



John "Jerry" Jerome Donnelly

September 20, 1934 - May 15, 2025

Troy, NY-John (Jerry) Jerome Donnelly of Troy NY, age 90, passed away on May 15, 2025, at St. Peter's nursing home. Born in Albany, NY on September 20, 1934, he was the son of John F. and Helen (Geary) Donnelly.

John was a US Army veteran having served in France. After working as a bricklayer for over 30 years, John changed careers in the early 80's where we worked as a Rehab Specialist for the Albany Community Development Agency for the City of Albany before retiring in July of 1999. During retirement John and Agnes attended mass daily and enjoyed taking day trips to Vermont or Western Massachusetts. Until the end, John always enjoyed watching his old movies and cheering for his New York Yankees.

He is survived by his beloved wife, Agnes Kenneally Donnelly, his children: Mary Helen, Trish Donnelly Olson (Tim) and Martin (Marty) Donnelly (Beth); his four grandchildren: Jin (Rose), Jack, Kara, & Chloe; and his brother-in-law Edward Urschel. He was predeceased by his sisters Margaret Burns (William), Susan Urschel (Edward) and his brothers Francis "Dick" Donnelly (Carol) and Thomas J. Donnelly.

Relatives and friends are invited to visit with John's family Thursday, May 22, 2025 4:00 pm to 7:00 pm at McVeigh Funeral Home, 208 North Allen Street, Albany, NY 12206. Please enter the funeral home from the rear parking lot

entrance only.

Funeral services Friday, May 23, 2025 at 9:30 am at McVeigh Funeral Home
thence to Sacred Heart Church, Troy, NY at 10:30 am where his Funeral Mass
will be celebrated.

The Rite of Committal will be held at St. Agnes Cemetery, Menands, NY
immediately following the Mass.

To leave a special message for the family please visit www.McveighFuneralHome.com

Those wishing to remember Mr. Donnelly in a special way may send a
contribution to Sacred Heart Church 310 Spring Ave, Troy, NY 12180, or to
the charity of your choice.

The following text was the Eulogy delivered by Martin Donnelly at Sacred
Heart Church during Jerry's Funeral Mass:

Welcome and thank you for your presence today. On behalf of my mother
Agnes who couldn't make it here today, thank you for coming. Although Aggie
is not with us today physically, she is certainly here today with us spiritually.
We are sure by now that Aggie is about three rosaries in praying for my dad
this morning.

Also, on behalf of my sister Mary Helen, my sister Trish, myself and our
families, we want to thank each of you for attending this mass here with us

this morning. We want to welcome those from Ireland who are watching via livestream. We thank those that spent time with us last night, of course this morning, and we hope all of you can also join us after the burial for a celebration of life later at Wolfert's Roost. I mean the mass is important Father Yannis, but my dad did love a good party.

He was called John by some, Jerry by others or "Jer" by Aggie, but his proudest title was Poppy. He never got to spend as much time with them as he would have liked, but he cherished the time with them whether it was in person or just a few quick minutes on the phone. The funny part is that he wouldn't ask them a lot or talk for long, but days or weeks later he would still be talking about their visit or that particular conversation.

It was quite a life and quite a journey. He was born here locally in Albany, the second oldest of six children to John F and Helen Donnelly. He attended CBA briefly before having to go out and work to help his family and his chosen trait was masonry work. He was a bricklayer for over 30 years and proudly wore his gold watch after retiring from the bricklayer's union. At 18 he was drafted into the Army and served for two years serving much of that time in France where he was most memorable moment was visiting Lourdes. After returning to the US and satisfying his service requirements, he settled back into Albany and laying brick. In the early 60's he joined a church group for young parishioners where he met my mother. As a side note, this is another reason for you young kids to attend church.

They were married in 1962 and settled initially in Albany for a few years. At that time housing prices were rising faster than they could save so they made a plan, we will buy a house in Troy which were a little less expensive and we will live there for 2 – 3 years until we can save up enough for a home in Albany. Well, as most of you know, they moved into 8 Clark in the late 60's

and there they stayed. Of course, along the way, two girls, Mary Helen and Patricia Ann, and one boy, Martin Joseph, came along and my parents' sole focus became education. As my mother would say, their purpose was to procreate and educate. They sacrificed A LOT so that we could be educated and so that we could have better lives. I think if my dad were here today, he would likely say that providing a good education for his children was what he was proudest of. The education he was able to provide for his children was more important to my parents than a better car, better clothes, or taking a vacation. After all, cars wear out, clothes go out of style and vacations are short lived, but an education stays with you for a lifetime.

My father later moved on from bricklaying to work for the City of Albany where he worked for Albany Urban Renewal Agency where the agency's focus was the redevelopment of homes in Albany for the poor. He worked there for ~20 years before retiring in 1999. From there, as many of you know, they went to church every day and went on a 20-year journey of estate sales buying God knows what from God knows who each and every weekend, but hey, it made them happy. He enjoyed the simple things like going to the movies with Uncle Dick, watching the Yankees, watching his movie collection (first VHS and then DVD's), going to the diner with my mom or just taking a ride to Vermont for the day. Of course, the highlights for my dad were their trips to Ireland, trips to California to see Trish, and attending all those Notre Dame games over the years.

I'm not sure I could sacrifice all that he did. I'm not sure I wouldn't be more selfish, but I think if he was here, he would say what choice did I have. He would tell us you don't know what you're capable of until you are in that situation and my God's grace, God's guidance, God's strength he choose the best path that he had, with the information that he had in hand at that time, to do what gentleman would do, he did what was right for his family.

It was quite a life and quite a journey. Then after 90 years and almost 8 months to the day, God called John home. We were not ready, no one ever is ready to lose your husband, your dad, your grandfather, or your friend. I bet dad wasn't ready for it, but God decided that it was time. Can't you imagine it, God reached down and just said, John good job my loyal servant, your work here is completed and now it is time for your heavenly reward. As Jesus told us countless times, God simply said I have prepared a room for you and now it is your time to be with Me, your heavenly Father. It is much better, right, when you think of it that way.

I am sure dad resisted, I think all of us would. I can picture hm saying "But I am not done here yet. Who will take care of Agnes, what about my kids, my grandkids, they need me". And God simply said, you work is done, you stood by your wife's side for over 62 years, and you guided your children throughout the years to the best of your ability, despite them not always taking your advice. You showed your grandkids that you loved them in your own way, and you did the best you could with the resources that you had and the information that you had in your hand at that time.

John, good job, my faithful servant, now it is time to take that final journey to heaven with all the saints and angels. It is time to reunite with your parents and your siblings and the friends that have gone before you. As Dottie Wolfstich would say, it is time to go to the party on the other side. I can see Uncle Dick giving him a hug and handing him a beer. I can see Uncle Pat telling him that he needs his help building some stuff for our Lord around heaven (I mean someone needs to help God prepare all these rooms).

I can see Steve Olson arguing with him about who is better USC or Notre Dame, but really Steve only caring about where the tailgate was going to be rather than the actual outcome of the game, and of course I can see Pat Richel giving him a big hug and telling him that they can eat out every night

until

Tony and Aggie get here (Tony and Aggie always wanted to cook at home and Pat & my father were always up for eating out). I can also see Bob and Mimi Simpson holding a Bacardi and coke, Maura Devito, Lenny, and Damon Devito with Coors lights in their hands, all welcoming him to the party. The Lord has carried him there as He carries us all in the toughest times during our life.

Now, I want to do something a bit unusual and shift from remembering my dad to try and speak for my dad, well sort of. I want to share with you what I think he would share with each of you at this moment, if he had one last chance to sit with you, one more meal with you, one more coffee with you or one more phone call with you.

These are my words, but I hope I can channel my dad's spirit and articulate what he might say to us if he had one final opportunity to speak to all of you. So here it goes....

First, I want to thank you all for coming to see me, to pay your respects and to say goodbye, it means more than you can imagine. Thanks also for being a part of my life over my 90 years whether you were a large part or just a small part of my journey because it is the culmination of those interactions with each of you that made my life so special. Whether you were a member of my family, my neighbor, my coworker, someone from church or someone who entered my journey because you were friends of my kids, it was each of you collectively that made up my life and I am grateful for all of you. Please know I am thankful for all of you and all that I was blessed with during my lifetime.

I am most thankful for my 62+ years of marriage to my beautiful wife Agnes

because she was the rock of our family, and she made me a better person, father, and friend. I am thankful for my kids, and I am proud of each of them for who they have become. At this point, I would like to take credit for my kid's good traits and none of the bad traits as they must have picked those up from all of you people here. Hey, this is my day after all. I am thankful for my grandkids Jin (Rose), Jack, Kara and Chloe, I love all of you and will be watching over you. Don't be afraid to ask me for guidance, I will be there for you.

My wish for all of you is that this life becomes all that you want it to. I hope the days come easy and the moments pass slow and each road you take leads you where you want to go and if you're faced with a choice, and you have to choose I hope you choose the one that means the most to you. I hope your dreams stay big, your worries stay small, that you never need to carry more than you can hold. And while you're out there getting where you're getting to, whatever that is, I hope you know somebody loves you and wants the same things too. I hope you never look back, but you never forget all the ones who love you, in the place you left. I hope you always forgive, and you never regret, and you help somebody every chance you get.

So now it is time to say goodbye and thank you one last time. I will miss you but please know that I am safe in God's hands and so I will leave you all with these familiar words:

May the road rise to meet you,
May the wind be always at your back.
May the sun shine warm upon your face,
The rains fall soft upon your fields.
And until we meet again,
May God hold you in the palm of his hand.

Previous Events

Visitation

MAY **22**. 4:00 PM - 7:00 PM (ET)

McVeigh Funeral Home, Inc.
208 N Allen St
Albany, NY 12206
(518) 489-0188
info@mcveighfuneralhome.com
<http://www.McveighFuneralHome.com>

Funeral Mass

MAY **23**. 10:30 AM (ET)

Sacred Heart Church
310 Spring Street
Troy, NY 12180

Tribute Wall



“ *McVeigh Funeral Home, Inc. created a Tribute Video in memory of John "Jerry" Jerome Donnelly*



McVeigh Funeral Home, Inc. - May 22, 2025 at 09:58 AM

EO

“ *Erik, Mary, Erika, Luke and Mark Olson purchased the Emerald Garden Basket for the family of John "Jerry" Jerome Donnelly.*



Erik, Mary, Erika, Luke and Mark Olson - May 23, 2025 at 11:28 AM

CF

“ *Culbert Family lit a candle in memory of John "Jerry" Jerome Donnelly*



Culbert family - May 23, 2025 at 06:44 AM



“ *The Culbert Family lit a candle in memory of John "Jerry" Jerome Donnelly*



The Culbert Family - May 23, 2025 at 06:42 AM



“ *38 files added to the album Life Tributes*



McVeigh Funeral Home, Inc. - May 22, 2025 at 09:55 AM



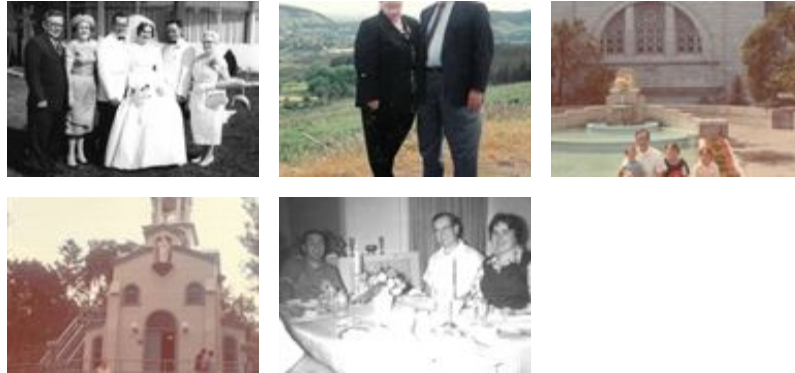
“ *3 files added to the album Life Tributes*



McVeigh Funeral Home, Inc. - May 21, 2025 at 04:12 PM



“ 95 files added to the album Life Tributes



McVeigh Funeral Home, Inc. - May 21, 2025 at 11:49 AM

CC

“ Dear Mary Helen and Rose, I will always remember sitting behind Agnes and Jerry during the summer months at St. Jude Church. Rose would turn around and then run down the aisle to give her Principal a hug. I especially looked forward to Agnes Irish Soda Bread that she made every St. Patricks Day and would send into school with Rose. My deepest sympathy to the entire family but especially to Rose who loved her grandparents so much.
With Love and Prayers
Dr. Cathleen Carney

Cathleen Carney - May 20, 2025 at 10:50 PM

PD

“ PJ, Gary, Megan, Jon, Kristen & Dusty planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of John "Jerry" Jerome Donnelly.

PJ, Gary, Megan, Jon, Kristen & Dusty - May 20, 2025 at 03:00 PM

PD

“ PJ, Gary, Megan, Jon, Kristen & Dusty purchased the Sentiments of Serenity Spray for the family of John "Jerry" Jerome Donnelly.



PJ, Gary, Megan, Jon, Kristen & Dusty - May 20, 2025 at 03:00 PM

SC

“ What a wonderful person Jerry was. We always loved having him and Agnes come to our estate sales (gave them special deals, of course). We moved to CA 10 years ago and miss them. Our best to the children and grandchildren and dear, dear Agnes. Love from Sherry and Michael Carnevale

Sherry Carnevale - May 20, 2025 at 12:12 PM



“ Basket of Memories was purchased for the family of John "Jerry" Jerome Donnelly.



May 20, 2025 at 10:32 AM



“ Sweet Solace Spray was purchased for the family of John "Jerry" Jerome Donnelly.



May 20, 2025 at 10:22 AM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of John "Jerry" Jerome Donnelly.

May 20, 2025 at 07:53 AM



“ Sweetest Sunrise Bouquet was purchased for the family of John "Jerry" Jerome Donnelly.



May 20, 2025 at 07:53 AM



“ The Marheine and Montgomery Family purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of John "Jerry" Jerome Donnelly.



The Marheine and Montgomery Family - May 19, 2025 at 05:27 PM