Plant. She later went on to work for Fleet Bank of New York as a teller and Branch Secretary at their East Utica Branch, from which she retired in 2000. Olga’s fluency in Spanish communication was a great asset.

Family was of utmost importance to Olga, and she insisted “her boys” showed great respect to all. She possessed an outgoing personality and had a great knack for embracing peoples’ hearts and minds.

Olga and Russ were snowbirds when residing in New York. They very much enjoyed their winters spent in Mexico Beach and Coco Beach, FL. Many friendships were formed and wonderful times were had during those winters. They also loved to travel and take in wonderful sights.

Olga especially delighted in being a good mother to two wonderful sons, and Grandma and Nani to her grandchildren, whom she lovingly spoiled. Her home was a grand place and the door was always open. She was very hospitable and upheld Spanish traditions. Family and faith were paramount to her. If she wasn’t praying, she was partying with those she loved!

Olga believed God came first and that all things fall into place when you depend on your faith. She felt blessed to have such a close and personal relationship with her Lord. When residing in Utica, Olga was a faithful parishioner of Historic Old St. John’s Church. There, at one time, she served as a Eucharistic Minister and was heavily involved in the Spanish Community of the Parish and taught CCD.

Olga is survived by her loving husband, Russell; and son and daughter-in-law, David and Lauri Gagnon. She cherished the memory of her son, John Dustin Gagnon, who passed away on August 11, 2019. She will be deeply missed by her grandchildren, Michael Gagnon, Anthony Gagnon, Gabriella Gagnon, and Matthew Gagnon; sister, Carmen “Carm” Laurey (the late George Laurey); brother, Alejandro “Alex” Rivera, Jr., and Agenge Sladek; step-siblings, Michael Ortiz, Millie Lawler, and Mary Elaine Vazquez; many nieces and nephews, with special mention of James Laurey, and Robert Laurey and their families; great-nieces, great-nephews, a host of cousins; daughter-in-law,

Kristin L. (Vanderveer) Gagnon; Russell's children and their families; in-laws, Lorraine and Leo Sczrbaniwicz, and June Palczynski (the late Roger A. Palczynski); and many wonderful and loyal friends, especially acknowledging Freddy and Lind Otero, with whom she enjoyed over 70 years of friendship, and Rose Nelson.

The family wishes to extend their gratitude to Father J. Patrick Quinn of Our Lady Star of the Sea Church in New Smyrna Beach, FL, for his friendship and spiritual guidance.

In keeping with Olga's wishes, she was laid to rest in Calvary Cemetery. Relatives and friends are respectfully invited to attend Olga's Memorial Mass of Christian Burial and Celebration of Life, which will commence on Saturday, August 2, 2025, at 10:00 a.m., at Historic Old St. John's Church, 240 Bleecker St. In lieu of floral offerings, memorial contributions in Olga's honor may be made to Historic Old St. John's Church Food Pantry by mail to 240 Bleecker St., Utica, NY 13501.

# Cemetery Details

## Calvary Cemetery

2407 Oneida Street  
Utica, NY 13501  
(315) 735-2727

# Previous Events

## Memorial Mass

**AUG 2.** 10:00 AM (ET)

Historic Old St. John's Church  
240 Bleecker Street  
Utica, NY 13501  
(315) 724-6159  
<https://www.historicoldstjohnschurch.com/>

# Tribute Wall

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“ I am so sorry to read about Olga's passing. I was in the Red Hatters with Olga. She was always a sweet,wonderful person to be with. Deepest condolences to all of you who are part of her family.  
Tania Montana

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**Tania M Montana** - April 08, 2025 at 06:51 PM

FF

“ I was so sorry to hear of Olga's passing. Olga and I worked together and we always had such a great time. She was a wonderful fun loving lady. We crossed paths a few times after that and she always made it feel like no time had passed between us. She was such a special lady! I hope and pray that she is at peace and her family finds comfort in knowing that.

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**Fran Fuller** - April 08, 2025 at 10:10 AM

JF

“ Dave, Lauri and family - your mother was such a special lady. I have fond memories of her, especially in the kitchen, making her homemade sauce. Take comfort in knowing she is at peace with your father and brother.

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**Jim Fluty** - April 08, 2025 at 08:18 AM