



Henry James Ford

March 28, 2018

On Wednesday, March 28, 2018, after a long and courageous battle with cancer, Henry James Ford departed this life, at the age of 84, to be with his Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Henry is survived in life by his brother, Frank Ford, of Del Rio, Texas, and five children: Ms. Iris Ford, of McCalla, Alabama; Mr. Kevin Ford, of Allen, Texas; Mr. Niles Ford, of Baltimore, Maryland; Ms. Sonya Ford, of Gautier, Mississippi; and Mr. Robert Ford, of Houston, Texas. In addition, Henry leaves behind seven grandchildren; two great grandchildren, and a host of nieces and nephews, and friends. Henry is preceded in death by both of his parents as well as three of his siblings, Mr. Clarence Ford, and Mss. Julietta Knight and Joyce Lockwood, all of New Orleans.

Henry was born in New Orleans, Louisiana, on August 28, 1933, to Mr. Hampy Ford, of Bunkie Louisiana, and Mrs. Eloise Ford (nee Gabriel), of New Orleans, Louisiana. Henry was raised in New Orleans's Tulane-Gravier neighborhood and grew up attending St. Katherine's Catholic Church, where he also served as an altar boy and attended grammar school. Henry began his secondary education at St. Augustine's Catholic Seminary in Bay St. Louis, Mississippi, one of the few Catholic seminaries at that time open to African-Americans wishing to enter the priesthood, but he ultimately graduated from Booker T. Washington High School after being called home by his parents to assist the family during his father's illness.

Intending to fulfill his father's dying wishes by joining the Army, Henry ended

up in the United States Air Force by a twist of fate that involved unwittingly entering the wrong line at the enlistment office. Despite these humble beginnings, Henry went on to serve his country with distinction for 21 years, which included a tour in Vietnam and culminated in his honorable discharge at the rank of Senior Master Sergeant—one of the highest ranks then available to an enlisted man.

With the assistance of the G.I. Bill—and while working two jobs and caring for a family of four—Henry achieved his lifelong goal of attaining a college degree by graduating from night school at Loyola University New Orleans. From there, Henry accepted a position at South Central Bell telephone company in Birmingham, Alabama, where he steadily rose through the ranks in the company's corporate sales department before retiring in 1989.

Henry's life was as varied as it was exceptional. A devoted and lifelong member of the Roman Catholic faith, Henry was known to attend mass six days a week, and he regularly credited his successes in life to God's grace. Before his mobility left him, Henry was a frequent fixture on the basketball and tennis courts, and he regularly traveled abroad, always eager to experience new cultures and never missing an opportunity to visit Catholic shrines and religious sites. Finally, Henry's love of learning—particularly in matters of history and politics—was unrivaled, and he was known by his family and friends as a voracious reader. (He was rarely seen without a thick work of nonfiction or a crossword puzzle.)

Henry's going home services will take place on Friday, April 6, 2018, at 10:00 a.m., at Resurrection of Our Lord Catholic Church, 9701 Hammond Street, New Orleans, Louisiana 70127. Interment will follow at 12:15 p.m. at Biloxi National Cemetery, 400 Veterans Avenue, Biloxi, Mississippi, 39532.

Arrangement by D.W. Rhodes Funeral Home, 3933 Washington Avenue, New Orleans, Louisiana. Please visit www.rhodesfuneral.com to sign the online guestbook.

Cemetery Details

Biloxi National Cemetery

400 Veterans Ave
Biloxi, MS 39531

Previous Events

Visitation

APR 6. 8:00 AM - 10:00 AM (CT)

Resurrection Of Our Lord Catholic Church
9701 Hammond St.
New Orleans, LA 70127

Service

APR 6. 10:00 AM (CT)

Resurrection Of Our Lord Catholic Church
9701 Hammond St.
New Orleans, LA 70127

Graveside

APR 6. 12:15 PM (CT)

Biloxi National Cemetery
400 Veterans Ave.
Biloxi, MS 39535

Tribute Wall

GR

“ Lovingly remembering Henry from his USAF time at Chelveston AFB.England and Toul Rosieres AFB.France.
Maureen Saddington of Raunds and Gill Eady of Chelveston.

Gillian Rawlins - November 25, 2018 at 04:54 PM

CJ

“ Rest In Peace uncle Hank. My deepest sympathies to the family.

Clarence Ford, Jr - April 05, 2018 at 08:51 PM



“ Summer's Light Bouquet was purchased for the family of Henry James Ford.



April 04, 2018 at 03:56 PM

GS

“ I met Mr. Henry when he moved to the MS Gulf Coast following hurricane Katrina. He was active here at Our Lady of Fatima Church in Biloxi. He helped out with St. Vincent de Paul Society and very generously donated his old Avalon to the parish. We still have it and the pastor and Associate as well as some visiting priests and deacons use it when they stay at Fatima Parish. He was a quiet, dignified man and we were sorry to see him move to Texas, but we knew he could not stay alone. He will be missed here at Our Lady of Fatima Parish in Biloxi.

Gladys Simmons, office manager, Our Lady of Fatima Church

Gladys Simmons - April 04, 2018 at 03:49 PM