



Thomas Francis Durkin

July 7, 1923 - September 14, 2024

On September 14, 2024, Thomas F (Tom) Durkin, passed away peacefully at the age of 101. His long life was one of service - to his family, country, church, and community,.

Tom was born in River Rouge, Michigan to Teresa and Michael Durkin on July 7, 1923. His mother moved the Tom and his brothers back to their home in Staten Island, NY just 2 years later, after the death of his father in an industrial accident. Tom helped his mother by working in a bakery after elementary school days (without gaining weight, to the surprise of the baker who sent goodies home with him!) He graduated from New Dorp High School, where he first met his future wife, Anne.

Pearl Harbor then directed his course, as he enlisted in the Army Air Corps in 1942, after graduating, following his two older brothers into service. He became a B-24 bomber pilot, flying out of Italy over the Alps to German fortified targets during the war. He completed 25 missions.

Tom returned to marry Anne in December, 1947. He made the Air Force his career, and after sending for Anne to join him in Japan after the war, their first daughter, Patty, was born, followed soon after by Kathleen, born in San Francisco on the way home. After duty stations from Bangor, ME to Guam, they landed in Fayetteville, NC, where Deborah was born. Over that time, in

addition to being a veteran of WWII, he also served in Korea and Vietnam.

After retirement from 20 years in the Air Force, Tom continued to serve his country - a second career in the Civil Service for another 20 years.

But service didn't stop after that retirement either - he went on to volunteer work the rest of his life. As a long-time member of RSVP (Retired Seniors Volunteer Program), named volunteer of the year more than once, he spent each week on Meals on Wheels delivery, Literacy for Adults program, Habitat for Humanity, Tax Assistance for Seniors, and went to the VA to visit "his guys" in long-term care for 20 years. Since he remained an early-riser all his life, he also worked in at least one game of golf with his long-time buddies. Golf was a game he really loved, and was proud of the three holes-in-one he'd made over the years. He played the game until he was 94.

Tom had a passion for being with people, often starting up conversations with folks standing in a line, a nurse checking his BP, or the folks at checkout counters in shops and restaurants. His friendliness and positive attitude even inspired Cape Fear Hospital's oncology center to name a new department after him, hence the Thomas F. Durkin Veterans Program came to be, inspired by his mantra "you've got to keep going..!" In addition to the wars, he survived cancer as well.

Tom and Anne were devoted to St Patrick Church, participated in many committees and events, and could be found at the same pew every week over their 60+ years as parishioners. After Anne's passing, he went to daily mass, then visited the columbarium and left a rose for her every day until he could no longer drive.

Tom was pre-deceased by his beloved wife, Anne, his parents, and his brothers, Martin and Daniel. He leaves behind a family that will love and miss

him throughout their lives - his daughters Patricia (Michael), Kathleen, Deborah (Bruce); his grandchildren Brian (Allie), Eric, (Kristen), Kristen (Joshua), Justin (Samantha), and Emma (Nick); his great grandson Jace Thomas, a step-granddaughter Courtenay, as well as nieces Dale, Gloria, and nephew Dennis.

His family wishes to thank devoted caregivers who were invaluable to sustaining his life in Fayetteville - Retha Toney, Cheryl McPhaul, Dina Carrion, and those at Fox Hollow in Pinehurst who came to assist him. Our gratitude to First Health Hospice as well, for thoughtful care helping him through final his months.

A funeral mass will be held on at 1 p.m. on Saturday, September 21 at St. Patrick Church, 2844 Village Dr., Fayetteville, NC. There will be a reception in the church hall after the internment in the columbarium.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to St. Patrick Church Priest Welfare and Retirement Fund or a charity your choice.

Cemetery Details

Saint Patrick Catholic Church Columbarium

2844 Village Drive
Fayetteville
Fayetteville, NC 28304

Previous Events

Funeral Mass

SEP 21. 1:00 PM (ET)

Saint Patrick Catholic Church
2844 Village Drive
Fayetteville, NC 28303

Interment

SEP 21 (ET)

Saint Patrick Catholic Church Columbarium
2844 Village Drive
Fayetteville, NC 28304

Reception following Interment

SEP 21 (ET)

Saint Patrick Catholic Church
2844 Village Drive
Fayetteville, NC 28303

In Church Hall