



## Franca Amabile Tognazzini

March 7, 1927 - August 1, 2023

Franca (Nonna) passed away peacefully of natural causes in the care of Cedarbrook Memory Care on August 1, 2023, Zia Elvira's Birthday! A very special thank you to the Cedarbrook and Hospice staff and management, her stepdaughter-in-law and closest friend, Danielle Filipponi, her step-granddaughter Giannessa Angela Filipponi, for their loving-care, caring love, kindness and patience. Special thanks to the Tognazzini Families for their support with Franca over the many years in Papa Arturo's absence.

She (Nonna) was born in the Northern Italian town of Olsano-Mura, Italy, (Prov. Brescia), on March 7, 1927, to Pietro and Angela Pilotti. As a teenager she aspired to be a professional seamstress. After completing that trade discipline, she, with her sister would contribute time and resources to/for their family. Growing up she always showed a commitment to detail and work ethic. Nonna and her older sister (Elvira) with their entrepreneurial spirit and determination would vend in neighboring towns that dotted the Italian countryside near Olsano.

From remnants of cloth, she would make herself and her sister something to wear for special occasions and the winter weather. They provided designer quality garments for the entire family.

After worldwide depression and during World War II, she and her family were part of the Italian Resistance movement, abidingly assisting American flyers whose planes had been shot down, escape to safety. [En]during the resistance, Nonna and her sister Elvira, were taught to use a machine gun.

Fortunately, neither ever had to use the weapon! (Learned this at Elvira's funeral)

In 1959, in her mid-30s, speaking only Italian, Franca moved to Guadalupe, CA, to help her sister Elvira and husband Gene Groppetti with their three young sons (Gene, Claudio and Don) while Zia Elvira and Zio Gene operated a successful Commercial Hotel, Bar and Ginos Restaurant in Guadalupe. Her first husband (widower/Thelma Walls Filipponi) Fred Filipponi Sr. at that time was a farmer. Fred Sr. was widowed in 1959, leaving him to assume the routine of raising both; a daughter Fredrica (18) and son Fred Jr. (5). Franca and Fred Sr. met, had a quick romance, and were wed on April 23, 1960, at our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Church in Guadalupe, CA.

In April 1961, Franca and Fred opened Frederick's Deli. They started small with deli sandwiches and eventually added pizza. While helping to run the pizza parlor, Franca did her due diligence, learned English, and became a U.S. citizen in 1964. The pizza parlor was quite successful, so they decided, in addition, to open a dinner house and bar in 1973. Unfortunately, Fred Sr. passed away in 1975.

Her current husband (deceased) Arturo Tognazzini (widower/Mary Tognazzini). Arturo with Mary, and family owned and operated Sunset Laguna Dairy in Guadalupe, CA. The Filipponi's and Tognazzini's were friends over the years, so it was no surprise when Franca and Arturo wed on January 5, 1985, at our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Church in Guadalupe, CA. Franca befriended Arturo's adult children, Anthony Tognazzini (deceased), Laura (Tognazzini) Dias and Arthur Tognazzi Jr., along with becoming a step-grandmother to several grandchildren.

Nonna Franca (96) and Zia Elvira (98), sisters, competitors, best friends, next door neighbors, inseparable and one often mistaken as the others twin! They started with very little but with commitment they finished as success stories! Both their businesses in the Guadalupe/Santa Maria Valley were dining pillars of Northern Santa Barbara County, CA.

Franca is survived by:

Her sister Egidia (Renato) Fiori, Milan, Italy.

Step-Children; Fred Filipponi (Danielle), Clovis, CA, Arthur Tognazzini, Paso Robles, CA and Laura Dias, Elk Grove, CA and step-daughter-in-law Diana Tognazzini, Lakewood, WA .

Step-Grandchildren; Giannessa Filipponi, Clovis, CA, Giovanni Filipponi (Aimee), Twin Falls, ID, Lisa Sharp, Reston, VA, John Tognazzini, Santa Maria, CA, Eric Dias (Lisa), Santa Maria, CA, Stephanie Goodlett (William), Elk Grove, CA, Annette Zambrano, Paso Robles, CA, Craig (Cindy) Tognazzini, Agua Dulce, CA , Christopher (Kristy) Tognazzini, Santa Maria, CA, Scott Tognazzini, Santa Maria.

Step-Great-Grandchildren; Gianna, Gavin, Jaydon, Grayson, Baylee, Gauge, Madeline, Sophie, Hunter, Cody, Austin, Hailey, Lilley, Scotty, Peter, Kristina, Matthew, Ally, William, and Chase.

Many nieces, nephews, great-nieces, great nephews and cousins in the United States and Northern Italy.

Nonna's closest special friends; Luanna McCann, Elk Grove, CA, step-nephew Michael Filipponi her casino partner, Fresno, CA and our family friend and loving caretaker Joslyn Ochoa, Fresno, CA.

Nonna- your parents Pietro and Angela, your husbands Fred and Arturo, your sisters Elvira, Savina and your brother Gianni, brothers-in-law Gene and Giorgio, sister-in-law Aldina, step-daughter Fredrica, step-son Anthony, step-daughters-in-law Dolores, and Mary Franzina Tognazzini, step-son-in-law Alvin, step-nephew Henry, step-grandson David and step-grandson-in-law Richard left this earth before you and will surely welcome you, with open arms, in heaven to celebrate your life well lived!

Grazie e addio! Ciao, Momma Franca, due volte una Sposa [twice-a-bride], Sorella, Nonna, Bisnonna, Zia e amici!

In lieu of flowers please donate to Cedarbrook Memory Care, Bristol Hospice, Alzheimer's/Dementia Research Study or a Catholic Charity of your choice in Franca's name.

Services provided by Salser & Dillard Funeral Chapels

(559) 635-1144 / [www.salseranddillard.com](http://www.salseranddillard.com) <<http://www.salseranddillard.com>>

127 E. Caldwell Ave., Visalia, CA, 93277

# Previous Events

## Viewing

AUG 16. 4:00 PM - 6:00 PM (PT)

Salser & Dillard Funeral Chapel  
127 E. Caldwell Ave.  
Visalia, CA 93277

## Rosary

AUG 16. 6:00 PM - 7:00 PM (PT)

Salser & Dillard Funeral Chapel  
127 E. Caldwell Ave.  
Visalia, CA 93277

## Mass of Christian Burial

AUG 18. 10:30 AM (PT)

St. Mary's Catholic Church  
608 N. Church Street  
Visalia, CA 93291

## Graveside

AUG 18. 12:00 PM (PT)

Visalia District Cemetery  
1300 W Goshen Ave  
Visalia, CA 93291

# Tribute Wall



“ *Salser & Dillard Funeral Chapel created a Tribute Video in memory of Franca Amabile Tognazzini*



---

**Salser & Dillard Funeral Chapel** - August 12, 2023 at 04:42 PM

FG

“ *From, John, Aimee, Gavin, Grayson, Gauge purchased the Beautiful Heart Bouquet for the family of Franca Amabile Tognazzini.*



---

**From, John, Aimee, Gavin, Grayson, Gauge** - August 16, 2023 at 11:01 PM



“ *Heavenly Heights Bouquet was purchased for the family of Franca Amabile Tognazzini.*



---

August 15, 2023 at 12:18 PM



“ *Sweet Tranquility Basket was purchased for the family of Franca Amabile Tognazzini.*



---

August 11, 2023 at 05:20 PM



“ *Ocean Breeze Spray was purchased for the family of Franca Amabile Tognazzini.*



---

August 11, 2023 at 04:35 PM



“ *Lavender Reflections Spray was purchased for the family of Franca Amabile Tognazzini.*



---

August 10, 2023 at 06:32 PM



“ *We have LOVED Franca in this life. Let us not abandon her now. Let us instead lead her with our prayers into the house of the Lord. Rest in Peace Aunt Franca.*

---

**Michael Filipponi** - August 09, 2023 at 09:54 AM