

On behalf of her beloved husband, Rich and her devoted children, Leslie and Jess, and her faithful sister, Katie - welcome and thank you for joining us today as we gather to remember and celebrate the life and legacy of Janie Gallaher.

For those that don't know me, I'm Katie - it was my joy and privilege to be married to Jason Gallaher, Rich and Janie's late son...and I was blessed to have Janie as my mother-in-law for over 30 years. Rich and Leslie have given me the opportunity to guide our time together today as we reflect and share how Janie's life impacted each one of us.

Janie was born Margaret Jane Bayle on December 22, 1948 in Yakima, Washington. At age 19, Janie married Rich Gallaher and began their 57 years together as they grew into true soulmates. Their marriage was filled with love, laughter, and a deep sense of togetherness; a partnership built on commitment, care, and mutual respect throughout their lives.

Janie dedicated her career to vocational education - she was a natural teacher - patient, compassionate, and endlessly supportive...always believing in the potential of others.

Janie's warmth and creativity touched every part of her life. She was an amazing cook and baker, loved sewing and art, and approached every project with care and imagination. But above all, her greatest joy and passion was her family. Nothing made her happier than spending time with those she loved, creating memories, sharing laughter, and filling her home with comfort and connection.

Despite facing numerous health challenges over the past 13 years, Janie continued to live each day with joy, love, and a profound sense of purpose. She remained a source of comfort and laughter for her family, inspiring those around her with her strength, warmth, and unwavering spirit. Her life was a testament to the power of love and resilience, and her presence will be deeply missed but forever cherished in the hearts of all who knew her.

Janie's legacy lives through her impact on many people including each one of us gathered together today. I encourage you to use this time together to share memories, tell stories, and laugh and cry together because that's what brought Janie so much joy in her time with us.

Losing those we love is never easy. In my own journey, solace has been found in my faith and meaning has been found in the practice of identifying a character quality I associate with the person, and striving to live that out more fully. As I've been reflecting on Janie's impact on my own life, and in preparation for sharing with this larger audience today, there is a verse from the Bible that brings together that solace and meaning for me - 1 John 4:19 "We love because God first loved us."

Over these last 30 years I have seen example after example of how Janie's first love for others extended an open invitation and an unconditional welcome into her life. Is that not the very definition of what a mother does?...to love a life that grows within even before it has come to be known.

Janie was mother and grandmother to many - Jason, Leslie, Jess, myself, Emma, Sarah, Kathryn, Joshua, and Austin...each of us have been generously embraced in Janie's first love for us...not having to earn, or prove, or be worthy but simply accepted and loved from the very beginning.

My faith reminds me that it is God's love for me through which I am able to love others first...and Janie's life has been a testimony and example to me of how to do that very well. May each of us seek to love like Janie...to love generously, to love unconditionally, and to love others first.