



Pallbearers Max Kennedy, left, Chris Kennedy, behind center left, both sons of the late Ethel Kennedy, and Matt Kennedy, center front, and, Joseph Kennedy III, front second from right, both grandsons of Ethel Kennedy, carry her casket from Our Lady of Victory church, following funeral services, Monday, Oct. 14, 2024, in Centerville, Mass. (AP/Steven Senne)

by Associated Press

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CENTERVILLE, Mass. — October 15, 2024

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Members of the Kennedy family gathered Monday for the funeral of Ethel Kennedy, the wife of the late Sen. Robert F. Kennedy.

Ethel Kennedy, who raised their 11 children after her husband was assassinated and remained dedicated to social causes and the family's legacy, [died on Thursday at age 96.](#)

Monday's funeral, which was closed to the public, took place at Our Lady of Victory, in Centerville, Massachusetts, about 70 miles (112 kilometers) south of Boston.

Mourners gathered at the church under a cool gray sky. Ethel Kennedy died following complications related to [a stroke suffered earlier this month.](#)

"Along with a lifetime's work in social justice and human rights, our mother leaves behind nine children, 34 grandchildren and 24 great-great-grandchildren, along with numerous nieces and nephews, all of whom love her dearly," the family statement said in announcing her death.

President Joe Biden called her "an American icon — a matriarch of optimism and moral courage, an emblem of resilience and service."

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The Kennedy matriarch, mother to Kathleen, Joseph II, Robert Jr., David, Courtney, Michael, Kerry, Christopher, Max, Douglas and Rory, was one of the last remaining members of a family generation that included President John F. Kennedy. Her family said she had recently enjoyed seeing many of her relatives before falling ill.

A millionaire's daughter who married the future senator and attorney general in 1950, Ethel Kennedy had endured more death by the age of 40, for the whole world to see, than most people would in a lifetime.

She was by Robert F. Kennedy's side when he was fatally shot in the kitchen of the Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles on June 5, 1968, just after winning California's Democratic presidential primary. Her brother-in-law had been assassinated in Dallas less than five years earlier.

Ethel Kennedy went on to found the Robert F. Kennedy Center for Justice and Human Rights soon after her husband's death and advocated for causes including gun

control and human rights. She rarely spoke about her husband's assassination.