



Patricia Lefevere

August 1, 1943 - March 30, 2023

Patricia Lefevere, 79, of Englewood, died unexpectedly on March 30 from complications of cancer treatment and congestive heart failure. A passionate journalist and intrepid world traveler, she retained her trademark good humor to the end. She is survived by her beloved daughter Katelijne Lefevere, son-in-law Damon Broglie and grandsons John and George Broglie, of Richardson, TX. She will be deeply missed by them and by her many relatives and friends around the world. Born in Saint Cloud, MN to Helen Murray and Clarence Scharber in 1943, Patricia graduated from the Marquette University College of Journalism in 1965. She later did graduate work in England at the University of Essex, where she met Andre Lefevere. After their marriage they lived in Hong Kong, Belgium and Australia before moving to Austin, TX in 1983. Patricia filed stories from 22 nations on six continents. A business and finance reporter in Hong Kong and Belgium, she switched to religion after reporting on the work of the World Council of Churches in Geneva, Switzerland in 1976 as it and other religious organizations sought to deal with the huge resettlement issues of a quarter million refugees rendered homeless by the Vietnam War. She reported for many U.S. publications, but most regularly for the independent National Catholic Reporter (NCR), where she was a significant contributor for more than 40 years.

Tom Fox, former NCR editor, recalled Patricia as “a tenacious researcher and reporter, one of the finest who contributed to NCR.” He said, “You could aim her at any subject and

be assured she would return with a well thought out report. I feel honored and most grateful to have collaborated with her over many years.”

Tom Roberts, also a former NCR editor, called Patricia “an editor’s dream: impressively smart with a great sense of humor, always prepared, a self-starter with boundless energy and an engagement with the news worldwide that was remarkably detailed and nuanced.”

“She was inexhaustibly and intelligently curious, deeply read across disciplines and ready, it seemed, to go anywhere on a moment’s notice,” he said.

“In ways subtle and bold, she was fearless. I confess to using her occasionally as an example when working with young writers over the years. I would describe her as eager to talk to as many people as she could find that were connected to a story.

“She staunchly guarded the integrity of the reporting craft and believed stories usually have more than two sides.

“Her interviewees included everyone from Nobel laureates to a death row prisoner. She won top awards from the Catholic Press Association for her interview with death row prisoner Thomas Andy Barefoot in Huntsville, Texas, on the eve of his execution in 1984 and for her cover story on the attack and destruction of the World Trade Center in New York on 9/11.

“Her understanding of the post-Vatican II church and contemporary theologians was on full display in an extensive appreciation she wrote for NCR following the death of controversial Swiss theologian Hans Kung, based in part on dozens of conversations and interviews she had with him over decades. <https://www.ncronline.org/news/people/hans-kung-ce...> http://www.natcath.org/NCR_Online/archives2/2004c/...

“In 2019, Patricia spent an academic year as a participant in the University of Notre Dame’s Inspired Leadership Initiative ...Another participant, learning of Patricia’s death, sent a group email that said: ‘RIP Patricia ... Please send us an interview with God.’ One can only imagine the lengths she might go to in working on that assignment.”

Patricia lived in Tenaflly during her marriage to the late Dr. Richard Gardner. She later moved to Englewood and married Joseph Weitekamp, who preceded her in death along with her parents and sister, Marie Elaine Scharber. Funeral mass was held April 4, noon, at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church in Tenaflly. Burial and graveside service to be held April 15, 10:30 a.m., at St. Martin Cemetery in Rogers, MN. Funeral Mass will be livestreamed through Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church Facebook Page. <https://www.facebook.com/olmctenaflly> In lieu of flowers, friends and family can donate to Catholic Relief Services and/or Jesuit Refugee Service.

Patricia Lefevere, National Catholic Reporter Article:

Burial

 Saturday, April 15th 10:30AM

 St. Martin Cemetery
13705 Rogers Drive
Rogers, MN 55374