



## Dr. Thomas M. O'Connor

June 10, 1940 - March 15, 2017

Dr. Thomas M. O'Connor, 76, Topeka, died Wednesday, March 15, 2017.

Tom was born June 10, 1940, in Omaha NE, the son of Kenneth and Eleanor (Bongartz) O'Connor. Tom married Marilyn Eichhorn on January 27, 1962, in Omaha. She survives. He was a Professor of Biology for 40 years at Washburn University. Tom and Marilyn were blessed with six children, Michael O'Connor (Wendy), Karen Spain (Tim), Kristin Hundley (Craig), Father Kent O'Connor, David O'Connor (Tamra) and Kathleen Owens (Jason). Other survivors include his 11 grandchildren, Andrew O'Connor, Jacob, Joel, Nathan and Claire Spain, Dominic and Gabriel Hundley, Caleb and Madelyn O'Connor, Rachel and Rosalie Owens; sister, Mary Mitchell (Chuck); brother; John O'Connor as well as numerous nieces and nephews.

Family will greet friends from 9:30-10:30 a.m. on Saturday, March 18th at Most Pure Heart of Mary Catholic Church, where a rosary will be prayed at 10:30 a.m. Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated by Father Kent O'Connor and concelebrating priests of the Archdiocese, at 11 a.m. at the church.

Inurnment at Mount Calvary Cemetery will be at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be sent to Our Lady of Unity,

2910 Strong Avenue, Kansas City KS 66106.

# Cemetery Details

## Mount Calvary Cemetery

801 SW Westchester Rd  
Topeka, KS 66606

# Previous Events

## Visitation

MAR 18. 9:30 AM - 10:30 AM (CT)

Most Pure Heart of Mary Church  
3601 SW 17th Street  
Topeka, KS 66604

## Rosary

MAR 18. 10:30 AM (CT)

Most Pure Heart of Mary Church  
3601 SW 17th Street  
Topeka, KS 66604

## Mass of Christian Burial

MAR 18. 11:00 AM (CT)

Most Pure Heart of Mary Church  
3601 SW 17th Street  
Topeka, KS 66604



# Tribute Wall



“ *Dr. Thomas M. O'Connor*

January 28, 2023 at 12:08 PM



“ *Dr O'Connor was my professor/mentor at Washburn University. He was one of the best and hardest professors I have ever had. He is the reason I was accepted to medical school. When I took his subjects in medical school they were so much easier than his infamous microscope exams at Washburn! I was able to work with him over the summer and by the end of school I realized that all he wanted was the best for his students. He was a caring man that helped me through the tough time of my father's cancer my senior year of school. I am so thankful that I had him as a mentor as he made a direct impact on my life. Some of my greatest achievements were preforming well on his exams. I thank him for all of the patience teaching all of the aspiring medical students and he has a long and proud tradition of having many of us in the medical profession. I am sorry for your loss but be assured he impacted many students lives.*

**Amanda Colgan** - June 05, 2017 at 08:57 PM



“ *I was fortunate to have had Dr. O'Connor as an instructor in several Biology classes at WU. Having had many excellent professors I always looked upon Dr. O'Connor as my favorite and "best". He had high expectations of his students but he presented the material in a fascinating way that made me want to learn more and meet not only his expectations, but exceed my own, and set me on the path of life long learning. I am so sorry for your loss of this special man.*

**Debbie Worland Boos** - March 30, 2017 at 07:52 AM

JD

“ Marilyn, Kent and family. So sorry for your loss. Tom was one of my professors at WU as a freshman and then privileged to get to know him as an adult. Will keep all of you in our thoughts and prayers.  
Matt & Judy (McDaniel) Dowd

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**Judy Dowd** - March 20, 2017 at 07:30 PM

JA

“ To Marilyn, Kathleen and family--

*Sorry to hear of the loss of Tom. The head of a great and talented family. Peace be with you at this tough time.*

*- Janelle Burgardt*

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**Jan** - March 19, 2017 at 12:05 PM

PM

“ My condolences to the O'Connor family. Some of my fondest childhood memories were playing over at the O'Connor house on 32nd (with Tom in and out of his office area in the basement checking in on us). In the span of his lifetime, I'm sure I was merely a blip however he left a lasting impression on me as being a gracious, scholarly, and disciplined family man as well as a model for how to live life the right way. My condolences again to the O'Connors for their loss of a pillar of their family.

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**Pete McCaffrey** - March 18, 2017 at 07:05 PM

SW

“ Marilyn and Family, you are in the thoughts and prayers of the Hesse girls today. Mom and Dad loved you and Tom very much and I'm sure would be saddened by Tom's passing. Much love - Stacey, Jennifer, Catherine and Margaret and families❤️

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**Stacey Hesse Willey** - March 18, 2017 at 10:16 AM

CM

“ Marilyn and Family--Our sympathy and prayers to you at this sad time with the death of your beloved husband, father and grandfather. May the promise of the resurrection and your faith bring you peace. God Bless all of you.  
Carole and Jake Mertz

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**Carole and Jake Mertz** - March 17, 2017 at 06:40 PM

JF

“ I had several Biology classes with Dr. O'Connor at Washburn University. He was an excellent Professor! I remember Dr. O'Connor as a gentle, soft spoken, and fun loving gentlemen. ❤️

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**Julie Friedstrom** - March 17, 2017 at 01:15 PM

ML

“ Years ago Tom gave us a small card that he had made called;

*4 Points to Daily Surrender*

- All is a gift
- I am not in charge
- God's will be done, not mine
- Whatever His will - Praise God in all things

*We look at this card often and think of Tom. What a man! He certainly was one of the finest men we have ever known.*

*Love and prayers to Marilyn and Family.....  
Michael and Patti Lebens*

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**Michael and Patti Lebens** - March 17, 2017 at 01:12 PM

JK

“ Jeff, Sandi, Carla, Kelly, Bob, Jack, Warren, Ken purchased the Medium Dish Garden for the family of Dr. Thomas M. O'Connor.



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**Jeff, Sandi, Carla, Kelly, Bob, Jack, Warren, Ken** - March 17, 2017 at 12:47 PM

TU

“ The faculty and staff of Our Lady of Unity purchased the Divine Peace Bouquet for the family of Dr. Thomas M. O'Connor.



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**The faculty and staff of Our Lady of Unity** - March 17, 2017 at 12:45 PM

MS

“ Tom O'Connor was a great mentor of new faculty. When I came to Washburn as an English professor in 1987, his counsel was of great benefit. For instance, he encouraged my active participation in a College of Arts and Sciences Dean's search before I was tenured. I will always be grateful for his support and his example. Mary Sheldon

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**Mary Sheldon** - March 17, 2017 at 12:33 PM

PC

“ Paul and Janet Coons purchased the Emerald Garden Basket for the family of Dr. Thomas M. O'Connor.



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**Paul and Janet Coons** - March 17, 2017 at 10:57 AM

DO

“ I worked with Karen at St Francis and took anatomy under Dr O'Conner. He was a tough as nails instructor, but he pushed me to work hard. Twenty years later, and I still remember how he encouraged me to strive for excellence. I am sorry for your family's loss.

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**Dia Orear** - March 17, 2017 at 10:24 AM




“ I'm so sorry for your loss. I always enjoyed talking to Tom here at Fleming Court. Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me. My Fathers house has many rooms; if that were not so would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you ?

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**Jeff Teske** - March 17, 2017 at 09:41 AM

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“ I am so incredibly sorry for your family. Dr. O'Connor is the reason I am a science teacher today. He was such a blessing, and touched so many. I can imagine the face-to-face meeting between he and Jesus has been incredible!!!

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**Therese Hinchsliff (Weber)** - March 17, 2017 at 08:49 AM

 Becky Sue

“ I am so sorry for you loss. My thoughts are with your family. May you be granted peace knowing he was a good man and father.

*Becky Wilkes-Wagner*

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**Becky Sue** - March 17, 2017 at 08:20 AM

MO

“ *My Dad was the ultimate role model of fatherhood. He had a steel-spined faith, a tender heart and gracious, serving hands. Not to mention his incredible mind - which was hard to see decay. I will miss him dearly.*

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**Michael O'Connor** - March 16, 2017 at 09:05 PM

JM

“ *Marilyn, and the rest of the O'Connor family, my deepest condolences on the passing of your wonderful husband, Tom. I am almost certain he is the reason why Washburn hired me years ago and I was honored to be his colleague for 6 years in the Department of Biology. He was an amazing man who will be missed.*



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**John Mullican** - March 16, 2017 at 08:14 PM

JF

“ *Jack O'Connor, Marci Dolter, Annis & Dvorak Family purchased the Sweetest Sunrise Bouquet for the family of Dr. Thomas M. O'Connor.*



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**Jack O'Connor, Marci Dolter, Annis & Dvorak Family** - March 16, 2017 at 02:15 PM



“ Dear Mrs. O'Connor please accept my condolences on the loss of your husband. Please extend my condolences to all of your family. I did not know your husband well, but I know by observation that he was very strong in his Catholic faith. May he rest in peace.

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**Francis Slobodnik** - March 16, 2017 at 11:49 AM

JS

“ Marilyn and all our O'Connor family/friends - With dozens of years of extended family gatherings, our families are certainly intertwined. Lori and I truly feel the loss in Tom's passing, too. While we are saddened by our loss, we believe he's in heaven today and that gives us great joy. We're honored to celebrate Tom's life with you this weekend. You remain in our thoughts in prayers.

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**John and Lori Spain** - March 16, 2017 at 11:34 AM