

Kathryn Marie (Murphy) Orozco – Kate was born December 17, 1959, in Gillette, Wyoming, passed away on September 13, 2026, at Campbell County Health in the same community where her life began. Kate was feisty, fiercely intelligent, deeply passionate, and extraordinarily talented. She graduated from Campbell County High School, where she excelled in debate on the CCHS Speech Team. After graduation, she spent a year as a foreign exchange student living with a Swiss family (the Allenspachs) in Wil, Switzerland. She endeared herself to her Swiss family and learned how to speak both High and Swiss German. Kate returned from Switzerland and set up a “pipeline” for Swiss friends and acquaintances to travel to and live in Wyoming experiencing American life while working at her parents’ drugstore, Murphy’s Drug in Gillette, WY. Kate attended Gonzaga University, where she achieved her bachelor’s and master’s degrees in education. She began teaching in Spokane and committed herself to lifelong learning and teaching with a gift and passion for both. Ultimately, she earned her Ph.D. in Leadership and brought her intelligence, conviction, and unmistakable personality as a teacher, administrator, and superintendent to the students, educators, and communities she served, including Spokane, WA, North Platte, NE, Whitefish, MT, Coeur d’Alene, ID and Kahlottus, WA. Kate made her home in Grants, New Mexico, a place and community she dearly loved with her loving husband Paul. She and Paul treasured the New Mexico sunshine, the mountains, their faith community and the people around them. When her health declined, she ultimately returned to Gillette, where she entered hospice and spent her final chapter close to family. Kate is survived by her mother, Nancy Murphy; her brothers, Tom Murphy Jr. and Jim Murphy (Allison); her sister, Terry Norfolk (Paul); her husband, Reuben Paul Orozco; her children, Micah Whalen, Meghan Hovee (Luke) and MariClaire Razeka (Joseph), her five grandchildren, and her stepchildren, John Paul, Christie, Carie, Hope, and Luke. She was preceded in death by her father, Tom Murphy Sr., and her sister-in-law, Dianna Murphy. Kate lived a life marked by intelligence, music, education, determination, and an enduring love for her family and the communities she called home. She will be remembered not simply for what she accomplished but for the unmistakable spirit with which she lived—a woman present to everyone she encountered. Kate left to her best friend and colleague, Katy Karschney, the final touches to complete a book they wrote together. Kate will be dearly missed, but never forgotten. Memorials and condolences may be sent in care of Gillette Memorial Chapel 210 West 5th Street, Gillette, WY 82716.

Please scan this QR code to
share a loving memory or
tribute.



Rita Mashak | Tara Aanonsen
Tara Cowger
Funeral Service-Monuments-
Advance Planning-Cremation-
Lending Library, Learning to say
goodbye; children’s tour.

In Loving Memory Of...



Kathryn Marie Orozco

December 17, 1959

September 13, 2026



Psalm 56

My heart is ready, God.

My heart is ready.

I will offer you music and song.

Awake, my glory,

awake, lyre and harp.

I will awaken the dawn.

**I will proclaim you among the peoples, Lord,
and make music for you among the nations,
for your mercy reaches as high as the heavens,
your faithfulness to the clouds.**



Mass of Christian Burial

10:00 a.m., Wednesday, September 16, 2026

St. Matthew's Catholic Church

Gillette, Wyoming

Officiant

Father Patrick Quinn

Musicians

Joanne Membrey

Gary Melgaard

Kathy Holland

Sue McKillop

Sarah Thrailkill

Songs

"Pescador de Hombres"

"Only In God"

"Trust In Me"

"You Are Mine"

"Amazing Grace"

"Song of Farewell"

Pallbearers

Micah Whalen | TC Murphy

Jacob Norfolk | Joe Raczka

Luke Hovee | Luke Orozco

*The family extends an invitation to a reception
and time of fellowship following interment catered by
Prime Rib Resturant at Parish Hall.*