



Virginia (Russo) Cecilia

October 26, 1931 - May 23, 2026

UTICA/NEW HARTFORD, NY – Virginia (Russo) Cecilia, age 94, passed away in the comfort of her home, surrounded by loved ones, on Saturday, May 23, 2026.

Virginia “Ginny” was born in Utica on October 26, 1931, to Italian natives Joseph and Catherine (Saltarelli) Russo. Raised and educated in East Utica, she graduated from T.R. Proctor High School. Shortly after graduation, Ginny spent a brief time out West before returning home to New York, where she completed secretarial school and began her career as an executive secretary at Bendix Aviation Corp. During her time there, she was proudly chosen as the first “Miss Bendix,” an honor she always cherished.

On July 7, 1956, Ginny married Peter J. Cecilia, Sr., a love story that started on the old Utica “bean trucks,” where an East Utica girl and a West Utica boy first met while working on local farms harvesting beans. The couple raised three children and shared 56 years of marriage prior to Peter’s passing in 2012.

After raising her children as a homemaker, Ginny returned to the workforce as a bookkeeper at Arlott’s Office Supply. After many fulfilling years there, she continued her career in accounting at the Oneida County Comptroller’s Office. She remained a valued employee until retiring at the age of 82.

Virginia had many interests and talents. Whatever she did was with passion and perfection. She enjoyed bowling and bridge, participating in many leagues. Her greatest passion was golf. As a member of Cedar Lake and Stonebridge Golf Clubs, she chaired and participated in many invitational tournaments. She also served as President of the Valley View Women's Golf League.

She had a love for music and expressed that through her piano playing and singing with a traveling church choir. Ginny had a strong lifelong devotion to the Catholic Church. She was a faithful member of St. John the Evangelist Church in New Hartford, where she became a Eucharistic Minister. She also attended St. Mary of Mt. Carmel/Blessed Sacrament Parish, where she joined the choir.

Virginia is survived by her two beloved daughters and son-in-law, Robin Cecilia and her husband James Day, and Christine Cecilia; darling son, CDR P.J. Cecilia, Jr., USN (Ret); and cherished grandchildren, Jamie Day, Michele Day, and Nicholas Cecilia. After losing her sister, Mary D'Onofrio (the late Rocco D'Onofrio), just a few weeks ago, Virginia held close to her heart the memories of her eight siblings and their spouses, Josephine and Edmund DeCarlo, Lucy and Daniel Daniels, Frederick "Fritz" and Dora Russo, infant Thomas Russo, Nicholas Russo, Anthony Russo, and Louis Russo. She is further survived by many nieces and nephews, with whom she shared individual and special relationships; her brother-in-law, John Segal (the late Deanna Segal); and her sister-in-law and her husband, Sandra and Sam D'Amico. Virginia was additionally predeceased by her in-laws, Yolanda and Tony Cardone, Pauline and David Fleishman, Eleanor and Edmund Dembowski, and Leonard "Lenny" and Louise Borruso; her niece, Marcia (Daniels) Rogers; and her nephew, John "Johnny" Segal.

The family wishes to extend their gratitude to Ginny's caretakers, Tara, Karen, Moriah, and Sharon, for the care, compassion, and friendship they afforded her, always going out of their way on her behalf.

In lieu of floral offerings, those wishing to honor Ginny's memory are kindly asked to consider a memorial contribution to Hospice and Palliative Care, Inc., online at <https://hospicecareinc.org/donate-online/>; envelopes will also be available at the funeral home.

With hearts full of gratitude, Ginny's family warmly invites all to attend her Mass of Christian Burial on Monday morning, June 1, 2026, at 10:00 a.m. at St. Mary of Mt. Carmel/Blessed Sacrament Parish, 648 Jay St., where her life will be celebrated in faith and remembrance.

This obituary was lovingly composed by Virginia's family.

Cemetery Details

Calvary Cemetery

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

Previous Events

Funeral Service

JUN 1. 10:00 AM (ET)

St. Mary of Mt. Carmel/Blessed Sacrament Parish
648 Jay Street
Utica, NY 13501
(315) 735-1482
<https://www.mountcarmelblessedsacrament.com/>

Tribute Wall

MS

“ *Robin, Christine and Peter... very sorry for your loss... and truly sorry I will not make it back...*

Mike Segal - May 31 at 10:53 PM

JP

“ *My sincere condolences to Robin and all the Cecelia family.*

John Pitarresi - May 30 at 08:00 PM

JP

“ *My sincere to Robi and all of the Cecelia family.*

John Pitarresi - May 30 at 07:59 PM

PI

“ *She was a beautiful woman and a great mother. RIP*

Peter Inserra - May 28 at 11:46 AM