



## Susan Lynn Esserwein

February 7, 1955 - November 1, 2025

Susan Lynn Esserwein, 70, passed into the loving embrace of God on November 1, 2025, after a valiant battle with cancer. Sue was born on February 7, 1955, to the late Francis Brady Howard and Doris Ann Haas and raised in Baltimore. She received her Bachelor of Science Degree in Music Education from Towson University and her Master of Arts Degree in Music, Concentration in Church Music and Liturgy, from St. Joseph's College in Rensselaer, Indiana. Sue also studied Performance at the Peabody Conservatory, Liturgy at The Catholic University of America, and Lay Ministry at Mt. St. Mary's College. From 1980 until recently, Sue was a guest speaker and cantor at the conventions of the National Pastoral Musicians Association and the East Coast Conferences, presenting workshops on enhancing music in the Catholic liturgy. From 1980 until 2000, she served as choir director, music and liturgy director, trainer of lay liturgical ministers, and composer in residence for St. John's Catholic Church in Columbia and other Catholic parish communities in the Baltimore area and in Phoenix, Arizona.

Sue was a gifted musician and composer. In addition to scoring music for several cable networks and independent filmmakers, she composed and released over 25 albums of instrumental music for meditation and healing as well as inspirational and celebratory liturgical music. She also coauthored songs with her husband, Phil Esserwein. Together they founded Starfire-Muse Studio Productions in the mid-1980s. All of Sue's published works can be

heard through Orchard, Pandora, Amazon, Apple Music, Spotify, You Tube, and other streaming platforms.

Sue and Phil married in 1980, and their 45-year marriage was grounded in faith, love, laughter, and music. Phil recalls their playful and affectionate relationship, which included calling each other “Peep,” and the delight and challenge of creating music together. “She had a gift for creating community” within their publishing company, in their musical groups, and among their friends. Sue and Phil bonded deeply in their spirituality. According to Phil, Sue and he “were always trying to move beyond who we were to what we could become.”

For the last 25 years, Sue taught at Mount Saint Joseph High School in Baltimore, serving as vocal music director, music director for the theater program, and liturgist. As Administrators Brendan Donohue and Rob Peace wrote in Mount Saint Joseph’s tribute to Sue, “She was a formidable, no-nonsense instructor to her students and colleagues, yet had a distinct sense of style and a cackling laugh that could quiet a performer’s nerves and remind adults of the joyful nature of educating young people and forming them into the men God intends them to be.”

In addition to her beloved husband Phil, Sue is survived by their daughter, Lovella Paradiso, their grandson Chey Paradiso, two half-sisters, Helen and Nancy, and many cherished friends. She was predeceased by her parents and her sister, Deborah Ann Howard.

A Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated on Saturday, November 15, at 11:00 AM at Saint Joseph’s Monastery, 3801 Old Frederick Rd, Baltimore, MD 21229. The family will receive friends in the church beginning at 10:00 AM. The Mass will also be live-streamed at <https://www.youtube.com/@saintjosephmonasteryparish7861>.

A reception for family and friends will follow the Mass at Mount Saint Joseph College High School, 4403 Frederick Avenue, Baltimore, MD 21229.

Interment will be private.

In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to the American Cancer Society, Mount Saint Joseph High School, or Covenant House.

# Tribute Wall

MA

“ Mark purchased the Strength & Solace Spray for the family of Susan Lynn Esserwein.



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**Mark** - November 12, 2025 at 05:27 PM

LP

“ Chey was Uma’s little peep from the very first time she sang opera to get him to stop crying.



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**Lovella Paradiso** - November 11, 2025 at 02:44 PM

LP

“ 4 files added to the tribute wall



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**Lovella Paradiso** - November 11, 2025 at 02:24 PM