



Zoraida (Garcia) Abeling

May 5, 1950 - February 10, 2021

N. UTICA - Zoraida (Garcia) Abeling, age 70, went home to the Lord on Wednesday, February 10, 2021 with the love and support of her sisters by her side. Sadly, her passing was due to the Corona Virus.

Born in Cayey, Puerto Rico on May 5, 1950, Zoraida was the daughter of the late Juan and Irene (Vega) Garcia. As a young woman, she came to Utica with her maternal grandparents, Santiago and Juanita (Vega) Rivera. She was a graduate of T.R. Proctor High School/Class of 1968 and continued her education at SUNY Oneonta where she earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Science and Education. Zoraida was married to Ronald D. "Ron" Abeling with whom she shared common interests and faith. Their relationship was blessed and bonded by the Lord. Ron passed away on May 23, 2015.

Zoraida had zest for teaching and a love of children. She taught multiple subjects in the Utica City School District at numerous local schools, retiring in 2009. She then continued teaching as a tutor for students who were homebound. She was an awesome educator who touched so many lives, and testimony has been given of her compassion, patience, and love for teaching. She had a lovely laugh, filled with joy and non-judgmental sincerity. Her generosity and helping hand extended above and beyond, and in many thoughtful ways. It was a renewed faith that she found over 40 years ago that transformed her priorities in life. A God fearing woman, her renewed faith aided and sustained her positive nature and compelled her to do God's work. As her fellow brethren of River of Life Christian Church in Rome attest,

“Zoraida was a mother to us all, always checking up on us every week to see how everyone was doing. She was the last to leave the church building every Sunday because she wanted to make sure everything was in its place”. She loved to decorate and organize the Bulletin Board at church so everyone would be aware of upcoming events. She was simply sweet, down to earth, humble, and so helpful.

God graced Zoraida with great friends who meant the world to her. They often gathered to enjoy a day and each other’s company, and that was her outlet; they were all soul mates. Christian music filled her space as it ministered to her heart. She had a deep desire to share her enlightened soul through a mother’s love, so she took her cousins, Anna Rose Colon, Leslie Diaz, and Diana Jones, into her home and raised them as her own. Currently, she was a nurturing guardian to Jayovani “Jay Jay” Santalucia and De-Analis “Dee Dee” Santalucia. She gave them a new outlook on life, and in turn, they gave joy to her life. They motivated her, and she was filled with love. Her unexpected passing has broken the children’s hearts, but Zoraida will continue to watch over them from above.

Zoraida was instrumental in touching so many lives, in so many ways, many known only to God, alone. Her conviction as a guiding light and her sacrifices for others came from a genuine place. This is the path that led her to selflessly help lift so many souls. God was first. Zoraida mentored others to know His glory.

“Good night, sister Zoraida. We love you”.

You heard the clarion call of the voice of God, and you spread His word with love in your heart.

Zoraida is survived by her siblings and their loved ones, Marta and Diego Carriero, Jose Garcia, Nidia Rivera, Frank Garcia, Juan and Tata Garcia, Mike and Lety Garcia, Michele and Ken Whittemore, David and Laurie Garcia, Adelaida “Ollie” and Josue Pagan, Andy Garcia, Janie Jardieu, Stevie Garcia, and Sam Garcia; her many, many nieces, nephews, great-nieces, great-nephews, cousins, aunts, uncles, in-laws, and her late husband’s children,

Christopher and Jacky Abeling, and Roy Abeling. In her circle of life, Zoraida was also blessed with Janet Oyer who she truly considered an additional sister. They shared a special bond and Janet was there to the end, helping and blessing Zoraida's life.

Zoraida's untimely passing has left her family and her friends in such shock, and in order to properly celebrate her life they have chosen to gather at a time when it is safe and healthier due to the pandemic. Please await further details through this website and the family's emails.

During this time of social distancing that we are all experiencing, please take a moment to connect with Zoraida's family through the "Memories" section of her obituary. Our prayers go out to all as a sign of our continued support.

Tribute Wall

BD

“Wow this is a crazy thing I was just laying in bed and ms abeling came to mind. She was my favorite teacher out of all my teachers as a kid. I met her in JFK Social Studies. She did so much for me as a young teen. She took her time in her lessons and you can feel the love when speaking with her. She gave me alot of advice while I was in school that I tended not to listen to. This woman was a blessing only wish I would had looked her up earlier to thank her for the love she showed. One of few teachers that were really there for the kids

Bryan Dixon - October 23, 2022 at 07:04 PM

JO

“Tomorrow May 5th. is Zoraida 71 birthday. Miss her so much and times I find myself getting ready just to have a relaxing time for grilling.



Janet Oyer - May 04, 2021 at 03:19 PM

JH

“Jeremy Hayes lit a candle in memory of Zoraida (Garcia) Abeling



Jeremy Hayes - March 23, 2021 at 09:52 AM

WM

“*Regrettably, it was just days ago that I was at work and thought to myself, I need to get in touch with my friend Janey to find out where her sister is because I haven't seen her in a long time. But Its too late!*

Now all I have are a few memories of one of the greatest people to walk the face of the earth.

She was a friend of my family and my 3rd grade teacher and was beacon of light throughout my life.

Although I only shared a few moments in our lives together, the lasting impression She left on me as a child will forever guide me for the rest of my life.

I love you and miss you very much!



William Martinez - March 19, 2021 at 11:24 PM

MB

“*Please accept my most sincere and heartfelt condolences on the loss of Zoraida. I worked with her for several years at Thomas Jefferson School. She was a kind, loving and compassionate teacher who always had the best interest of her students in mind. She will live on in the hearts and minds of all the people she touched*❤️

Margaret Beck - March 10, 2021 at 07:38 AM

SJ

“ As the Thomas Jefferson School Nurse to Jayovani “Jay Jay” Santalucia and De-Analis “Dee Dee” Santalucia, I've had many conversations regarding the children's health, forms to be completed and visiting in the lunch room with Zoraida. My heartfelt condolences to the children and to all her family and friends. May Jay Jay and Dee Dee always remember: "When someone you love becomes a memory, the memory becomes a treasure".

John 11:25 Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies".

May her soul and all the souls of the faithfully departed, rest in peace. Amen.

Susan M Januszewski - March 05, 2021 at 03:49 PM

JO

“ Me and Zoraida have been the best of friends for 40+ years. We were like sister's. We went on vacations together. I remember times we went camping with her sister Michelle and her family. We were roommates for 15-20 years. She did everything in the spare of the moment. We walked around two miles just to get ice cream at 9 PM. There were times she decides to go out and eat up North at 12 AM. We had so much fun together. She had a way of making people realize they can do anything if they put their mind to do it. She was my mentor in college. I did not think I would graduate college. But with her help and other's I graduated. She was always busy but took time to tutor me. That's the kind of person she was and never expected anything in return. When she passed part of me is missing but I realize she is with Jesus. She dedicated her life to Sunday school children. That was her life. There is a big void in my life without her. Anyone that came across her path were blessed to have such a loving and caring person. I will miss you my friend. It's still hard to believe your gone. I think of you everyday as tears would fill my eyes. I will forever remember you and the wonderful times we spend together. RIP Zoraida and I will see you in heaven dancing and praising God.

Janet Oyer - February 26, 2021 at 10:56 PM

FC

“ I have known Zoraida for over 50 years and needless to say, I am truly saddened by her passing. She was one of my favorite people of all time. She was a born teacher. Her rapport with students came so naturally. During her teaching career, she touched so many lives in such a positive way. And she was such a positive role model in the Puerto Rican community by not only being one of the first Puerto Rican teachers in Utica (if not the first), but by also giving back to her community in so many ways. She had an infectious laugh and was always in good spirits. She and I shared so many fun times back in the day that will never be forgotten. We have truly lost a very special person. My sincerest condolences go out to the whole Garcia family.

Frankito Calaprice - February 24, 2021 at 09:15 AM

JP

“ So very sorry to hear of Zoraidas passing, (we were neighbors on Brody Dr) Zoraida was the most kind, gentle sweetest soul. Always a smile & positive outlook. She will be missed by many. Rest easy my friend. 🙏

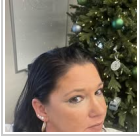
Jackie Petrowski - February 22, 2021 at 08:14 PM

RA

“ I am deeply sad hearing of the loss of my stepmother. She was a wonderful loving woman. She had faith in me when I never had faith in myself. I know she lived a life to always help others and be close to her loving family and of most God. Ill never forget that smile and her joyous laugh. You will be missed by all. I was blessed to have you for a stepmother. ----LoVe RoY A.



Roy Abeling - February 22, 2021 at 01:31 PM



“ Zoraida my family and children were blessed to get to know you and have you in our lives. We are truly heartbroken over your untimely passing. We will cherish the fond memories we have and continue to spread love to others just as you had done to all of us. We love and miss you so much and no words, spoken or written, could do justice to all you have done so unselfishly in your life. You always put other’s needs before your own. Rest in heavenly paradise as you’re with God now.

Crystal Lee - February 21, 2021 at 10:58 AM

JB

“ Jess Bussonnais lit a candle in memory of Zoraida (Garcia) Abeling



Jess Bussonnais - February 20, 2021 at 05:04 PM

KK

“ I will miss you so dearly my friend. My memories of us together will be a comfort and I am so grateful we had those loving conversations on the phone just before you left us to be in a more peaceful and restful place. We will be together again and we will have one more joyful trip together. You will always be in my heart..❤️❤️❤️



Kathleen Knight - February 20, 2021 at 02:29 PM

ME

*Thank you Zoraida for all the joyful moments you shared with me and my family, you were really one of us:
Always so positive you never refused whenever your help was requested. I'll keep you in my mind & in my heart. How sad to think of Utica without you but in Paradise there is a party going on for your arrival with Jesus m.
Blessings from the Espinal family from Puerto Rico.*

maritza Espinal - February 21, 2021 at 08:49 PM

JO

“ Gonna miss you love you. you helped all of us through the good and bad



Johnboy - February 19, 2021 at 11:25 PM

JB

“ Holy shit! I blame Trump.

Joe Biden - February 19, 2021 at 11:14 PM

CL

“ I still can't believe that you are no longer here. I keep looking outside in hopes to see you but all I see is your fur baby in the window.

I moved across the street 2 years ago and you were the first to welcome us to the neighborhood.

I remember you telling me how much fun you had in Florida then us watching fireworks together as we lit up the sky from the middle of the road.

Your going to be missed. Fly high with the angels 🙏



Cinnamon Ludlow - February 19, 2021 at 07:07 PM

JA

“ Jacky A. Abeling lit a candle in memory of Zoraida (Garcia) Abeling



Jacky A. Abeling - February 19, 2021 at 09:02 AM

SL

You will always be in my heart my sweet friend 💔 I miss you so much 💔 Until we me again💔

Sue LaComb - February 19, 2021 at 03:24 PM

JA

“ Zoriada, I will never forget your infectious smile and all the kindness that exuded from you. As your daughter-in-law I want you to know you have a very special place in my heart. This loss is heart breaking and so unnecessary. Your going to be missed by so many people but know I loved you and you always treated me like a daughter. I am proud to share my life and last name with you.
Love from your daughter-in-law
Mrs. Jacky A. Abeling

Jacky A. Abeling - February 19, 2021 at 08:57 AM

LD

“ Zoraida always knew what to say to encourage her students, her brother's & sister's of the Lord, and anyone she met. I will definitely miss Sister Zoraida. I am so sorry for the loss of a beautiful and gracious woman of God. God keep her family strong and faithful to the Lord. She was my mentor & one of my teachers at Conkling School. Later in my 30's; Zoraida became a mentor again in helping me learn more about Our Lord Jesus Christ. 💖💖



Sister Linda Daniels

Linda Daniels - February 19, 2021 at 12:34 AM

LA

“ Zoraida was my Sister in law and she was a wonderful person! She will be very missed.
Linda Abeling

Linda Abeling - February 18, 2021 at 10:41 PM

JG

“ Zoraida and I were roomies about 30 years ago, but I still remember her sweetness, sense of humor, and dedication to her family, friends, students, church family, and pretty much anyone who was lucky enough to cross her path in life. She was one of those rare individuals who could make you feel like you were the most special person when you were with her, even though she was always being pulled in a dozen directions at any given time. I remember her taking such wonderful care of her grandparents at that time and I know she's done so much for all her family in the years since. I have rarely known anyone so selfless. She will be missed by so many...this world has lost an amazing woman and the only comfort is knowing she had faith that sustained her through the best and worst times of her life. My sincere condolences to her family during this difficult time.

Jean Garro - February 18, 2021 at 03:33 PM

DM

“ DAVID MCMAHON sent a virtual gift in memory of Zoraida (Garcia) Abeling



DAVID MCMAHON - February 18, 2021 at 02:20 PM

DM

Sorry for your family Loss may God Strengthen you all.

DAVID MCMAHON - February 18, 2021 at 02:22 PM

CH

“ She was my teacher in grade school she was a gem to me I am so sorry to Herat of her passing to her family I am so so sorry

charleneperrotta - February 18, 2021 at 01:48 PM

CF

“ Zoraida is a woman the will be missed dearly I myself had the chance to meet this extraordinary woman through her cousin Anna Rose Colon and this lady helped me and my family in so many ways I will always have a place in my heart for her RIP Zoraida and even though you're not here physically you ou will always be here spiritually thank you very much for all you have done for me and my family you will be missed.

Carlos Rivera and Family - February 18, 2021 at 01:30 PM

CA

“ Zoraida was a beautiful soul who's kind spirit was evident to anyone who knew her. She had a knack for making you feel comfortable and loved even after knowing her for a short time.My dad (Ron Abeling) was a lucky man to have married such a sweet, loving lady.I consider myself a better person for having know her. The world has truly lost a valuable precious person. She will truly be missed. She is in your hands now God. Peace....

Chris and Jacky Abeling - February 18, 2021 at 10:28 AM

CS

“ A wonderful gal, fond memories going back through the years. Our Lord will embrace her eternal spirit. RIP 😊

C. T. Sebastian - February 18, 2021 at 06:18 AM

TL

“ Ms.Garcia was one of the best teachers me and my siblings had she was so good to us and helped us a lot
RIP 💜

Trina Loomis - February 18, 2021 at 12:49 AM

AP

“ A very sad and humbling time for me and the earthly world losing a wonderful and joyful spirit. I will always remember my beautiful friend for her loyalty, optimism, love and goodness. I will love and remember you always, Soraida.

Effie 03

AVKEENA PELIFIAN - February 17, 2021 at 10:37 PM

EH

“ My most warmest and sincere condolences and sympathies to the Family of Mrs. Zoraida(Garcia), she was my 3rd grade teacher at Conkling Elementary, she was always a loving educator to her students and a proud and hardworking Woman she is definitely missed by those she taught, loved and mentored over her Great Life, May She be Resting Happily at Peace!

Edward L Howard - February 17, 2021 at 09:44 PM



“ Zoraida has always been special to me and my family....will always love you and miss you....

Leon Hare - February 17, 2021 at 08:16 PM

AM

“ So many ways to describe you Zoraida. Above all was caring. You were the first to step up, and in and do whatever needed to be done to fix any situation. You loved with all of your heart and soul Rest in Jesus sister. I pray your family rests in the knowledge that you are with Him at peace and that this will bring comfort to their hearts..

Anne Miles - February 17, 2021 at 06:18 PM

SL

I miss you my dear sweet friend we had so many good times together laughing..shopping going out to eat ..You will always be in my heart.... until we meet again💔

Sue LaComb - February 19, 2021 at 03:31 PM

AT

“ Farewell my beautiful tiny friend.
All of my memories I share with you are all happy and loving moments. Just too many.
While I feel very sad I will no longer see you in this life anymore, I know full well, we will see each other again one day! And I take great comfort in that Truth that you are eternally abiding in the Glory and the Presence of the Lord Jesus.
Well done thou good and faithful servant!
We love you Zoraida. It has been an honor to know you and call you friend.
Sister Angela Traub from Life Tabernacle, Utica, NY

Angela Traub - February 17, 2021 at 05:42 PM

TA

“ So sad to hear this news. Zoraida was so very special. She always put her whole heart into everything she did. Praying for her family.

Tabitha - February 17, 2021 at 05:34 PM

PL

“ Patricia Lazore lit a candle in memory of Zoraida (Garcia) Abeling



Patricia Lazore - February 17, 2021 at 05:13 PM



Such a beautiful person, I will never forget her. My heart goes out to Ollie, Nidia and the rest of the family. God Bless you all.

Patricia Lazore - February 17, 2021 at 05:19 PM

TW

“ We will always remember Zoraida's zest for life, her selfless love for others and her laughter, that filled the air of any room she was in. May God give all family and close friends of Zoraida's comfort, peace and strength at this time.

*Pastor and Sister Waterman
New Life Apostolic Church*

Theresa Waterman - February 17, 2021 at 04:44 PM

MB

“ Michelle Brown lit a candle in memory of Zoraida (Garcia) Abeling



Michelle Brown - February 17, 2021 at 04:44 PM

MW

“ Mary Michele Garcia Whitemore lit a candle in memory of Zoraida (Garcia) Abeling



Mary Michele Garcia Whitemore - February 17, 2021 at 03:46 PM

MW

Dear sis, I already miss you. Love you.

Mary Michele Garcia Whitemore - February 17, 2021 at 03:48 PM

BJ

“ So sorry for your loss, Ollie.
Zoraida was a beacon of light in a dark time, and will be missed by
so many. Praying the comfort of the Lord, for you and her family.
~Sis Bonnie Jweid-Triplett

Bonnie Jweid-Triplett - February 17, 2021 at 02:53 PM

DF

“ we are so sorry for your loss Ollie.... you and the whole family.... i
didnt know her but i send you all my love and prayers,may she rest
in peace....love you all Doreen Fresina

Doreen Fresina - February 17, 2021 at 01:04 PM

LS

“ Linda Spratt lit a candle in memory of Zoraida
(Garcia) Abeling



Linda Spratt - February 17, 2021 at 10:44 AM