

Elena Pilar Schlener, 51

Elena Pilar Schlener, 51, passed away Thursday, Dec. 18, 2008, at her home near Bonners Ferry.

Funeral services were held Monday at Kootenai Valley Mennonite Church in Bonners Ferry. Interment followed at Moravia Cemetery in Bonners Ferry.

Elena was born Jan. 21, 1957, in Lima, Peru, to Flavio J. Mazzetti and Maria Luisa Mazzetti Florez-Estrada.

Elena was nurtured by her loving family and dear teachers and friends at Santa Ursula School in Lima.

At a very young age, she began placing all her faith in Jesus Christ not only for salvation, but for guidance in righteous principles of life. God richly blessed Elena's walk with himself by granting her a privileged position as his servant.

She served faithfully in loving from the heart those who came to know her. One's relationship with Elena resulted in sweet instruction in humility and self-sacrifice.

Jesus taught in the book of Matthew that all of God's principles for living given to man prior to his first coming were consolidated into just two: "you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind," and "you shall love your neighbor as yourself."

Elena understood these principles and practiced them wherever she went.

God brought the Mazzetti family of eight to Colorado Springs, Colo., in 1971 and fulfilled her dad's life dream of becoming an American citizen.

In God's divine providence,

she and Phil, a cadet at the Air Force Academy, met and developed a God-centered relationship that flourished and resulted in their marriage at the Air Force Academy Chapel on July 3, 1976.

Elena began studying aviation and earned her commercial and instrument ratings to better relate to her husband's career as an Air Force KC-135 pilot. She also instructed other pilots' wives to help them enhance their own marriage relationships.

God, in His perfect timing, provided Elena and Phil with the first of six wonderful children after nine years of intense longing for them. She carefully nurtured them in God's ways and they each now trust Jesus Christ as Savior, a credit to God's grace in her life.

Chris, 23, is in pilot training at Columbus Air Force Base; Jessica, 21, is finishing her senior year as a nursing student at Cedarville University in Ohio; Erik, 18, is a high school senior; Austin, 16, is a high school junior; Louisa, 14, is a high school freshman; and Matthew, 10, is a fifth-grader.

Elena was a deeply loving wife to Phil, faithfully serving with him during a 23-year military career and then, in 2006, God called her with Phil, to serve as missionaries in bringing the Gospel of the Good News of Salvation by Faith in Christ to the people of Portugal.

The people there loved her and became closely attached to her in just a short time as they saw that she was a genuine Christian, a "do-er" of the Word and not a "hearer only."

After just a year and a half



on that field of service, Elena was diagnosed with terminal melanoma cancer. Despite cutting edge treatments

at renowned medical centers and Godly advice from a dear naturopathic doctor, it was God's plan to take Elena home to heaven.

The night before she passed away, God placed on her heart repeatedly the words from Psalm 116:15, "precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his Godly ones." She explained to Phil the next morning that she felt God was calling her home.

That day, Elena enjoyed a beautiful 21st birthday celebration for Jessica, hymns of praise to God, readings of life-touching scriptures and phone calls from Chris, her mot her and all her brothers and sisters.

Her husband and children kissed and embraced her and said their good-byes and then she breathed her last on this present earth at 1:20 a.m. on

Dec. 18.

It was Elena's wish, and it remains the wish of her husband and children, that the people of this community and in the whole world be reconciled (to be in right relationship) first with God through faith in Jesus Christ, and then with each other, in love.

Her children rise up and bless her; her husband also, and he praises her, saying: Many daughters have done nobly, but you excel them all. Prov 31:28,29 unasb

Thank you, dear Elena. Enjoy God's presence, face-to-face. We'll see you soon.

"Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy, to the only God our Savior through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen." Jude 24,25 unasb

Family and friends can sign Elena's book at www.bonnerrsferryfuneralhome.com.

Bonnerr Ferry Funeral Home handled arrangements.