

16 X MOM: A Mastery of Motherhood



By Barbara Olivo Cagle

Reviewed by D. Andrew McChesney

Dedication and devotion are keys, both to the story told and the production of this book. Growing up without the warmth of family love, Rose Nunez Olivo marries and showers her sixteen children with devotion. She dedicates herself to providing each of them with the love, guidance, and caring she never had. Recognizing the transformation in her mother's life, daughter Barbara (child number thirteen) tells Rose's amazing story to the world.

What emerges as a result of Barbara's dedication is a massively complete work. It begins with the arrival of Rose's immigrant father, Joseph Nunez in the historic mining town of Campo Seco where he meets, falls in love with, and marries Adelaide "Lydia" Madriago. When she tragically dies of tuberculosis at twenty-one, the couple already has three children. Jacqueline Rose is the second born. She has an older brother, Rodger, and a younger sister, Marie.

As a single parent, Joseph "Pa Pa" struggles to keep his young family united while providing for them. Disagreements with one of his late wife's family, and a desperate need to see his children cared for, force him to contact Children's Aid and place them in foster care. Rose and Rodger go to live with Teresa Espinosa, an older lady with a perhaps shady past, whom they know as "Ma." The children are properly, if not generously provided for, and contribute to the household income from an early age, delivering Ma's homemade enchiladas and tamales around their San Jose neighborhood.

After graduating from high school, Rose marries Nello John Olivo, Sr. She blossoms, enveloping their ever-increasing brood with all the love and care she had been denied in her childhood.

The laminated hard cover volume is well illustrated with family photos, genealogical charts, and excerpts of Rose's philosophies. 16 X MOM: A MASTERY OF MOTHERHOOD is an inspirational celebration of maternal love and well worth reading. As a gift, it is the ideal way for all to say, "Thanks, Mom!"

See Barbara's web site at www.barbaracagle.com for ordering information

Reviewed by Shirley Smith-Allen

Dear Barbara,

I enjoyed reading every word of your book. Having known you over the years made it more special. Getting to know your family was such an honor. You did such a wonderful job writing this book, I felt you took me right into your family and their life.

Being a Baby Boomer and growing up during the same years as most of your brother and sisters, I was taken back in time when family life was so much different than today. Life was simpler and we depended on the family unit to get us through all of the difficult times. We appreciated what we had and not what we did not have. No we did not have a lot of money but we learned that we needed to work to get the things we needed.

Your mom is so special and I can see the love you have for her radiate throughout this book. She is a very strong woman and I know she passed this on to her children. Her faith in God is what got her through the difficult times. Without the faith in God I don't know how I would have weathered the many ups and downs we all experienced in life. I know you have this faith as well. You gave me such a positive insight into the Catholic Religion.

Today I recorded in my journal during my devotions Father Dondero's unforgettable speech on page 283 and 284. I bet there were very few dry eyes during his speech. I know my eyes were not dry when I read it.

Thank you for writing this book and paying tribute to your wonderful loving mother and family. I am so proud of you and what you have accomplished and with you all the success you deserve.

I feel so close to your family after reading this book and feel that if I ever went to one of your reunions that I would know each and every one of them.

God Bless

Reviewed by Dora Tylock

Barb,

Your mother's story is fantastic! I am so enjoying reading about your family. What a tribute to a wonderful woman, an inspiration to womanhood. The thoroughness that you applied in getting information and pictures attributes to the fact that this is an outstanding piece of writing.

You are to be commended and I'm sure your family is very proud of you.