



Joseph "Joe" Tillotson

March 20, 1929 - March 15, 2024

Joseph "Joe" Tillotson, esteemed former mayor of Lancaster, Texas, loyal US Marine, venerated grandfather and loving great-grandfather, passed away on March 15, 2024. Born in Wichita Falls, Texas, on March 20, 1929, Joe's life was marked by his devotion to his family, his community, and his country.

A fifth-generation Texan, Joe's heritage is deeply entrenched in Texas history. His great-great grandfather fought at the battle of San Jacinto and his grandfather was the County Judge of Stonewall County in west Texas at the turn of the century.

Raised in San Antonio, Joe graduated from Central Catholic High School. He served with distinction in the United States Marine Corps from 1948 to 1952. Upon returning to civilian life and after a brief tenure at Southern Methodist University, Joe married the love of his life, Marjorie "Marge" McCarthy, and founded his still-expanding family. He began his civilian career with the Rock Island Railroad, following a path first laid by his father. After living in Houston, Teague and Waco, his career led him to Lancaster and Continental Trailways where he served as an executive until 1976. Joe then assumed the role of Director of Safety for the City of Dallas and retired with distinction in 1991.

Joe and Marge made their beloved town of Lancaster home for more than 50 years. A devout Catholic, Joe helped establish St. Francis of Assisi Catholic

Church in Lancaster where he served on the parish board and finance committee and remained a parishioner until his passing. His active contributions and deep faith were recognized in 2012 by the Bishop's Award for Service to the Church from Bishop Kevin Farrell of the Diocese of Dallas.

Following Lancaster's devastating tornado in 1994, Joe committed himself to helping rebuild his community and served as a City Council member and then as Mayor of Lancaster from 1995 to 2005. Over a decade-long term marked by wisdom and compassion, Joe supported his citizen's quality of life through the development of the City Park with the Lancaster Recreation Center and Veterans Memorial Library. Joe championed the successful completion of the Lancaster High School Complex and the renovation of the original high school into the Lancaster ISD Administration building. He fostered a strong school/city partnership in the 2004 School Bond election. The 2005 City Bond election was endorsed by Joe for the completion of the new Public Safety Building, Senior Life Center, and renovation of the old library as the Municipal Court Building. He was instrumental in establishing Lancaster as the epicenter of the Southern Dallas County Inland Port by fostering collaboration with national and international corporations that now call Lancaster home. He also served on numerous Best Southwest Partnership boards and was the Best Southwest Partnership Chair in 2003.

Joe's most enduring legacy is the loving family he and his cherished Marge nurtured together for over 70 years. He is survived by his wife Marge, brother John Tillotson (Sylvia), his six children Joseph Jr. (Harumi), Anne Hilmo (Bob), Mary Bogenschutz (Mike), Stephen (Patty), Tom (Margie), and Bill (Christina), his 18 grandchildren, and 21 great-grandchildren, as well as numerous nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Rose and Joe Tillotson, his sister Mary Fruge, and his nephew Joseph Patrick Tillotson.

Arrangements for Joe's funeral services are being handled by Bynum Funeral Home in Lancaster, Texas. A Rosary and visitation will be Thursday evening, March 21, from 6pm to 8pm at Byrum Funeral Home, located at 425 N Dallas Ave, Lancaster Texas. The Funeral Mass will be celebrated on Friday, March 22 at 10am at St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church, located at 1537 Rogers Ave. Lancaster, Texas.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations may be made in his name to the Juvenile Diabetes Research Fund (<https://www2.jdrf.org>) or to St Francis of Assisi Building Fund (<http://www.stfrancislancaster.org>).

As we mourn his passing, we also celebrate the life of a man who embodied the virtues of faith, family, and fidelity to public service and his community. He always felt that his children and their families were his and Marge's greatest accomplishments. Joe's memory will live forever in the hearts of all who had the privilege of knowing him, and his contributions to the world he lived in will be long remembered.

Cemetery Details

Holy Redeemer

1500 South Westmoreland
DeSoto, TX 75115

Previous Events

Funeral Mass

MAR 22. 10:00 AM (CT)

St Francis of Assisi Catholic
1537 Rogers Ave
Lancaster, TX 75146

Tribute Wall

EH

“ *Elaine Harris lit a candle in memory of Joseph Tillotson*



Elaine P. Harris - March 22, 2024 at 10:34 AM



“ *Lily and Rose Tribute Spray was purchased for the family of Joseph "Joe" Tillotson.*



March 21, 2024 at 09:31 AM

MF

“ *Matthew & Stephanie Bogenschutz Family planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Joseph "Joe" Tillotson.*

Matthew & Stephanie Bogenschutz Family - March 21, 2024 at 09:31 AM

BT

“ *We love you, Grandpa!*



Brooke Tillotson - March 20, 2024 at 11:27 PM

KI

“ Joe was a good man in all respects. I worked with him at the City of Dallas when he was Director of Safety and Employee Relations for the City and I was in Dallas Water Utilities. He was a big help to me and we became friends. I saw him and Marge last at a Dallas Veterans Day Parade and Dallas retired employees luncheon several years ago. He always greeted me with a big smile and friendly howdy. I am fortunate to have known him. My deepest condolences to Marge and his family and may he Rest In Peace.

King Moss II - March 20, 2024 at 10:50 PM

ST

“ Steve and Jamie Thurman purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Joseph "Joe" Tillotson.



Steve and Jamie Thurman - March 20, 2024 at 05:54 PM

SE

“ Selinda lit a candle in memory of Joseph Tillotson



Selinda - March 20, 2024 at 05:40 PM

WR

“ With love, Ralph and Judy Rodriguez purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Joseph "Joe" Tillotson.



With love, Ralph and Judy Rodriguez - March 20, 2024 at 04:42 PM

SN

“ What an incredible man....was the nicest, classiest and most positive person I knew. I was fortunate to serve as City Manager from 1995-1998 when he was Mayor. He and Marje always made you feel welcome. He will be missed and definitely made his mark on Lancaster and many people. Steve Norwood

Steve Norwood - March 20, 2024 at 12:22 PM

ST

“ 2 files added to the tribute wall



Steve Tillotson - March 20, 2024 at 12:05 PM

EC

“ I loved this man so much! Grateful for so much time with him in his final years ☐



Emile Cinque - March 20, 2024 at 09:36 AM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Joseph "Joe" Tillotson.



March 19, 2024 at 03:44 PM

AN

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



anne - March 19, 2024 at 03:06 PM

EC

“ Joe and Margie raised a great family in Lancaster. He worked hard to make things happen and managed to keep lots of different groups working together. It was a time that the city and the school district created a bond that lasted for many years after he was no longer mayor. That city/school team effort was probably the base for Lancaster becoming the All American City.
Thank you Joe and to Marge and family for your contribution to Lancaster. I consider each of you a friend and my sincere sympathy for the empty space that has been left in your family.



Ellen Clark - March 19, 2024 at 11:26 AM

CT

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Christina Tillotson - March 19, 2024 at 08:58 AM

CT

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Christina Tillotson - March 19, 2024 at 08:58 AM

RM

“ I lived down the street from the Tillotsons on Rutgers Dr. I have many fond memories of them. His son Bill and I were good friends along with his other brothers. Like to play chess. Joe was a good father and a very good mayor. Prayers for the family and deepest sympathy for all in this difficult time.

Randy Meisell

Randy Meisell - March 19, 2024 at 07:37 AM

JN

“ Jeannie Navarro purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Joseph "Joe" Tillotson.



Jeannie Navarro - March 19, 2024 at 06:29 AM

JN

“ Jeannie Navarro planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Joseph "Joe" Tillotson.

Jeannie Navarro - March 19, 2024 at 06:29 AM

DH

“ Debbie and Rudy Hanselka purchased the Divine Peace Bouquet for the family of Joseph "Joe" Tillotson.



Debbie and Rudy Hanselka - March 18, 2024 at 06:43 PM

VM

“ I will never forget the day Joe came knocking at our door. He introduced himself - I'm Joe Tillotson - then spelled his last name. T I L L O T S O N. They were interested in buying the house next door and he was inquiring about the neighborhood. There was a lot of over-the-fence conversations between him and Charlie over the years. One such conversation Charlie suggested Joe run for mayor--which he did--which he won. He and Marge were ideal neighbors and we will all miss him. Say hello to Charlie for me Joe. Virginia McCalla

Virginia McCalla - March 18, 2024 at 05:37 PM



“ Sacred Duty Spray was purchased for the family of Joseph "Joe" Tillotson.



March 18, 2024 at 05:08 PM

TA

“ Thanks! Amie planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Joseph Tillotson.

Thanks! Amie - March 18, 2024 at 05:08 PM



“ Sacred Duty Spray was purchased for the family of Joseph "Joe" Tillotson.



March 18, 2024 at 05:06 PM