



Peter J. Dirr

April 12, 1941 - May 11, 2020

Peter's life was a faith-filled journey. On the afternoon of May 11, 2020, he took the next step of his journey to be with God as he passed away at home, surrounded by family.

Peter was a loving, warm, welcoming, compassionate man who valued a deep faith and a life of service to others. One of his children described him well: "He was a good man. He was a gentle soul. He cared a great deal about his family and his faith. His steadfast commitment and generosity to his siblings, his children, his grandchildren, his community and his church were the yardsticks by which he gauged a life well lived. It enabled me and many others he encouraged to reach for new heights and dream big dreams in our own lives. We shared a lot of great adventures together."

His professional career reflected his commitment to the availability of education for wider and more diverse populations. He received his doctorate in education at New York University, and after periods at WNET–Channel 13 in New York City and SUNY in Albany and Buffalo, NY, he worked for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, creating channels for access to higher education for students throughout the country – and beyond. He travelled extensively in the 80's and 90's, domestically and internationally, to assist in the development and implementation of ideas and strategies for incorporating distance learning into mainstream educational institutions. He later applied

this same passion to his work with the US Conference of Catholic Bishops as it developed its own efforts to expand its media footprint and make its proclamation of the Good News accessible to all. He then worked for Cable in the Classroom, helping administrators and teachers throughout the country incorporate the internet and distance learning elements into their day-to-day curriculum. For many years, he served on the Board of the Open University of Hong Kong.

During his retirement years, Peter generously volunteered his time and skills with several nonprofits. He led the Circle of Caring bereavement ministry at St. Charles Borromeo Parish in Arlington, VA and subsequently devoted over 10 years to the work of Medical Missionaries in Thomassique, Haiti, travelling there over 20 times to assist in developing a functional operational infrastructure for its health clinic for the needy.

What Peter loved most was spending time with his family, especially summer vacations to the beach. Those good times included many laughs, stories, games, songs, creamsicle ice cream cones, jelly-bellies, and root beer floats.

Peter is survived by his wife of 40 years, Dee, and his 5 children, Peter Christopher, Patrice, Matthew, Renee and Andrew. He was blessed with 9 grandchildren: Alexandra, Caroline, Jacqueline, Logan, Meredith, Jonathan, Keira, Grayson, and Maddox. In addition he is survived by his sister Bernadette and brothers Joe and Jack and is predeceased by his sister, Sister Mary Ann Dirr RSM.

A small memorial mass was held at Peter's local parish church on May 13th (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HaLOfzGrmNw>). Plans for a memorial celebration for Peter are pending due to the current pandemic. Please check back to this website (www.ShikanyFuneralHome.com) for further details, and email jsdirr@gmail.com to be notified when arrangements are finalized.

In Peter's memory, donations can be made to Medical Missionaries (MedMissionaries.org), 9590 Surveyor Court, Manassas, VA 20110.

Arrangements are being handled by Shikany's Bonita Funeral Home.

Cemetery Details

Our Lady of Light Memorial Garden

19680 Cypress View Dr.
Ft. Myers, FL 33967

Events

Details are pending.

Tribute Wall



“ *Peter J. Dirr*

October 09, 2023 at 03:40 AM



“ *I went to Annunciation grammar school in Crestwood, NY with Peter and there wasn't a nicer, kinder, smarter boy than Peter, I'm sorry I did not hear of his death until recently. His obituary was so wonderful in that it showed what a wonderful man he turned out to be but that wasn't surprising, He was my first boyfriend in 8th grade and I remember walking to Crestwood train station to the drugstore there many times and sharing hot chocolates with marshmallows and then walking home again. He was a quiet but such a kind young man. We lost touch after Annunciation and high school and college and I am saddened to hear of his passing.*
Luise Bethencourt

Luise Bethencourt - June 19, 2020 at 08:01 AM



“ *I have struggled to find words to express my sadness about losing Peter. He was the most extraordinary colleague -- wise, smart, thoughtful, and caring. Our work at the Annenberg/CPB Project was focused on opening new opportunities for students of all ages to earn a college degree, and Peter truly put his heart into making that dream real. The Project was a pioneer of distance learning, and these days the advantages are clear. Peter really made a difference for the world.* *Mara Mayor*

Mara Mayor - May 29, 2020 at 02:31 PM