



Rita Whitbey

October 13, 1948 - July 16, 2025

Rita R. Whitbey, 76, of Morrilton, AR passed away on July 16, 2025, at her home. Rita was born on October 13, 1948, in Morrilton, Arkansas, daughter of Clarence and Beatrice (Beck) Hartman. Rita was a member of Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Morrilton, taught religious education and attended Adoration for many years, and had a deep faith in our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. She held a variety of jobs, but one of her fondest was babysitting dozens of children over the years. Rita had great joy in being able to care for her parents and cherished her time as a wife, mom, sister, aunt, grandmother, and great-grandmother. She loved dancing, bargain shopping, and eating at Golden Corral.

Rita is survived by her husband of 57 years, Bill Whitbey of Morrilton; daughters Brenda Bunker and husband, Randy of Cabot; Karen Smith and husband, Kevin of Cabot; and son Chris Whitbey of Morrilton; brothers Clarence (CW) Hartman of Texas, Gerald (Jerry) Hartman of Mabelvale, and sister, Carol Shewmake of Morrilton; 8 grandchildren (Katie Hamilton, Tabitha Davis, Justin Whitbey, Lexy Danner, Broady Whitbey, Carson Whitbey, Jennifer Siebe, and Gabriel Smith); 2 chosen grandchildren (Paizlee and Cannon Collins); and 7 great-grandchildren (Carli, Hayzen, Rainlee, Paxton, Maverick, Madden, and Estelle) and a host of extended family and friends. She was preceded in death by her parents, Clarence and Bea Hartman, son, Kevin Whitbey, and great-grandson, Memphis Whitbey.

Per Rita's request, she is being cremated. A Mass of Christian Burial will be held at 10:00 a.m. Saturday, July 26th, 2025 at Sacred Heart Catholic Church with Father Stephen Hart officiating. Burial will be at Sacred Heart Cemetery. Family visitation will be an hour before the service at the church with a Rosary following at 9:30. In lieu of flowers, please consider donating to Arkansas Children's Hospital. The family wishes to express thanks to all who visited and prayed, Hospice Home Care, nurse Dee, nurse's aide Tiffany, and special thanks to friend and caregiver Christine Ashby. Arrangements are by Harris Funeral Home of Morrilton.

Cemetery Details

Sacred Heart Cemetery

Morrilton, AR

Previous Events

Visitation

JUL 26. 9:00 AM - 9:30 AM (CT)

Sacred Heart Catholic Church
506 E. Broadway
Morrilton, AR 72110

Rosary Service

JUL 26. 9:30 AM - 10:00 AM (CT)

Sacred Heart Catholic Church
506 E. Broadway
Morrilton, AR 72110

Mass of Christian Burial

JUL 26. 10:00 AM (CT)

Sacred Heart Catholic Church
506 E. Broadway
Morrilton, AR 72110

Tribute Wall



“ *Harris Funeral Homes, Inc. created a Tribute Video in memory of Rita Whitbey*



Harris Funeral Home - July 18, 2025 at 12:34 PM

JE

“ *My deepest condolences to the family. Rita was truly someone special. You're in my prayers 🙏*



Jennifer Evans - July 28, 2025 at 11:55 AM



“ *Dish Garden with Fresh Cut Flowers was purchased for the family of Rita Whitbey.*



July 24, 2025 at 12:27 PM



“ *A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Rita Whitbey.*

July 24, 2025 at 12:27 PM

AN

“ I remember Rita as a warmhearted and cheerful person, always beaming with energy. I always felt so welcome when Brenda brought me home with her. Rita was always very busy, but at the same time she had a special way of making people feel appreciated. When we spent a couple of days in Rome together she impressed us with her ability to embark on an adventure so enthusiastically, to embrace the new so openly and to savor life's wonders so passionately. My most heartfelt and deepest sympathy to the Whitbey family whom I thank for the wonderful moments you all have gifted me with during my exchange year. You are all amazing. Sending you love and greetings from Germany, Anne



Anne - July 20, 2025 at 01:19 PM

JD

“ We meet Rita at Karen and Kevin's wedding years ago. Rita was so appreciative of everyone who helped get it together. Therefore, we are so sure she is proud of Karen, her daughter, for sacrificing time from her job and family, cooking her special diet, taking her to doctor appointments, cleaning her home, etc. just as Rita sacrificed for Karen as she was growing up. We are sure Karen treasures those memories more so as Rita's days were winding down. God will reward such love and devotion for all your kindness and time to help and make memories!! We are so sorry for your loss and Kevin and Gabriel's loss!! As your friends we are here to help if you need us! Your Friends... Karen and Jack

Jack dowell - July 19, 2025 at 10:16 AM

CR

“ Rita & I clicked right off, cousins make wonderful friends. When you were loved by Rita, you were truly loved! She had such a kind heart. I will miss our hours long phone calls. Although we were thousands of miles apart, we were seconds apart in heart. Love you Rita!!

Connie Reed - July 18, 2025 at 01:20 PM

LR

“ Love Y'all, Scott & Connie Reed planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Rita Whitbey.

Love Y'all, Scott & Connie Reed - July 18, 2025 at 10:54 AM

LR

“ Love Y'all, Scott & Connie Reed purchased the Floor Plant for Sympathy for the family of Rita Whitbey.



Love Y'all, Scott & Connie Reed - July 18, 2025 at 10:54 AM

CM

“ Christy Smith McCray lit a candle in memory of Rita Whitbey



Christy Smith McCray - July 18, 2025 at 09:10 AM

DH

Carol, I am so sorry for the loss of your Sister. My thoughts and prayers are with you and Rita's family. Love, Debbie Hogan

DEBRA HOGAN - July 19, 2025 at 03:10 PM

CM

“ *The Whitbey family is so loving. I first met Rita when she watched me and my brother one summer. I think I was 7. That's all it took and from then on she continued to take care of me and my family. With her prayers, hugs and always being there to listen. I love you Rita! And I will miss you!*

Christy Smith McCray - July 18, 2025 at 09:09 AM

DU

“ *We are so sorry for your loss. YHou will be in our prayers.*

Duvall - July 17, 2025 at 06:07 PM