

## FFWPU USA Blessing and Family Ministry: In Memory of Catherine Ferabolli

Yun-A Johnson  
October 12, 2022



### Catherine Ferabolli

Spouse: Altair

Children: Arlena, Karmina, Letisha

Birthdate: April 28, 1953

Blessing: October 14, 1982

Ascension: October 10, 2022

Seonghwa Ceremony: October 15, 2022

Catherine (Cathy) Ferabolli, nee Aherne, was welcomed into a large Catholic family in rural Ireland on April 28, 1953. Cathy grew up on a farm with 15 brothers and sisters. They milked cows and shared chores. She learned to work hard.

Cathy excelled academically and enjoyed reading, but what she really loved above all else was playing sports. With so many brothers and sisters, it was easy to put together a football game on the field after dinner. Cathy was in the first group of

women allowed to officially play Irish football in her town. She has always been a trailblazer.

After graduating high school, Cathy joined some of her brothers and sisters who had traveled to America to find work. Cathy landed in the Big Apple and began her next adventure. In 1974, Cathy was introduced to the Unification Church by Hisako Watanabe and was moved by the vision of the Unification Movement to build one family under God. She thrived as she worked on many campaigns, including the 1974 Madison Square Garden Rally where Father spoke intriguing words that caught her attention: "What we need are new ideas - God's ideas, because humankind has exhausted all of its own ideas already. So, I ask each one of you to open your mind and open your heart, so that the spirit of God can speak to you directly." Cathy invested in studying these new ideas. Her spiritual brother, Chad Hoover, said that once Cathy heard the Divine Principle she was "all in!" She was dedicated, good-natured and hard-working. Her infectious smile and positive energy allowed her to successfully outreach and share her faith with many.

Cathy's deep faith guided her throughout her life. On October 14, 1982, Cathy received the Marriage Blessing to Altair Ferabolli, who lived in Brazil. Their early communications were through a translator, but Altair became her rock. Over the next 40 years together, they built a beautiful family with three lovely daughters, Arlena, Karmina, and Letisha. Karmina, who had cerebral palsy and needed constant care, lived for just nine precious years. During those demanding years, Cathy said that sometimes people would ask her, "How can you still believe?" Cathy's simple response was, "I don't believe in God, I depend on God. I know I can get through each day because God has my back." It was this heart that she wanted to pass on to her children and those around her. Cathy's sister, Bridgette, said that while the nurses came to care for Karmina every day, it was Cathy who was mentoring and caring for the nurses. Cathy had a mother's heart, not just for her children but for the whole community.

Cathy has taken care of so many people over the years, and she had the heart of an activist. That was her God language, the way she personally felt connected to God. She was drawn to service projects from supporting people in need, to investing in the youth of her faith community - being there for them when they needed an Auntie. Cathy was always involved!

Mika Deshotel said of those times, "Cathy Ferabolli opened my eyes to the plight of those less fortunate. She was always rooting for the underdog and had a special place in her heart for young people and providing them with opportunities to grow. She served as a mentor, and a community leader, but ultimately as a mother who led by example. She also gave me invaluable experiences, working with movers and shakers for positive change in the community."

Cathy was at the heart of many Worcester community events, creating collaborations between her faith community and numerous other organizations, including Friendly House, Emmanuel Baptist Church, Worcester Housing Authority, the Regional Environmental Council, and Brigham Hill Community Farm, to name just a few. Cathy was an avid supporter of the Women's Federation for World Peace, Schools of

Africa project.

Her heart was one of selfless service. She was recognized by so many, both young and old. In 2004, the Family Federation for World Peace honored Cathy with an award for her Outstanding Leadership and Dedication to Service. In 2007, The International League of Muslim Women, New England Chapter, honored Cathy with an award in recognition of her Outstanding Service to G-d, Family and Humanity. Cathy later traveled to Israel with WFWP as part of a peace initiative to bring reconciliation and healing among the three Abrahamic faiths: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.

Cathy's sister, Bridgette, said she was a champion for so many people. When she got her teeth into a cause, she wouldn't let go. She gave 100% of herself in all that she did. Cathy was feisty and fun. Bridgette was hopeful that Cathy could retire, once she reached 65 years of age, and relax a little. But no, Cathy wanted to do something to help the refugee crisis. And so their family welcomed a refugee youth from South America to live with them. This was her way of loving God and loving the world.

Her joy, her love of games, her sense of fun, and the memories she created with the many, many people she loved lives in our hearts. Cathy is survived by her husband of 40 years, Altair; her eldest daughter, Arlena, who is Blessed with Takanari Suzuki, and their daughter, Kaya; and Cathy and Altair's second daughter, Letisha Feraboli. Cathy leaves behind 9 of her 15 siblings and many other family members and friends all over the world.

As we celebrate Cathy Feraboli's beautiful life, we are comforted by the words of Rumi, "Life is a balance of holding on and letting go." Those we love may leave the physical world and we will miss their physical presence, but they are always with us in our hearts.



### **Seonghwa Ceremony**

Date: Saturday, October 15, 2022 at 1:00 PM

Location: First Unitarian Church (90 Main St, Worcester, Massachusetts 01608)

Calling hours will be on October 14 from 4 PM to 7 PM at O'Conner Brothers Funeral Home (592 Park Ave, Worcester, Massachusetts 01608)

Zoom livestream link:

[us02web.zoom.us/j/84959718362?pwd=cHBTZWZ0SWh6Y2RKTUFMZDNGUTINdz09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84959718362?pwd=cHBTZWZ0SWh6Y2RKTUFMZDNGUTINdz09)

Meeting ID: 849 5971 8362 Passcode: 101522

Cathy wished to invite anyone who would like to make an offering in remembrance of her to donate to the Women's Federation for World Peace - Schools of Africa Project at [www.wfwp.us/schools-of-africa](http://www.wfwp.us/schools-of-africa)