



Mrs Juana Esther Ortiz- Aponte

March 1, 1933 - October 14, 2025

Juana Esther Ortega Ortiz, affectionately known as "Esther," passed away peacefully surrounded by her beloved family at the age of 92. The love she showered her family with along with the calm demeanor, angelic persona, and steadfast faith which defined her will be forever missed but remember in perpetuity.

Born on January 5, 1933, in Orocovis, Puerto Rico, Esther was the daughter of the late Agripina Aponte Ortiz and Aracelis Ortiz Alvarado. She came from a humble family amid a world in disarray. As a child she endured the turmoil of the great depression, World War II, and political uncertainty within her own island. Through the uncertain times, Esther was resolute, determined, and full of grit. She focused on the good around her, always clinging to her faith, and choosing to spread love, joy, and peace - especially within her family.

At age of 24, Esther met the love of her life, Reyes Ortega Perez, in "La Isla Del Encanto" Puerto Rico. Together, they traversed the vicissitudes of Military Life with the United States Army. Their love survived the most vicious of fights - the Vietnam Conflict - where Ortega honorably fought for the United State of America as a proud Boricua. In the age without cellphones, or Amazon, Esther and Ortega resorted to writing letters to each other during his deployment. With each stroke of the pen, and through every envelope opened, they endured the desperation to be together again. Their love, so strong and pure, flourished as kindred souls.

Esther and Ortega married on January 11, 1958, in Cayey, Puerto Rico,

surrounded by jubilant friends and family. This celebration symbolically began a long life of happiness, adventure, and love centric experiences. Undaunted, Esther followed Ortega around the world as they moved to Germany and Washington state. Finally, settling in their homeland of Puerto Rico, they raised their family in Bayamon, Puerto Rico. It was there that Esther thrived hosting family, friends, clergy, and passersby to a warm cup of tea, or her famous café con leche, and a myriad of succulent meals. In a rusty metal frame rocking chair, with light padding, she sat for countless hours, talking, praying, listening, holding her grandchildren, watching novelas, christian programs, and most importantly, listening to those she loved - who loved her even more than words could describe. Her love for God, for family, and for life was second to none. The patience she exuded, and the compassion she showed, was enviable, an example to us all. She taught her grandchildren how to cook, how to live, and how to forgive - she was an angel God sent from heaven, to make us all better, and now she has returned to her home reunited with her cherished Don Ortega, mother, father, countless siblings, and most importantly her Lord and Savior. She eagerly awaits our arrival, at the doorsteps of heaven, much like she patiently waited on the balcony of her house in Bayamon for her family to arrive.

Esther is survived by her loving children Jorge Eduardo (Jorgie), Reyes Manuel (Reyito), Juan (Johnny), Carlos Juan (Carlitos), Ramon, and Juana Esther (Tita). Also, the grandchildren, and great-grandchildren she had an integral role in raising Nitzita, Reyin, Stephanie, Jorgito, Reynaldo, Jose, Kevin, and Selentia. She was able to also meet, love, and shower with gifts her great-grandchildren Alicia, Rey Jacob, Natalia, and Adeline.

A memorial service to honor Esther's life will be held in Bayamon, Puerto Rico at a future date, details of which will be shared as they are finalized. The family extends a heartfelt gratitude to Doña Esther's caregiver, and daughter, Tita Ortega, for her loving care over the two decades. Finally, to all her family for the love and care that they offered countless to Doña Esther with love and gratitude.