

RICHARD FRANCIS MACHEL



My father, Richard Francis Machel, passed away surrounded by his family on November 15, 2024. He was 79 years young. Born on June 7, 1945, in Providence, RI, he was preceded in death by his parents, Edward and Eleanor; and sister, Mary (Midge Kruluts). He is survived by his wife, Lisa (Gagliardi); brother, Edward (Carole) Machel; children, Lisa Machel, Phyllis (John) Wandrisco, Heather Machel Davis, Travas Machel,

Jake Machel, and Sasha Machel. He had numerous nieces and nephews, eight grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren.

Rich moved to Pittsburgh from Boston at the age of 10, and attended grade school at St. Bernard's Catholic School. He attended South Catholic High School, where he was captain of the 1962 State Championship Football Team, and was named team MVP, All-Catholic, and All-State. He received a scholarship to play football at The University of Kentucky where he was a three-year starter and never missed a game. He was named team captain by both his teammates and coaches his senior year. Rich loved his days at The University of Kentucky and will always be a Wildcat.

After college, he came back to Pittsburgh where he started a career at Xerox, eventually moving into finance. He "retired" at 65, and opened a restaurant in downtown Pittsburgh, which is still family-owned, and thriving to this day.

My dad loved intensity and physicality. He kept himself in top-shape throughout his life. In his early forties, he lied about his age so he could compete in The Golden Gloves - he made it to the final round and was beat by a kid half his age. I can remember as a little kid, him taking us to the boxing gym to learn how to throw a proper jab, or the driving range to learn the mechanics of a good golf swing. I'm also happy to say that he jumped out of a plane four times, all after the age of 70.

Richie was always the sharpest dresser in the room. He kept his clothes in impeccable condition, and wasn't afraid of a little pop of color. I remember one time at a wedding he gave his tie to a guy right off his neck because the guy told him how much he liked it. He had a way with people, and made you feel like you were the most important person in that moment. He was also a great listener, and his warm and kind spirit drew many towards him.

My father was a spiritual guy. He got down on his knees every night to thank God for another day. He was soft-spoken by nature, and he had a certain sense of calmness about him, which in his presence, you too would start to feel. This calmness and serenity he had inside his soul, I believe, came from his trust in God. When my world felt like it was on fire, he'd often tell me to get quiet somewhere and ask for peace right now, and direction tomorrow. He had this uncanny ability to bring me back to center and help ground me. My dad was unselfish and willing: willing to go to the wall for his teammates and the people he loved, willing to give the beggar on the street 10 bucks (over and over again), willing to sit down and have an honest conversation with almost anyone, willing to help people out (which he would do quietly), and willing to turn his life over to the care of God. His generosity, humility, honesty, integrity, awareness, and willingness are just a few of the spiritual principles he possessed.

My dad was much at peace here on this Earth, but he has now made his return home with God in heaven. We'll carry him close within us now, we'll carry him in our hearts and souls. Please hold him close, as we do, in your mind and spirit. My dad was a gift; and it wasn't his accolades, career, or even his children that will be his legacy. His legacy will be the ineffable and extraordinary beauty of his simple human heart. He was love. He made everyone he met feel loved and seen. I was fortunate enough to experience this love in close proximity.

I know my father would have only one last request from all of you, and that would be for you to wish a stranger well, if only in passing, even if you decide to keep it between you and God. He did this all the time, throughout the day, whenever he felt someone needed it. Whenever I was stuck, he'd always say to me, "Why don't you start by wishing someone well."

"I Love You Dad"

Family and friends welcome Thursday, November 21, 2024, from 2-8 p.m. **WILLIAM SLATER II FUNERAL SERVICE**, (412-563-2800) 1650 Greentree Rd., Scott Twp. 15220. Funeral Mass Friday, November 22, 2024, at 12:00 noon St. Mary of the Mount Church, Mary Queen of Peace Parish. Burial will be private to the family. www.slaterfuneral.com.

In lieu of flowers, my family asks that you make a donation to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, UPMC Children's Hospital Foundation, or the Make-A-Wish Foundation.



SLATER

Send condolences post-gazette.com/gb