



Mr. Joseph P. Esper

January 28, 1951 - June 4, 2020

N. UTICA - Mr. Joseph P. Esper, age 69, unexpectedly departed this world and was embraced by the Lord as he passed on Thursday, June 4, 2020 with those he loved most in his heart.

Born in Utica on January 28, 1951, Joseph was the son of the late Anthony P. and Natalie (Testa) Esper. He was raised and educated locally. On June 28, 1980 he married the former Anita Santoro with whom he shared 30 years blessed with great love, a happy household, and tender memories prior to her passing on December 21, 2010. His heart belonged to Anita.

Joe was employed at Midstate Correctional Facility as a Vocational Instructor, and for numerous years he simultaneously worked as a Licensed Barber at the Center Barber Shop and currently at the Gentleman's Corner Barbershop, both located in the New Hartford Shopping Center.

A generous soul, Joe was blessed with a witty sense of humor and was never afraid to offer advice to friends and family, often restructuring their life to embrace a more optimistic, hopeful outlook. The Lord lived in Joe's heart and mind, and as life unfolded he practiced his faith devoutly, attending daily Mass which grounded him and gave him grace. Recently, he was gifted his late cousin Jeff's bible, for which he was so appreciative. His daughter was guided by his wisdom and his example, to be the best person she could be, a loving mother to her daughters, and a caring wife to her husband.

Everyone knew Joe's three favorite things --- classical guitars which he could play for hours at a time with a masterful, artistic style; dining out, preferably at

Delmonico's; and ice cream, especially hot fudge sundaes! He practiced his Catholic creed at Sacred Heart and St. Mary's Church in New York Mills where he formed a faithful friendship with Fr. Art Krawczenko. In looking back at Joe's humble life, we see a hardworking man who was grateful that God gave him the opportunity to guide and provide for his family. When he celebrated Christmas every year he would say to his loved ones, "If you don't have family, what do you have?"

Joe is survived by his cherished daughter and son-in-law, Angela and Matthew Pastor; his beloved grandchildren, Emily Grace, Adalina Rose, and the beloved memory of his granddaughter Marlana Natalie who passed away on October 17, 2007. He also leaves his brothers and sister-in-law, Carmen Esper, Tony and Joseanne Esper, and the memory of his eldest brother, David P. Esper Sr. who preceded him; nieces, nephews, great-nieces, great-nephews, cousins, in-laws, Patricia Esper, Annette Santoro and Mark Punzi, Debbie and Michael Kowalczyk, and Celeste and Bill Boris. He was blessed with "brothers" that he worked alongside at the Barber Shop and shared a great friendship and respect. He was predeceased by his in-laws, Thomas and Jeanette (Nogas) Santoro.

The family extends special thanks to Joe's son-in-law Matt for transporting Joe to the Emergency Department at the hospital and sharing those last moments with him.

Due to current health concerns and in keeping with federal and state regulations, the family will honor Joseph's life privately and funeral services will be held with immediate family only. In lieu of flowers, memorial donations in Joe's honor may be made to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital online at <https://www.stjude.org> or by mail to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, 501 St. Jude Place, Memphis, TN 38105.

Please take a moment to connect with Joe's family through the "Memories" section of his obituary on our website.

Our prayers continue to go out to all as a sign of our community support.

Tribute Wall

JK

“ Joe Esper didn't just make you laugh, he made you laugh until the tears ran down your cheeks. He cleansed you with laughter. He spread sunshine. I'm sure that he is with his maker and he's got him in stitches. Also, he's with the love of his life Anita. A friend of my family since the eighties, He will surely be missed.

*Sincere condolences to his family
Joanne Koshar (Pickles)*

Joanne Koshar - June 13, 2020 at 02:22 PM

SL

“ Joe was my barber many years ago at the barber shop in the New Hartford Shopping Center and then this past year I went to the Gentlemen's Corner Barber Shop and asked for the "old guy" (to better match me). Joe remembered me from years ago from the other barber shop (my memory was a little hazier!) and I started going back. I was shocked to go back on Thursday after three months of no haircut only to find he had passed away last week. My prayers for his family in their time of grief. Though I didn't know him well, I was glad I knew him and had a chance to get re-acquainted with him.

Scott Leonard

Scott Leonard - June 12, 2020 at 06:32 PM

BP

“ Joe & Anita, I will always remember the great fun we all had together, You're blue smurf Cadillac lol and Anitas's wonderful cookies. Loved the trips we took together when we were working the business and the many meetings I came to do at your home. Rip till we see each other again, with all our love, Brian & Irene Pantola

brian pantola - June 11, 2020 at 03:51 PM

MK

“ I met Joe at Mid State and we became instant friends. He was a wonderful man; always lending a helping hand and quick with a joke. I heard him at one of his "gigs" and he was awesome. May he rest in peace.

Marguerite Kershaw - June 10, 2020 at 06:59 PM

MG

“ Like a distant Brother, Joe I wish you a safe and happy journey to your Mom, Dad and Brother
Always in my heart and memory
RIP



Mike Guarno - June 10, 2020 at 05:03 PM

MM

“ I'm very sorry for your loss! Joe was a great man, my husband, my son and I will always remember him! He was a great friend to talk with and hear his stories. I loved his art work and drew amazing pictures, you could see the love in his work. My family and I are going to miss him but the memories and the time we had with him at the barbershop we will always cherish.

Mr and Mrs. Michael Matys - June 10, 2020 at 10:55 AM

LL

“ Joe was like family. He called me sister and referred to my mother as Mom.he had a great gift from God and shared it with many! I can't imagine how awesome it is to be with the Lord and now with your wife. Angela and family my prayers are with you. Your father will be greatly missed by so many people, but now we have a new intercessor in heaven.

Lynn Laventure - June 10, 2020 at 08:44 AM

VD

“ Angela and family. So sorry to hear of your dad's passing. My prayers are with you. In these hard times you have your memories and the comfort that your parents are together. I am always here for you if you need someone. God Bless and again my condolences.
Vicky David

Vicky David - June 10, 2020 at 08:07 AM

RK

“ Tony,Carmen and family; Our deepest sympathy for your loss! I will always remember the great times with Joe on Leard road especially our attempts at a “band”! He was the only one that was any good at guitar and not one of us could sing; but we gave it a shot! Sure miss those simpler days! Ray & Kim Kolupa

Rainier & Kim Kolupa - June 09, 2020 at 08:38 PM

MB

“ Joe, you will be missed.
Bova's



marie bova - June 09, 2020 at 09:01 AM

CC

“ When I found out about Joe's passing, my breath was taken away. I knew Joe spiritually through our great love of Jesus. He was so gifted and close to the Lord and helped me so many times in prayer through many of my life's challenges. A humble and giving heart, a true prayer warrior, he always reached out to others in their need. Joe, I will miss you so much. I know you are in the ecstasy of God's presence. Pray for us.

Cathy Donnell Conklin - June 09, 2020 at 12:24 AM

PF

“ We met Joe at the Gentleman Corner Barbershop. Always a gentleman with smile. So sorry for your loss. RIP our friend.
Paul, Laura and Samuel Longieretta

Paul Longieretta Family - June 08, 2020 at 11:55 PM

MO

“ My condolences to Joe's family, his daughter and family, Tony and family, Carmen and my sister Patty and children. Joe was great guy.

Marion Ostrosky - June 08, 2020 at 06:20 PM

WK

“ Joe was a loyal & great friend. I have known him for over 25 years. Always had a Spirit of Love in Him & Endless Devotion to his family. Joe loved talking about his children & his grandchildren. God Bless you, Joe. Respectfully, Bill Koslosky

William Koslosky - June 08, 2020 at 11:44 AM

PW

“ Tony, Josephine, we are so very sorry for your loss. Our deepest condolences to you & your loved ones. May God give you the strength & peace you need at such a sad chapter in your lives...<3..Much Love & Respect, Jane, Paul , David .



Paul Waszkiewicz - June 08, 2020 at 11:37 AM

EG

“ In the years I have known Joe, he has always been a gentleman and a gentle man. His kindness, and love for God and family will always be his legacy. Joe always did his best to lift everyone's spirits through his humor and compassion for them. I am thankful God had put Joe in my life, as one of the people who will leave footprints on my heart.
I truly know is happy now to be with God, and his wife, Anita. As he has said many times, "Anita is the love of my life and when I pass I will be with her forever." Now you can sing and play your guitar for her forever.
God speed, my friend, and fly high.

Elaine Gaworecki - June 08, 2020 at 10:58 AM

KY

“ Joe was a great cousin, we will miss him, he always made us laugh and smile. He will be deeply missed by everyone. Our thoughts and prayer go out to all the family at this difficult time,.

Kim Yero - June 08, 2020 at 09:17 AM

JP

“ I met Joe at the Dunkin Donuts on N. Genesee Street, where we would be early in the a.m. We just hit it off striking up a conversation and each morning before work we would chat. He was a phenomenal gentleman. My condolences, God bless.

Joe Pacini - June 08, 2020 at 07:45 AM

DO

“ Gentelmans Corner Barber Shop and Joes family,

So very sorry Joe left us so soon. He always was a friendly guy that greeted you with a smile. A very dedicated worker as I would see him early in the morning ready for the day. God rest his soul. Donna

Donna - June 08, 2020 at 06:26 AM

CC

“ Joe has been my dear friend and my musical student since the early 70's. His love of guitar and his heartfelt musical compositions are joy to behold. He always gave credit to the Lord for the music he heard in his head and heart and played so beautifully through his hands. I will truly miss you, Joe.
Rest In Peace, my old friend.

Carmen Caramanica - June 07, 2020 at 07:04 PM

MC

Very sad to see Joe has passed. He was very nice to my son when he got his haircuts. God Bless him and family.

Mark Carchedi - June 07, 2020 at 11:39 PM

PP

“ *We have known each other since grade school, will miss him badly..hard times.*

Phil Pandolf - June 07, 2020 at 11:12 AM

FR

“ *I interacted with Joe in dance class lessons, and he just cut my hair last week. Great barber. He will be missed. May he rest in peace.*
Francis T. Roy



Francis T Roy - June 07, 2020 at 10:33 AM

AE

“ *I knew Joe from the Mt. Carmel choir. He was always so kind to me, and he was just one of those beautiful souls. I'm so terribly sorry for your loss. You are all in my prayers. I know he will be watching over you.*

Amy Eddy - June 07, 2020 at 09:15 AM

CD

“ *Joe , I will miss your great family stories of love for all. The music and guitar playing that you loved and continued to train on. Rest in peace . God bless your family and friends at this difficult time.*

Chet Dougherty - June 07, 2020 at 09:09 AM

BE

“ I knew Joe from processing his checks for cutting hair of inmates at the Oneida County Sheriff Department always pleasant to deal with. Deepest sympathy to the family.

Beverly Eckert - June 07, 2020 at 08:12 AM



Joe was a great neighbor who would always have time to talk and say hi. He will be missed. RIP Joe.

Pat Washburn Walchusky - June 07, 2020 at 10:00 AM

RB

“ Joe you finally got the two wishes you talked to me about. Being with your love and God. I have so many great memories of us. The days at Griffins when we first meet at the barber shop and you'd give me the perfect 35-10 haircut. Then when you got married into the family almost a month after I did and we became related. Your wedding was a blast Terry and I really enjoyed ourselves. We lost track of each other when I got stationed in Texas until we met again at a random evening dinner with Bruce Gaska. Then we became family again and never lost touch. We played music together for many years and we'd had so many laughs at every gig we did. You always told me "brother we have so much in common" I have never forgotten those words. Just two weeks ago we were texting each other again about jazz and scales and the possibility of jamming together again. To find out you're gone is a shock. I'll be listening to your Serenity maybe that will bring my grief to closure but I won't stop ever thinking about you and Anita. Terry and I are going to miss you. Angela we are so sorry for your loss he was your rock and he shared many things about you and your children. They were very proud of you.

Russel & Terry Bell - June 07, 2020 at 06:59 AM

RU

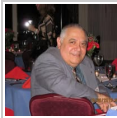
“*Mr. Esper I got to know almost 13 years ago he was always a friendly face. He knew me from church, and later on as one of his customers at the barber shop. No matter when, he would always tell me what was going on with Ace and her husband, his grandkids and all the other crazy bits of the world. Will miss seeing him around and that crazy look he'd give me that said "hey where ya been?!"*

Rusty - June 06, 2020 at 09:19 PM

CL

“*Back in the early 80s I remember Joe for not only his wit and humor, and geneosity but we had a few music jams together with him playing guitar and me piano. fun times, He was fun and talented and so many years passed on and I have seen his dedication to his family and he continued to set an example of his fantastic values he grew up with .. Rest in Peace Joe you have reunited with everyone that was dear to your heart .. Fly high with the angels.*

Claudia Lamascolo - June 06, 2020 at 09:08 PM



Carmen and family-

So sorry for your loss. My deepest sympathy to you and your family.

Victor Fariello - June 06, 2020 at 10:14 PM

BB

*May the Lord embrace you Joe and enjoy your music as much as I did. You were my barber for the past few years and I always enjoyed talking about guitars with you. How you loved your Collins guitar. God bless.
Bill Britt [fellow musician]*

Bill Britt - June 07, 2020 at 07:19 AM

BW

Always enjoyed Joe's company, whether it was at Midstate, where we first met, or later when I would run into him at Delmonicos. He was always such a gentleman with a great sense of humor and a passion for music as well. Rest in peace, my friend! My condolences to the family.

Bill Wrape - June 08, 2020 at 10:08 AM

AA

To the Esper Family

May YOU REST in PEACE JOE. You will be sadly missed. Our thoughts and prayers go with YOUR family. the BOSS

Anthony Annuich

Anthony Annuich - June 09, 2020 at 10:32 AM

CC

*What a bright light Joe brought to all around him. His Humility, Prayers and Strong Faith he had par excellence. May Joe's soul and all the faithful departed through the Mercy of God Rest In Peace. Amen.
Carla Cacciatori*

Carla Cacciatori - June 10, 2020 at 09:08 AM

LB

Tony and Josanne

So sorry to hear of your loss. Please know I am keeping you and your family in my prayers. May the many memories you shared over the years warm your heart and remind you that he will always be close in heart. Lisa Bates

Lisa Bates - June 12, 2020 at 04:40 PM

RB

We offer our heartfelt condolences to the Esper family. I have known Joe many years from our initial association and friendship through church. I saw him in March and we had a wonderful conversation, although we had not seen each other in a while, it seemed like no time had passed at all. A group of us from church would go out to a post mass breakfast and he used to play guitar sometimes at the church where I was the organist, that church being St. George's on Lafayette Street. I can imagine the great joy that Joe now feels being reunited with his lovely wife Anita. He will stay in my prayers and I am sure I have one more angel looking out for me. Rest in peace my friend...Marlene Bach

RAYMOND BACH - June 18, 2020 at 08:29 PM