



Mr. Francis P. "Franco" LaPaglia

March 17, 1953 - January 15, 2024

NEW HARTFORD – Mr. Francis P. “Franco” LaPaglia, age 70, passed away on Monday, January 15, 2024, holding tightly to the hand of his loving niece. It brought him great solace in his final moments that the Buffalo Bills were victorious in their game against the Pittsburgh Steelers.

Franco was born in New Hartford on March 17, 1953 to the late Frank and Josephine (Russo) LaPaglia. Franco was a 1972 graduate of T. R. Proctor High School. Franco continued his education at SUNY Morrisville, earning his Associate of Science Degree in Food Service Administration. His education served as the kickoff for his lifelong career as a chef.

For 52 years, Franco honed his culinary skills in a great number of kitchens around the world. After countless years of hard work and commitment, he opened Mama Jo’s Restaurant in Pembroke Pines, Florida as the owner, operator, and executive chef. There, he served fine Italian and seafood cuisine to the people of Broward County.

In more recent years, Franco was a mentor to many local, up and coming chefs. Drawing on his many years of experience, he offered consultations to restaurants, providing them with new concepts for reorganization. Franco was always ready to offer a helping hand to any restaurant in need –or as his darling sister would say “he always had his hands in something.”

Franco was a kind, good-hearted man who easily made his presence known. He was the loudest in any room, never allowing for a moment of silence. He possessed a sarcastic sense of humor, and only focused his attention on what he found interesting. One of the simplest pleasures for Franco was his weekly cup of joe at the casino with his dearest friends. His loved ones will never forget when he would “count cards” during Blackjack to convince them that he was a magician. People will remember him as a loving, family man with a quick wit.

Franco is survived by his three sons and daughters-in-law, Jamie and Lori LaPaglia, Jason and Adina LaPaglia, and Jeremy LaPaglia and Carina Diaz; grandchildren, Jacob, Aiden, John, Tatiana, Mariah, Catelina, Ariel, Jessa, and Josie LaPaglia; sister, Theresa (LaPaglia) Monopoli and the late Angelo “Ange” Monopoli; brother and sister-in-law, Jack and Rosetta LaPaglia; nieces and nephews, Marc Gabiger, Kristin Palmer, Scott Sebastian, and Joelle Sebastian-Dean; great-nieces and great-nephews, Teyler Gabiger, Marli Gabiger, Cody Wolf, Joshua Wolf, Kylie Nencetty, and Brody Palmer; great-great-niece, McKenna Gabiger; and great-great-nephews, Zayne Wolf, and Kyo Nguyen; and a special mention of his dear friend, Matt Grabski, who was more like family to Franco. He was predeceased by his maternal grandparents, John and Antonia “Antoinette” (DiNardi) Russo; and paternal grandparents, Nuncienzo and Theresa (Ciccione) LaPaglia.

With grateful hearts, the family would like to thank Dr. Scott Brehaut as well as the ICU team of physicians and nurses at Wynn Hospital for the meticulous care given to their beloved Franco.

Relatives and friends are respectfully invited to attend Francis’ Memorial Mass of Christian Burial and Celebration of Life which will commence on Saturday, January 27, 2024, at 12:00 p.m. at St. Mary of Mount Carmel/Blessed

Sacrament Parish, 648 Jay Street. There will be an opportunity to greet the family at the conclusion of Mass. Memorial contributions in Franco's honor may be made to the Center for Donation and Transplant, in support of their life saving measures, online at www.cdtnyvt.org; envelopes will also be available at the service. Franco will be laid to rest with his mother and father in St. Agnes Cemetery at the convenience of the family.

Cemetery Details

St. Agnes Cemetery

601 Arthur Street
Utica, NY 13501
(315) 732-8588

Previous Events

Memorial Mass

JAN 27. 12:00 PM (ET)

St. Mary of Mt. Carmel/Blessed Sacrament Parish
648 Jay Street
Utica, NY 13501
(315) 735-1482
<https://www.mountcarmelblessedsacrament.com/>

Tribute Wall

GG

“ Franco,

I'm so sorry to see this today. You popped into my head today and I searched a little bit to reach out and I found this obituary.

I just wanted to post something anyways.

You were a big inspiration in my life and helped shape me for the future back when I was just a kid. You were probably the best boss I ever had.

I'm extremely grateful that I took the chance to apply for the job at Mama Jo's so many years ago, it was a great experience.

I wish I would have searched for you a little sooner when there was still time to catch up.

Rest in peace

Greg Grant - June 15, 2024 at 02:25 PM

JR

“ Both Pat and I had the distinct honor of dining at Mama Jo's in Florida. Francis prepared a meal that night that we will never forget. Of course he would not allow his cousins to reach into their pockets but made sure to state "make sure to take care of my restaurant staff" simply because that was who he was. He cared deeply for family to include his restaurant family. Theresa and Jack, both Pat and I offer our sincerest condolences for the loss of your brother and our cousin Francis. Francis rest in peace.

Love John & Pat Russo

John & Pat Russo - January 26, 2024 at 07:35 PM



“ *Sentiments of Serenity Spray* was purchased for the family of Mr. Francis P. "Franco" LaPaglia.



January 20, 2024 at 03:24 PM



“ *Divine Peace Bouquet* was purchased for the family of Mr. Francis P. "Franco" LaPaglia.



January 20, 2024 at 03:05 PM