



Elizabeth 'Betse' Kirkland Rockwood

May 18, 1937 - June 26, 2025

Elizabeth 'Betse' Kirkland Rockwood, beloved daughter, sister, wife, mother, grandmother and great grandmother died peacefully on June 26, 2025.

The daughter of Arden Elizabeth and Samuel Kirkland, she was born in Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania on May 18, 1937. Betse grew up riding horses in the still-rural suburbs of Philadelphia and became a decorated equestrian. She found in the outdoors the presence of the Divine and a call to serve, which stayed with her throughout her life.

Betse followed two paths into adulthood: she debuted in Philadelphia and Baltimore to the delight of her parents and then, to her own delight, entered the Lankenau School of Nursing. Her nursing studies were cut short, however, when she met the love of her life – Bill Rockwood - at a July 4th celebration in Galveston, Texas while visiting her aunt. Betse and Bill married a few months later, a union that continued for 46 years until Bill's death in 2002.

Betse established their home in Texas and set about encouraging the world around her to realize its capacity for love. While raising three children, she published two books on Christian prayer that had multiple printings in multiple languages. Betse also led as a layperson in the Episcopal Church for decades, including a term as President of the Women of Christ Church in San Antonio.

At the age of 76, Betse graduated from the Oblate School of Theology with two degrees in Pastoral Ministry. Betse was then received into consecrated life with the Oblate Missionaries of Mary Immaculate as a secular nun continuing to live and work in the world as Christ's committed servant. She put the degrees to work immediately and continued until sidelined by illness.

Betse is survived by her children, Shelly Gunn and husband Bob, Robert Rockwood and wife Meg, and Lindsay Irvin and husband Lennie. She was proud grandma Betse "GMB" to eight grandsons: Robert Christian, Stewart and Gibson Gunn; William, Graham and Aidan Rockwood; and Lawrence and Joseph Irvin. She was also the proud great-grandmother of Annabel, Fisher, and Sabrina Gunn.

Betse is predeceased by her parents, brother Faris "T" Kirkland and sister Polly. Her siblings Narelle and Bill Kirkland survive her.

We are so grateful for the loving care provided by Visiting Angels of San Antonio, especially Holly Willis, the incredible team at Aging Gracefully, and Heart of Texas Hospice.

Previous Events

Mass of Resurrection

JUL 30. 11:00 AM (CT)

Saint Anthony De Padua
102 Lorenz Rd, San Antonio, TX 78209
San Antonio
San Antonio, TX 78209
bellaunbeh97@gmailcom

Tribute Wall



“ Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Elizabeth 'Betse' Kirkland Rockwood.



July 28, 2025 at 07:28 PM



“ To know Betse was to recognize how she trusted God in every aspect of her life. I admired her pursuit at Oblate and that as a part of her education, she helped establish the Caregiver Support Group at St. Mark's Episcopal Church. As I among a caregiver, I appreciate that Lillian Morris and Mary McClung continue a monthly meeting. Sincerely, Sally Dooley

Sally Dooley - July 28, 2025 at 12:46 PM



“ Betsy was such a special person. She radiated peace and joy to all those that came in contact with her. Her dedication as an Oblate made her so happy to belong to this consecration in the world by means of the world. Rest in Gpd's arm now. See you in the next life.



Claudette F. Cyr

Claudette F. Cyr - July 03, 2025 at 08:36 PM

PW

“ I have 3 memories:

1. Calling her friend, DeeDee, so Betse can talk to her.
2. Going to the little chapel to pray.
3. Splitting a cheeseburger at Jim's.

There is an extra light in heaven.

Pat Walker

Pat Walker - July 01, 2025 at 08:34 PM

EM

“ Eduardo and Maria purchased the Country Basket Blooms for the family of Elizabeth 'Betse' Kirkland Rockwood.



Eduardo and Maria - June 30, 2025 at 10:12 PM

MP

“ Dear Lindsay, Robert and Shelly,
How blessed we all were to know Betse. She was my mother's best and most loyal friend and brought so much love and humor to all of us. We will really miss her!

Mary Parker - June 30, 2025 at 03:25 PM