



Philomena de Mello

(née Fonseca)

25 SEPTEMBER 1933 - 11 AUGUST 2021

Born in Bombay in 1933, to Dr Pius and Alice Fonseca, Philomena was cousin to [Dr Jack de Sequeira](#) (Panjim) and niece to Dr Helen Figueiredo (Mombasa) on her mother's side.

Philomena's father sadly passed away when she was a teenager. To help support her family, she took on some of her mother's piano students. She later qualified as a music teacher through London's Trinity College of Music - the start of a lifetime dedicated to music education.

She met her husband-to-be Neville when in their teens, and they became engaged to be married. They emigrated to Tanga, Tanzania, where they married on 30 July 1957. They went on to have 3 sons in the following years - Neil, Nigel and Cecil.

In 1966 the family moved to Nairobi where Philomena took up a teaching role at Parklands Primary School, and became the choir mistress at St Francis Xaviers Church. Their fourth son Norbert was born a few years later. Philomena was later appointed as the senior Music teacher at Loreto Convent Valley Road, and under her tutelage the school choirs won many awards at the annual Kenya Music Festival.

On emigrating to London with her family in 1981, Philomena found her Indian matriculation qualifications weren't recognised by many employers. Determined to prove herself, she undertook a UK teaching degree at the Open University, which she completed in 1984. Shortly afterwards, she successfully secured a teaching role with Brent Council, where she worked until retirement.

The couple enjoyed their retirement travelling, much like their earlier years of marriage. They made yearly trips to Goa and Mumbai to visit family and friends, and other European destinations like pilgrimages to Lourdes and Banneux - until health issues made travelling difficult.

Philomena passed away peacefully after a period of illness, in Harrow, London. She will be lovingly remembered by her devoted husband of 64 years, Neville, their four sons Neil, Nigel, Cecil and Norbert, their wives Harsida, Mary and Liz, and two grandchildren Lianne and Ryan.

A funeral service will be held at [Breakspear Crematorium](#), Ruislip, London on Tuesday 31 August 2021 at 12.00pm noon and will be streamed online. There is a mourner limit at the crematorium, so if you wish to attend the funeral, or require access details for the online service please email nevillefdemello@gmail.com by Wednesday 25 August. Instead of flowers, please make any charitable donations to [St Lukes Hospice](#).

Condolence messages may be sent to nevillefdemello@gmail.com.

"The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters." Psalm 23

