



## Deacon Don Kostecki

March 24, 1941 - March 11, 2005

Deacon Donald Francis Kostecki, 63, of Topeka and San Ignacio, Belize, was shot and killed March 11, 2005.

Don was born March 24, 1941 in St. Louis. He earned his B.S. in Professional Meteorology from St. Louis University and his M.S. in Water Resources Science from the University of Kansas. He was ordained as a deacon on July 31, 2004 in Sacred Heart Parish, San Ignacio, Belize, Central America.

From 1962-64 he was a weather observer/pilot briefer with the National Weather Service. After graduating from St. Louis U. he went down to Belize as a Papal Volunteer and taught secondary school for two years. From 1966-68 he was a graduate teaching assistant at KU in the Dept. of Geography. He worked as a hydrologist/meteorologist with Kansas Water Resources Board and then with the KS Dept. of Transportation. He was then a water structures hydrologist/environmental scientist with the KS Dept. of Agriculture until 2001 where he retired from. After retirement he worked as a disaster assistance employee with FEMA until 2004. From then until his death, Don taught theology at Sacred Heart Junior College in San Ignacio and served as a deacon for the parish of Sacred Heart and surrounding villages. In San Ignacio he was a member of the Full Gospel Businessmen, and something very close to his heart, was the Faith and Justice Commission which he was heading.

In November of 1968, Don and Netti Figueroa were married. She survives along with her children, Anthony Kostecki, Fort Worth, Alicia Kostecki and her husband, Robert Schlachter, Chicago, Aaron Kostecki, New Orleans, Adrienne Kostecki, Topeka, and Adam Kostecki, Lawrence.

Don was cremated in Belize. A wake and mass was held, and a portion of his remains was encased in a memorial built for him, on the grounds of Sacred Heart Church in San Ignacio.

In Topeka, a memorial Mass will be celebrated at 11:00 a.m. Saturday, Apr. 9, at St. Matthews Church 2700 SE Virginia. Family will greet friends one hour prior to the Mass. Inurnment will follow at Mount Calvary Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, the family suggests memorial contributions be made to Sacred Heart Church in Belize, sent in care of Kevin Brennan Family Funeral Home, 2801 SW Urish Rd, Topeka, KS 66614. A new parish hall, to be used for adult education and parish gatherings, is planned in Deacon Don's memory in Belize. The memorial contributions will be used for this purpose.

# Tribute Wall



“ *Deacon Don Kostecki*

---

January 28, 2023 at 12:08 PM



“ *Nettie & family: My thoughts and prayers are with you during this time. I have fond memories working with Don at the Kansas Division of Water Resources. He not only taught me everything I know about floodplain management, but he was also a very good natured man. I have since moved to Maryland and when I heard this terrible news, my heart skipped a beat. Don may be the only one who would have recalled this from his retirement ... but to me, he will always be remembered as "My Giant"!*

---

**Gene Morgenthaler** - April 15, 2005 at 08:17 AM

“ Dear Kostecki Family,

*Words seem terribly inadequate to express my condolences at this time. I was unaware of Don's death until Saturday afternoon (April 9) when I saw his obituary while attending a class at the Mount in Atchison. I am so very, very sorry.*

*Don and I were classmates in the Loyola program, while he was studying for his diaconate. So, every Monday night, for three years, we were together in class, learning with our colleagues, discussing theology. Don was a remarkable student. His insight and absolute passion for ministry were very evident. He often spoke of his work in the parish, and with the business men's group that met and prayed together often.*

*Don also told us about his family. He loved each of you so very much. Nettie was the love of his life, and he was looking forward to those "quieter" years in Belize after she retired, when he would be active as a Deacon.*

*Don's goal to be ordained a Deacon was ever present in his conversations. I still have the invitation he sent to his ordination. It is a blessing that he was able to be ordained and know the joy of that Sacrament.*

*The last time I saw Don was at the dedication of the pipe organ at St. Benedict's Abbey Church. He was smiling and animated, and spoke of looking forward to his ordination. We talked and laughed as we walked together into the Abbey Church...one of the many "Houses of God" with which Don was very familiar.*

*And so it is now that he is in that everlasting "House of God."*

*May all of you find hope in the assurance of the Resurrection.  
May your tears be turned into dancing in the days to come.  
Bonnie Haghirian*

**Bonnie Haghirian** - April 11, 2005 at 09:28 AM

DT

“ *Dear Netti,*

*I worked at Jardine for a couple of years. I am very sorry to hear about your loss. Your family is in my prayers. Please take care.*

---

**Diane Tucker** - April 04, 2005 at 05:58 PM

RS

“ *Netti and Family, My prayers and deepest sorrow for this tragic lost. Don was a great guy.*

*Rene, Molly and Family*

---

**Rene Sabala** - March 24, 2005 at 03:20 PM

JH

“ *Nettie and family, I heard at Mass Sunday about Don. I always get thrown many years back in my own memories when someone passes too young. My prayers and thoughts are with you all. I have to be out of town the week of 3/21 and know that arrangements are pending. If I am absent from the celebrations of Don's life please know that I do not miss them by choice and that I will be thinking about you.*

*Julie Hinrichsen  
St. Matthew's*

---

**Julie Hinrichsen** - March 21, 2005 at 02:10 PM

RM

“ *Kostecki family, although it has been a few years, your father's laugh is crystal clear in my memory. It still brings a smile to my face to think about. Besides his great laugh, I will always remember him as a very loving, giving and proud man. Proud of all of you is what I remember most. Stay strong for him and for yourselves. My deepest sympathies are with you and you are all in my daily thoughts and prayers.*

---

**Ronnie McKinley** - March 17, 2005 at 08:44 PM

SM

“ *I am deeply saddened to hear of Don's passing. Just as my siblings have expressed, I will always remember the times we spent together in our youth. I have the upmost respect for Don's work to help the people of Belize and I hope that maybe he served as a role model for more people to follow a similar path. The entire Kostecki family is in my thoughts and prayers.*

---

**Sean McKinley** - March 17, 2005 at 08:34 PM

JM

“ *Cousins, I will always remember your husband and father as a funny, warm, tender, smart and caring man...a role model of a father. You have my warmest sympathies and my love.*

---

**Joseph McKinley** - March 17, 2005 at 12:49 PM

BJ

“ Nettie, Aaron, Adam and Adrienne, I was deeply saddened when my Mother gave me the word of Don's passing. I have kept you in my thoughts and prayers this past week and want to let you know that I will always have fond memories of the time spent growing up when our families would visit each other. The many people he has touched will truly miss Don.

*Barry McKinley Jr.*

---

**Barry McKinley Jr.** - March 17, 2005 at 12:17 PM

EM

“ Nettie and Kostecki family,  
I am so sorry for the loss of husband, and father. Perhaps the only condolence can be that he was a truly a courageous role model doing a greater good. Our thoughts and prayers are with you.

---

**Elizabeth McKinley** - March 17, 2005 at 11:43 AM

DR

“ Nettie, and family, I'm so sorry to hear about Don's passing. There wasn't a time a didn't see a smile on his face. He was a very pleasant man. My heart feels for you and your family.

*Delores*

---

**Delores Richardson-Kostecki** - March 16, 2005 at 04:26 PM

CK

“ Tony and family,  
My deepest sympathy to you and your family. Your dad was such a character. You will all be in my thoughts and prayers.  
Gerry and Colleen Kramer and our children: Tommy, Kathleen, Luke, Sophie

---

**Colleen (Schmidlein) Kramer** - March 15, 2005 at 07:57 PM

MP

“ *It has been a long time, Tony (since Hayden High), but I felt the pain when I heard this news. I want to extend my thoughts, prayers and spirit to you and your family. Please take care of yourselves.*

*~ Madeline*

---

**Madeline Pascua** - March 15, 2005 at 01:48 PM

JO

“ *Deacon Don KostECKi*

---

**Jose** - March 14, 2005 at 07:29 PM

MB

“ *Tony,*

*I am so sorry to hear about your loss. You and your family are in my prayers.*

*With love,  
Malcolm*

---

**Malcolm Beaty** - March 14, 2005 at 01:41 PM

EB

“ *Aaron, Adam, Adrienne & Family,  
Terribly sorry to hear of your tragic loss, will continue to include you and your family in prayer*

---

**Eoin Burke** - March 14, 2005 at 01:40 PM

BP

“ Nettie,

*Brian, Kim and I send our heart felt condolences. We are thinking of all of you and admire so much what Don was doing in Belize and that he had followed his heart and dream. What a heartbreaking end to such a wonderful mission and wonderful man's life.*

---

**Brian and Kimberly Hiller and Pat** - March 14, 2005 at 01:26 PM

KG

“ Aaron and family,

*I am sorry for your loss. You and your family are in my thoughts and prayers. Kelly*

---

**Kelly (Krentz) Goodwin** - March 14, 2005 at 01:08 PM

ER

“ Adam, sending you and your family my thoughts, love, and prayers during this difficult time.

---

**Erin Reid** - March 14, 2005 at 11:57 AM

LK

“ Tony,

*We went to Shaner and Jardine together and we were the best of friends. I am so sorry to hear about the loss of your father. You and your family are in my thoughts and prayers.*

*Lori*

---

**Lori (Willis) Kniss** - March 14, 2005 at 11:42 AM

FS

“ *My heart just breaks for your family, Nettie. I know that your strong faith will help sustain you through this terrible loss. My prayers are with you all.*

---

**Freda Saiger** - March 14, 2005 at 10:05 AM

DS

“ *It is many years since I worked with Don at Water Resources, but he will always be one of my best memories from working there. Don was a true gentleman who never failed to demonstrate his integrity. I am truly sorry for your loss.*

---

**DeAnn Hupe Seib** - March 13, 2005 at 10:35 PM

VH

“ *Dear Netti and family,*

*We are very sorry about your loss. We have been thinking about you and your children. Please let us know if there is any thing we can do for you and your family at this difficult time. Please take care.*

*Sincerely,*

*Vallapa and Bill Herzog*

---

**Vallapa & Bill Herzog** - March 13, 2005 at 10:13 PM

SK

“ *Dear family, You are in my thoughts and prayers. I am very sorry to hear the news. Don "Mr. KostECKi" was an inspiration and role model.*

---

**Sandy Keegan-Schluter** - March 13, 2005 at 09:42 PM

EC

“ I'm so sorry for your loss. Words are lacking. So instead of bits of wisdom, I want you to know... I'll be a hand to hold, a shoulder to cry on, and any other kind of support you can use. You are all SO loved.

---

**Emily Carkhuff** - March 13, 2005 at 02:47 PM

JM

“ Thinking of you and your family and keeping you in our prayers.  
Fondly, Judy

---

**Judy Martin** - March 13, 2005 at 02:28 PM

AB

“ *Netti and family,*  
*I was so sorry to hear of Don's passing. Please know you are in my thoughts and prayers. I love you all.*  
*Amy*

---

**Amy Bowman-Comer** - March 13, 2005 at 11:49 AM

BW

“ *Nettie and family, We are very sorry about your loss. Our thoughts and prayers are with you. It is a great loss to a good friend.*

*Love, Barbara and Bruce*

---

**Barbara and Bruce Wetter** - March 12, 2005 at 01:54 PM

TJ

“ *I am so sorry for your loss. i wish there is something i could say or do to help, but i just want you all to know that i am thinking about you.*

---

**Tyler Jones** - March 12, 2005 at 01:26 PM

KP

“ *My heart goes out to you all, and am praying for you.*

---

**Kimberly Patrick** - March 12, 2005 at 01:12 PM

DB

“ *Nettie and Family,*

*Our thoughts and prayers are with you at this time  
of great sadness.*

*Our Love  
Dennis and Anne*

---

**Dennis & Anne Biele** - March 12, 2005 at 12:12 PM

JT

“ *Our prayers are with all of you Nettie. A horrible tradgedy. Joyce &  
Randy Alexander, Josh and Tyler Bradney*

---

**Joyce,Josh & Tyler** - March 12, 2005 at 08:51 AM