



Celia P. Cantu

November 27, 1940 - March 19, 2026

The story of Celia P. Cantu is one of strength, resilience and perseverance, fueled by relentless optimism. She was rooted in faith—with a particular devotion to Our Lady of Guadalupe—that provided an unwavering moral compass throughout her life. Above all, her story is one of love—that intangible, mysterious force that, in her presence, was palpably felt.

Celia was born on November 27, 1940, in San Luis, Potosi, Mexico, to Ignacio and Antonia Palacios. She was working as a secretary at the Mexican television network Televisa in the early 1960's when she met an advertising executive from San Antonio, Texas, who would sweep her off her feet. After a one-year long-distance courtship, Celia married Felipe L.

Cantu—a Mexico-born citizen of the United States. Felipe soon convinced his young wife to begin a new life in the United States.

They made their first home in Del Rio, Texas, where the first two of their children were born.

In the years that followed, their path led them through San Antonio, Mexico, California, and Dallas before finally making their home in the Alamo City where the couple tended to their growing family. Ultimately, they would have six children, three boys and three girls. Given the symmetry of their gender distribution, the kids quickly nicknamed themselves the “Mexican Brady Bunch”.

Those were happy times. The family home sat directly across a city park, enabling the children to run and play with seemingly tireless energy, all under Celia’s watchful eye from the living room. Though the family’s means were modest, the children never felt it, sheltered by Celia’s commitment to a joyful, loving home. On their birthdays, each child woke to the familiar strains of Las Mañanitas, and a homemade cake—candles ready—awaited them. The children attended St. Gregory the Great Catholic School just a few blocks away, and the adjacent parish church soon became the family’s spiritual home.

Celia loved being out and about, taking in the world around her. In the years before she drove, she would gather her six children and board the city bus bound for downtown San Antonio, turning ordinary errands into small adventures. Whether it was a quick stop at San Fernando Cathedral, a movie at the Alameda Theatre, or a visit to the pediatrician at the old

M&S Tower, she led her children through the city with a sense of joy that made everything feel special. Her wanderlust stretched far beyond the city limits: she often traveled with her children to Mexico City, often by train, sometimes by plane, guiding them through the streets and memories of her own childhood. She fearlessly moved throughout the vast city with her six children in tow—undaunted, unafraid—determined to give them the world she carried in her heart. The highlight of those journeys was presenting each of her newborns to Our Lady at the Basilica de Santa María de Guadalupe in Mexico City. She made that pilgrimage of love for each of her children, placing them beneath La Morenita's mantle, trusting in the quiet protection only a mother can give. In her later years, the roles gently reversed: her children took her on near-daily outings, some as simple as visiting the grounds of local churches. She loved those moments just as deeply. Her joy in being out in the world never dimmed.

But with life being unpredictable, tragedy would strike. Left widowed at just 48 after the untimely death of her beloved husband, Celia suddenly faced an uncertain future with young children to look after. Yet it was during this period that her unstoppable resilience shone through. After grief began to mercifully subside, she demonstrated that

no challenge

was too great, no roadblock impassable. She had cast away any fears or doubts she had for

the sake of her children, never slowing down in showing them the way. It was in this self-reliance that she truly learned to soar.

Celia loved the outdoors, especially gardening and tending to her plants. After 40 years in

the home where she raised her family, she purchased a new one in 2017—better suited to

her life then and graced with architectural features that seemed tailor-made for her,

including the bay window in the parlor she had always wanted. As in her former home,

passing motorists would slow down to admire her beautifully landscaped gardens.

Celia had a strong devotion to Our Lady of Guadalupe and was a proud Guadalupana. She

entrusted her children and grandchildren to Our Lady, and her home was filled with images

of La Morenita. Perhaps the most endearing and heartfelt gesture she offered was blessing

her children and grandchildren at every parting—a tradition her children now carry forward

with their own families. Along with her faith, Celia kept an impressive repertoire of Mexican

proverbs for every occasion, which she readily imparted as valuable life lessons. Her

favorites included: Dime con quién andas y te diré quién eres, Mejor sola que mal

acompañada, and No hay mal que por bien no venga. She truly had a pearl of wisdom for

every occasion.

Even with her limited English, Celia negotiated her way through life in her adopted country

with remarkable zeal. She was instinctively and extraordinarily wise. Despite her share of

loss and grief, she derived incalculable happiness surrounded by her family.

“La vida es

hermosa,” she would say until the end. And she was right: Life is beautiful.

She is preceded in death by her husband, Felipe L. Cantu. She is survived by her six

children: Gabriela C. Couvillion, Antonio Cantu, Roberto Cantu, Marcela Szinnyey (Victor),

Felipe Cantu (Tracey), and Claudia Alvarez (Carlos); her grandchildren: Warren Couvillion,

Jose Couvillion, Alejandra Castillo, Isabella Castillo, Alexander Szinnyey (Ally), Paulina

Szinnyey, Ana Delgadillo (RJ), Rebekah Szinnyey, Sofia Szinnyey, Benjamin Cantu, Carlos

Alvarez, and Diego Alvarez; her great-grandchildren: Alexander Szinnyey, Amiela Szinnyey,

Austin Szinnyey, Mabel Delgadillo, and Ruben Delgadillo.

A visitation is scheduled for Sunday, April 12, 2026, from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. with a rosary at

6:30 p.m. at Mission Park Funeral Chapel, 3401 Cherry Ridge Dr., San Antonio, TX 78230.

The funeral Mass will take place Monday, April 13, 2026, at 10 a.m. at St. Gregory the Great

Catholic Church, 700 Dewhurst Rd., San Antonio, TX 78213. Burial will follow at Fort Sam

Houston National Cemetery, 1520 Harry Wurzbach Road, San Antonio, TX 78209.

Reception to follow immediately after interment at the St. Gregory the Great Catholic

Church parish hall. In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations in memory of Celia

be made to the Down Syndrome Association of Central Texas: <https://dsact.org/donate> or

4006 N. Lamar Blvd., Austin, TX 78756.

Cemetery Details

Ft. Sam Houston National Cemetery

1520 Harry Wurzbach
San Antonio, TX 78209

Previous Events

Visitation

APR **12**. 5:00 PM - 8:00 PM (CT)

Mission Park Funeral Chapels Cherry Ridge
3401 Cherry Ridge Dr
San Antonio, TX 78230
(210) 349-1414
<https://www.missionparks.com/>

Funeral

APR **13**. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

Saint Gregory the Great Catholic Church
700 Dewhurst Rd
San Antonio, TX 78213

Tribute Wall

GC

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Gabriela Couvillion - April 15 at 10:27 AM

GC

“ 6 files added to the tribute wall



Gabriela Couvillion - April 12 at 12:01 AM

CA

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Claudia Alvarez - April 11 at 10:45 PM

CA

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Claudia Alvarez - April 11 at 10:19 PM

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“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Claudia Alvarez - April 11 at 10:18 PM

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“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Claudia Alvarez - April 11 at 10:16 PM

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Claudia Alvarez - April 11 at 10:14 PM

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Claudia Alvarez - April 11 at 10:12 PM

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“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Claudia Alvarez - April 11 at 10:10 PM

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“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Claudia Alvarez - April 11 at 10:09 PM

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“ 2 files added to the tribute wall



Claudia Alvarez - April 11 at 10:08 PM

CA

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Claudia Alvarez - April 11 at 10:03 PM



“ *Enchanted Cottage was purchased for the family of Celia P. Cantu.*



April 11 at 12:42 PM

GC

“ 8 files added to the tribute wall



Gabriela Cantu Couvillion - April 10 at 11:44 PM

GC

“ 10 files added to the tribute wall



Gabriela Cantu Couvillion - April 10 at 11:33 PM

MS

“ 11 files added to the tribute wall



Marcela Szinnyey - March 25 at 11:39 PM

MS

“ 12 files added to the tribute wall



Marcela Szinnyey - March 25 at 11:38 PM

MS

“ 9 files added to the tribute wall



Marcela Szinnyey - March 25 at 11:34 PM