

Mr. Richard "Dick" Francis Higgins

September 12, 1931 - September 12, 2022

Richard (Dick) Higgins was born September 12, 1931 in Glen Ridge, NJ to Edward and Louise Higgins. He passed on September 12, 2022, on his 91st birthday.

Dick served as a Maryknoll Missionary for 20 years. He mostly spent time in the Philippines, where he ministered to the local communities and built schools. After leaving the Maryknoll community, Dick taught for Atlantic Cape Community College on the Jersey shore. Later, an opportunity with Southern Company Services brought Dick and his wife, Eileen, to Atlanta. At Southern Company, Dick conducted Management Training classes in Georgia, Alabama and Florida. Dick's zest for teaching and his faith were a key role in teaching adult education classes for many years at St. Aquinas Catholic Church.

Retiring from Southern Company, Dick found his ideal job as director of Seniors Enriched Living (SEL) in the Roswell and Alpharetta Area. Dick spent 23 years in this position expanding the program to a higher level of education with retired professors and business leaders who volunteered their teaching time. The organization grew to 400 participants at the time of his retirement from SEL in 2018.

A person with a thirst for learning and knowledge, Dick was a voracious reader who loved to discuss history, religion, and current affairs. He so enjoyed the art of conversation. Always a sports fan; cheering on the Braves, Notre Dame, Auburn (WDE), basketball and any game that his grandchildren were playing in.

He is preceded in death by his wife, Eileen Maloney Higgins; his parents; and his brothers, Edward, Paul, and Robert.

He is survived by his wife of 27 years, Mary Anne; his daughter, Mercedes Sanker (Steve Midas) of Chesapeake, VA; his stepsons, Brian DeStefano (Lisa) of Cumming, GA and Kevin DeStefano (Audra) of Auburn, AL; and the "Magnificent 7" grandchildren, Tatum, Michael and Aveary Sanker of Chesapeake, VA, Connor and Declan DeStefano of Cumming, GA, Aubrey and Paisley DeStefano of Auburn, AL; and many beloved nieces and nephews.

A memorial mass will take place at St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church on Wednesday, September 28, 2022 at 10:00am with a reception to follow.

Interment will be at Green Lawn Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to St. Benedict's Preparatory School, 520 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd, Newark, NJ 07102 or North Fulton Charities, 11275 Elkins Road, Roswell, GA 30076.

Cemetery Details

Cremation - Northside Chapel Crematory

12050 Crabapple Road
Roswell, GA

Previous Events

Memorial Mass

SEP 28. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church
535 Rucker Road
Alpharetta, GA

Reception

SEP 28. 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM (ET)

St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church
535 Rucker Road
Alpharetta, GA

Interment Services

SEP 28. 1:30 PM (ET)

Green Lawn Cemetery
10993 Alpharetta Hwy
Roswell, GA

Tribute Wall



“ *Mr. Richard "Dick" Francis Higgins*

October 08, 2022 at 11:37 AM



“ *Pretty Please was purchased for the family of Mr. Richard "Dick" Francis Higgins.*



September 27, 2022 at 11:52 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Mr. Richard "Dick" Francis Higgins.*



September 26, 2022 at 05:19 PM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Mr. Richard "Dick" Francis Higgins.*



September 26, 2022 at 01:27 PM

CR

“ I sat up all Classrooms for SEL on Tuesday when it was in sections at the Dodson Youth Center on the campus of RUMC. Dick was very friendly and easy to work with.

Rest in Peace, Dick.

Mary Ann, So sorry to read about Dick passing.

Dick is your special guardian angel 🙏 watching over his family!

Carole Ray - September 16, 2022 at 11:13 PM



“ After taking an SEL class about Japan. I was very impressed how the students helped the instructor whose second language was English and was also struggling with the A/V setup. This motivated me to approach Dick about teaching a course on Canada (later to find out he had a couple of brothers-in-law up there).

Dick's response was basically "Go for it." and he never once asked about course content or how I was teaching it. He just sat in on my class occasionally and asked the odd (i.e. occasional ;b) question.

Becoming a SEL instructor has really added some quality to my "golden years"...Thanks Dick - Clive Gillon

Clive Gillon - September 16, 2022 at 07:46 PM

TN

“ I remember when the position of director became available at SEL. Dick said, "I might like to have that job." Were we lucky! Dick had taught for us and knew what he was getting into. The job was his without question. I as a volunteer never worked with a man like Dick. When he was present, smooth sailing was the order. All facets of SEL improved. As Judy Seidner said, "Dick, you raised the bar." Well done good friend! Tom Nash

Tom Nash - September 16, 2022 at 03:29 PM



“ Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Mr. Richard "Dick" Francis Higgins.



September 16, 2022 at 01:32 PM



“ We are thinking of you and sending our heart felt condolences. Your memories of what a wonderful man Dick was will help you through this sad time. Love, Lillian and Harold

Lillian Glickman - September 16, 2022 at 06:57 AM



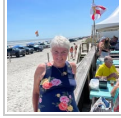
MaryAnn.....no one lives forever but we feel that we should! I did not know Dick well but his activities reached far and wide. He is now in a better place.
Much love from Sandy Tieken

Sandy Tieken - September 16, 2022 at 10:37 AM



Remembering my introduction to the Higgins family by the quantity of Richards. The great sense of love and togetherness sprinkled with laughter and fun. And knowing that I would have to have a "nickname" to distinguish me from all the other Richards. Not as lucky to get "The Duke" but impressed by the person carrying that designation. A class act and well beloved. Well done, good and faithful servant. Rest in Peace.
Mossy, Mossman, Pete, but still Richard

RICHARD C MOSS - September 16, 2022 at 01:46 PM



He was the best of the best. Always smiling, always laughing, always interested in what you were doing. He didn't mind the snow in Batavia....he just seemed to take everything in stride. There is a big hole in my heart. But I will fill it with happy memories and the sound of his laughter. I was privileged to have been one of his many nieces. Love ya, Duke.

Ginny (Higgins) Morey

Ginny Morey - September 16, 2022 at 03:57 PM

GC

Too many fond memories to capture in a quick comment. Watching him cope with Eileen's death and then rejoicing as he married Mary Ann. Never losing his cool as the only liberal in the heated discussions at the Saturday morning gatherings at the Skillet. Always upbeat and always a friend. And always able to take over when SEL needed someone to cover a course or take over the whole program. Dick Higgins could do it all, and do it well.

George Clements - September 21, 2022 at 06:07 PM

DP

Dick, Eileen, and very young Mercedes were my neighbors in Margate, NJ. A finer man and family would be hard to find. Mercedes and my daughter were friends. I'm glad Dick had such a good life.

Diane Perry - November 04, 2023 at 07:12 PM