



Lawrence Edward Miggins

August 20, 1925 - December 12, 2023

TO VIEW THE LIVESTREAM OF THE FUNERAL SERVICES FOR MR. LARRY MIGGINS, PLEASE SCROLL DOWN.

Lawrence “Larry” Edward Miggins, died in his sleep on Tuesday, December 12, 2023, at his home in Houston, Texas, with his wife, Kathleen, holding his hand, ushering him into Everlasting Life with words of prayer, gratitude, and love. Larry was born on August 20, 1925 in the Bronx, New York to Irish immigrants John James and Josephine O’Sullivan Miggins.

Larry was preceded in death by his cherished parents; his incomparable siblings John, James, and Robert Emmet Miggins, and Eileen Hoppenthal; his beloved sons, Rory Oliver Miggins, Larry Joseph Miggins, and an infant son. May their souls rest in peace.

Larry grew up when ice was delivered by horse and cart, baseball was played

in the sandlot, and children scavenged scrap metal for pocket change. In his parents, Larry witnessed a strong work ethic, a devout Catholic faith, and a generous spirit. His father was an NYFD firefighter who was cited for his bravery and heroic rescues. This example instilled in Larry a first responder attitude. He never shirked responsibility or took a bystander role. Several of his children witnessed him coming to the aid of a man who fell in downtown Houston, cracking his head on the curb. Larry rushed to his aid, lifted him, recited prayers in his ear, and stayed with him until the ambulance arrived. Larry considered his duty to save a life the same as his duty to save a soul. His actions embodied the priesthood of the laity.

Larry's mother was a resourceful homemaker, using available land to grow fruits and vegetables. She made everything from scratch and coached her children to always lift a cake because the heavy one had better ingredients. Larry would always choose the heavy cake. Hence, he had fruit cakes on hand in July! He liked a good homecooked meal better than dining out. "God bless the cook and the provider," ended every meal. During the Depression years, his parents shared any excess with neighbors in need and helped them with home projects. His father explained that you never know what someone is going through. Larry learned empathy and compassion during the Depression. These traits helped him in his later profession as a probation officer.

Larry was a product of a strong Catholic education, and he ensured his 12 children each received a Catholic education through high school. A strapping 6'4" by eighth grade, he was a scholar-athlete, winning a scholarship to Fordham Prep and lettering in three sports – football, baseball, and basketball. He excelled at baseball, playing in minor league games at the Polo Grounds while still in high school. Larry was the Valedictorian of his 1943

class.

Following graduation from Fordham Prep, Larry received a football scholarship from the University of Pittsburgh. While at Pitt, he met Honus Wagner, who urged him to try out with the Pittsburgh Pirates. The tryout led to a contract with Larry's beloved New York Giants. His father's blessing upon Larry's leaving home was "stay close to the priests." World War II interrupted his baseball career and education, while he served in the Merchant Marines. His cargo often contained prisoners of war. Larry returned to the Giants' farm team in Jersey City, and on April 23, 1946, Larry was playing third base for Jersey City when Jackie Robinson played his first professional game as a Montreal Royal. Larry was the last living player from that game.

Larry continued in the minor league system, with his greatest success playing for the Houston Buffs. He was a star on the Buffs 1951 Texas League champion team. He was a legend for crooning an Irish song for the fans during the 7th inning stretch. After that season, Larry was signed by the St. Louis Cardinals, where he was a teammate with Hall of Famer Stan Musial who became a lifelong friend. Larry's friend and fellow Fordham Prep alum Vin Scully called Larry's first major league home run (against Preacher Roe) in Ebbets Field. Scully called this improbable coincidence one of the highlights of his broadcasting career. Larry was inducted into the SUNY Maritime College Hall of Fame, the Texas Baseball Hall of Fame, and the Fordham Prep Hall of Fame. He received the inaugural Bill Dorrell Distinguished Service to Baseball Award from the Larry Dierker Chapter of SABR in Houston in 2016. At the time of his death, Larry was the third oldest living MLB player.

Baseball significantly influenced Larry's life, the biggest impact happening in 1952. During a road trip with the Cardinals to play the Cubs, Larry met the beautiful, native Irish, Kathleen McMahon, who worked at the Irish Consulate. They were introduced at a dance by a mutual friend, a priest. Being Irish and Catholic was central to Larry's identity. He knew right away that Kathleen was his soulmate. Her charm, love of music, and deep faith prompted him to call her "lovely lady" and "the cause of my joy" during their entire 70 years of marriage.

Larry retired from baseball in 1954 and began his career with the Federal Courts in Houston as a probation officer. Before long, he was elevated to Chief until mandatory retirement at age 55. Thereafter, he worked with the Houston Municipal Courts for 10 years, retiring in 1990. Larry saw the good in people and believed rehabilitation was possible with a strong belief system. Larry freely gave people the benefit of the doubt.

Because education was important to Larry, he obtained a BA from the University of St. Thomas in 1952, through the progressive leadership of Fr. Vincent Guinan who allowed Larry to take correspondence classes during baseball season. He later received a Masters degree in Criminology from Sam Houston State University. He was proud that all 12 of his children earned college degrees.

Larry lived his life with a strong faith, reciting an old-fashioned Morning Offering prayer which identified his daily task as "laboring for the salvation of my soul." His children know this prayer by heart. He and Kathleen lived it, daily. If they were burdened, they seldom showed it.

Together, they reared 12 children, eight sons and four daughters. They have

35 grandchildren and 9 great-grandchildren, with another expected in 2024. Their children gave them such joy. As Larry's mobility diminished, his face lit up when his family visited. Larry was a playful dad. Because of his height and athleticism, he could hoist 5 – 6 squealing youngsters at a time. He took his children with him on errands and work projects at rental properties. His children's friends were his friends, even if he forgot their names. He did not hesitate to give fatherly advice. Larry coached countless little league, PONY league, and college baseball teams. After his coaching days were over, he tremendously enjoyed watching grandchildren's sporting events. As a coach or a grandfather, he never missed a chance to pass along the command – anticipate. In baseball – anticipate where the ball is going. In life – anticipate the needs of others. He expected you to have your mind in the game.

Larry's happy disposition and pure heart were evident in his eyes. He had a song in his heart. He and Kathleen knew how to have fun. They danced. They sang. They entertained. And, once they were finally empty-nesters, they travelled. Larry and Kathleen were incredible story tellers and frequent pranksters. Larry's jokes and games were clean, clever, and hilarious. His children know them by label - "The Cow," "Pig Fair," "Magic Potato." They were involved in all Irish activities in Houston, including the Ancient Order of Hibernians, The Irish Society, the Center for Irish Studies at UST, and the St. Brendan Society.

Upon learning of his passing, many people have called Larry "Larger than Life." His neighbor, sculptor David Adickes, made this phrase literal when he prevailed upon Larry in 1990 to pose for the monumental statue of Sam Houston on I-45 in Huntsville.

Larry is survived by his beloved wife, Kathleen, his children, Eileen Hohlt (John), John Christopher Miggins (Debbie), daughter-in-law Sherl Hoepfner;

Maureen Swanson (Pat), Noreen Gottschalk (Stephen), Matthew James Miggins (Penelope), Kathleen Hibbler (James), Neil Patrick Miggins, Robert Emmet Miggins (Julie), Patrick Michael Miggins (Nancy), and Michael Sean Miggins (Abby). He is also survived by his adoring grandchildren and their spouses: Mary Hohlt (David Schneider), John (Lindsey) and Annie Hohlt; Christine Rorabaugh (Dave), Julia Proctor (Robby), and Matthew Miggins; Thomas Miggins (Jennifer) and Laura Markham (Brandon); Fiona, Patrick, Brian and Kenneth Swanson; Robert and Daniel Gottschalk; Gabriella, John James and Maria Miggins; Elizabeth, Conor, Bridget, and Rory Hibbler; Charles, Jack, and Adelaide Miggins; Lily, Carlo, Patrick, and James Miggins; James, Rory, and Bridget Miggins; Molly, Catherine, Lucille and Claire Miggins. Larry lived to meet 9 great-grandchildren, John Rex, Bridget and Logan Rorabaugh, Luke and Joshua Miggins, Henry and Lilly Hohlt, and Emmet and Astrid Schneider. Larry's numerous nieces and nephews also survive him as well as a dear cousin, Col. Mike Miggins.

The family would like to thank caregivers Marta Martinez and Maria Rodriguez for the exceptional care they provided, prolonging Mr. Larry's life until he died peacefully in his own home.

A visitation and Rosary will be held from five until seven o'clock in the evening on Monday, December 18, 2023, at St. Anne Catholic Church, 2140 Westheimer Road with the recitation of the Rosary at six-thirty o'clock in the evening. A Mass of the Resurrection will be held at one o'clock in the afternoon on Tuesday, December 19, 2023, with a reception following in St. Basil Hall. The family will hold a private burial on Wednesday.

In memory of Larry, set a good example, don't be a bystander, choose the heavy cake, anticipate the needs of others, share your resources, enjoy a laugh, sing, and stay close to Christ.

Donations in Larry's memory may be made to St. Anne's Church, St Anne's School, St Thomas High School, St. Agnes Academy, or the University of St. Thomas.

Tribute Wall

AM

“ Ann Miggin lit a candle To Kathleen and family. We were very saddened to hear of Larry's passing. We offer our sincere sympathies to you all at this very sad and difficult time. Reading Larry's obituary was inspiring, he led a long, courageous, fulfilled life and has a left behind wonderful family legacy. Eternal rest grant onto him, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon him. May he rest in peace. Amen. From Francis & Ann (Miggin) O'Kelly and also Tara, Ann-marie, Edel, Aoife, Frances, Niamh & Megan O'Kelly. Ardshanbally, Adare, Co. Limerick, Ireland.



Ann Miggin - December 20, 2023 at 12:00 AM

WF

“My wife and I extend our condolences to the entire Miggins family, and we are saddened that we can't be in Houston to join in a faithful send-off and to raise a parting glass. I've shaken hands with very few big leaguers, but that number proudly includes Nolan Ryan and Larry Miggins. As fond as I am of the flamethrower from Alvin, I'm more bowled over and won over by the life of the lad who hailed from the Bronx, particularly the life he forged with his wife. I'm an easy mark for old baseball lore (the LM stories involving Vin Scully, Stan the Man and Jackie Robinson etc. always enthrall) and for traditional Irish songs and for large Catholic families, so I'm especially grateful Larry Miggins graced the scene. My personal glimpses of his scenes were few, however, so I lean on my familiarity with his children to gain a fuller measure of the man. Kathleen was a college classmate and all the guys with any sense were smitten with her charm and goodness; Robert is a fellow parishioner and his warmth and generosity are as evident as his height and Irish looks. Both reflect extraordinarily well on their father and his example. Eternal rest grant unto him, O Lord.

Will Fagan

Will Fagan - December 18, 2023 at 03:58 PM

PW

“What an amazing man and an amazing life, a member of the Greatest Generation and the embodiment of the American Dream!

Peter Wrench - December 15, 2023 at 10:28 PM

GH

“ When I was a kid growing up in the 1970's I thought Larry Miggins was John Wayne! I Made Larry laugh with this - "Larry when you were 25 years old you could hit a 90 mile an hour fastball. Now that you are 90 years old I bet you can still hit a 25 mile an hour fastball!" To the entire Miggins Family - We love your family and you are always in our thoughts and Prayers, To Kathleen Miggins - Larry will always be remembered for his kindness, his singing and his great Irish humor!

From The Horan Family

*Gregory Horan
Elizabeth Horan
Tom Horan, III
Jeani Horan*

*John Horan
Michael Horan
Tim Horan
George Horan*

gregory horan - December 15, 2023 at 02:57 PM

BG

“ wonderful, faithful man that I was blessed to meet. He was a beautiful reflection of Christ spirt and he will be deeply missed.

Bruce Shannan Greer - December 15, 2023 at 10:54 AM

BM

“ Larry Miggins....a one of a kind, wonderful, smart, witty man - so, so devoted to Kathleen.

My memory will forever be one of laughter and enlightenment as he sat on the front porch chair or bench telling story after story. What a memory. Larry was kind to everyone and loved his family, but the BEST husband and Father I have had the privilege of knowing. Larry was the most faithful man that I have ever known as well, going to church EVERY day of his life! Remarkable and forever in my heart.

Bridget Monthy

Bridget Monthy - December 15, 2023 at 08:41 AM

FN

“ For many years I was lucky to live next door to Larry Miggins, Kathleen, and their dozen. Larry was hale, hearty and handsome and lived every day with gusto. He brought many smiles to my face. He and Kathleen lived with grace. Larry, you are unforgettable. You live on in our hearts. I send my deepest condolences to the entire Miggins family. Franci Neely

Franci Neely - December 15, 2023 at 08:27 AM

DW

“ May your memories comfort your family at this sad time❤️. We are keeping all of you in our thoughts and prayers. With sympathy and love, The Wittenberg Family

Deb Wittenberg - December 14, 2023 at 04:24 PM

KJ

“ My heart goes out to all of the family. He was such a great man and person. I see him in all of you. John and Neil and the rest of you my prayers are with y'all .

Kenneth Jozwiak - December 14, 2023 at 03:15 PM