



James McNeill McLaughlin

May 26, 1930 - January 2, 2024

On December 11, 1964, James McNeill McLaughlin moved to Blauvelt, N.Y., with his wife, Ann, and their children. On December 11, 2023, Jim, a beloved husband, father, grandfather and friend, moved to heaven and reunited with Ann, the love of his life.

Jim was born on May 26, 1930 to Loretta McNeill McLaughlin and Thomas McLaughlin of Woodhaven, Queens, N.Y. He was the youngest of the McLaughlin children, with four older siblings: Thomas, Barbara, Donald and Neil. Every day, while walking to school, Jim passed by a photography studio with photos hanging in the window, including one of a girl with a pretty smile and a bow in her hair — the shop owner's daughter.

After graduating from St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic Academy in 1948, Jim enlisted in the Army. He served one year of active duty at Fort Benning in Georgia, plus five years in the reserves before his discharge with the rank of staff sergeant.

One night, at a house party, he saw a pretty brunette sitting alone and sat down next to her. The world fell away as the two talked, and they were never apart after that. Jim knew then and there that he had found his soulmate, Ann Bonsignore: the girl whose photo hung in the window of the shop he passed while walking to school. They were married on April 25, 1953 and remained

married until her death 51 years later.

Jim was a devoted husband, and Ann was his world. They built their life together on the pillars of faith in God and love for one another, which they taught to their six children. Jim was a kind and patient father, and he extended his love to anyone who was adopted into his family. For his children, he was an enthusiastic Cub Scout pack leader, a creative Halloween costume-maker and a patient driving instructor. He was a lifelong believer in the power of discourse and community involvement, and after every Sunday morning mass, he gathered his family for a big breakfast and a discussion about politics before settling into his Sunday New York Times.

The family moved from Cambria Heights, N.Y., to Blauvelt, N.Y., in 1964. Jim loved his community and was an active part of it. He served as a lector and a eucharistic minister at St. Catharine of Alexandria Parish, where he was a devout parishioner and took part in many activities, helping in any way that he could. He volunteered with Friends of the Blauvelt Library, was a member of the Lion's Club and was a poll worker for local and national elections. He was the county's unofficial historian, penning a newsletter of local stories that he called "Rockland Reflections."

In 2004, Jim lost Ann, his best friend, to Alzheimer's disease. Determined that no other family should feel the pain he endured, he became an advocate for Alzheimer's research and an avid fund-raiser for the Alzheimer's Association. Each autumn, in Ann's memory, he would stand with photos of her outside every St. Catharine's mass, collecting money for the association's annual Walk to End Alzheimer's. (He did this until age 90, when his children begged him to stop standing outside in the cold, but his devotion to the cause never wavered.)

Jim worked as a linotype operator and was a proud member of the The New York Typographical Union for over 20 years before starting his own typesetting business, STB Graphics. There was never a project too ambitious for him, and in his later years, Jim pursued many. He lived at the Thorpe Village residence for over a decade and, when his famous brown bread became a hit among his friends, he started a “bakery” out of his kitchen called Jim’s Bread Box. He always had a fondness for words, so in his late 80s, he began auditing English and writing classes at the nearby St. Thomas Aquinas College. He was beloved by his professor, Gerald McCarthy, who made sure Jim could attend class even when he was no longer able to walk there. With Professor McCarthy’s encouragement, Jim wrote a number of articles for Nyack News & Views, submitted a collection of his poetry for publication and, with the help of his children, started a blog. He was passionate about the fight against hunger, and every time his grandchildren visited, he would show them his most recent letter to Congress.

“Think about time,” he wrote in an op-ed for Nyack News & Views. “How you use it. It’s worth it.” In his remarkable 93 years, Jim spent his time the way he knew best: living in love.

Jim is survived by his children and their spouses: Stephen, Sharon and Richard, Eileen and Brian, Kevin and Caye, Neil and Jennifer, and Tim, as well as his grandchildren and their spouses: Joseph and Amanda, Caroline and Greg, Dennis, Emily, Mariel and Christopher Robin. He will be remembered fondly for his quick humor and his unwavering kindness, warmth and gentle love. He will be deeply missed by all.

Jim never stopped loving Ann. He told stories about the two of them to anyone who would listen, and he spent his final days surrounded by the family they built. Through Jesus’s heart, as through an open gate, he passed through to

heaven to be at home with her once again.

A visitation for Jim will be held on Friday, January 5, 2024, from 4-8 p.m. at Moritz Funeral Home, 98 Route 303, Tappan, N.Y., 10983. His funeral mass will be held on Saturday, January 6, 2024 at 10 a.m. at St. Catharine of Alexandria Parish, 523 Western Highway South, Blauvelt, N.Y., 10913.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made in Jim and Ann's memory to the Alzheimer's Association.

Cemetery Details

Rockland Cemetery

201 Kings Hwy
Sparkill, NY 10976
(845) 359-0172
info@rocklandcemetery.org
<https://www.rocklandcemetery.org/>

Previous Events

Visitation

JAN 5. 4:00 PM (ET)

Moritz Funeral Home - Tappan
98 Route 303 South
Tappan, NY 10983
<http://www.moritzfh.com>

Funeral Mass

JAN 6. 10:00 AM (ET)

St. Catharine of Alexandria Parish
523 Western Hwy S
Blauvelt, NY 10913
<http://saintcatharines.org>

Interment

JAN 6. 11:15 AM (ET)

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