



Max Kennedy

January 19, 1938 - February 8, 2025

Max Joseph Kennedy, 87, of Topeka KS, passed away peacefully on February 8, 2025, at Brewster Place in Topeka with his wife at his side. Born on January 19, 1938, in Emmett KS, to John and Agnes Kennedy, he was a devoted husband to Alita Lynne Clark Kennedy for one day short of 62 years, loving father to two sons, grandfather to five grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren.

Max is survived by his wife; sons, Patrick (Beth) and Mark (Susan); grandchildren, Sean (Abigail), Scott, Jordan (Zion), and twins, Harper and Riley; great-grandchildren, Theodore, Benjamin, Charlotte, and Montgomery; nephews; nieces; cousins; and many friends. He was preceded in death by his parents, brothers, Bill and Jack, and sisters Mary and Joann.

Max grew up as an Irish Catholic in the Oakland neighborhood of Topeka surrounded by the German community. His early years were spent riding bikes, eating great German food, and playing around the Santa Fe rail yards. While still in high school, he felt a calling to the priesthood and attended seminary. Thankfully for us, Max changed his mind and followed a different calling. After graduating from Hayden High School (lifetime pride-point), Max served in the Army, spending four years in Germany alongside his best friend. Pat and Mark were often regaled with war stories, including the Battle of Bamberg—which they're certain was a tavern fight.

Upon returning home, Max worked at Dial Finance for several years where he met the love of his life, Alita. After a whirlwind romance, they married on February 9, 1963, and later added Pat and Mark to the joyous union. Mixed in with parenting and life, Max attended Washburn University for several years.

Max worked as a Revenue Agent for the IRS for over 30 years driving across Kansas working with clients while searching for the best bakeries and then training new agents across the U.S. and Puerto Rico. After retirement, he volunteered as the Holy Name Parish finance administrator and as a docent at the Kansas Capitol Building. Max also served faithfully for his parishes including as a longtime lector at Holy Name and Mother Teresa of Calcutta. Additionally, Max was very proud of advancing to the Fourth Degree in the Knights of Columbus and worked many pancake breakfasts.

Max gave of himself. For both sons, he was active in Boy Scouts despite "having camped enough in the Army." He was an excellent wood carver and never once sold a piece. He did it for his relaxation and the joy it gave others. Most were gifts or donated, and for three different Catholic parishes, his art adorns their churches. As the unofficial high school class president, Max brought his classmates together ALL the time. His baking skills were renowned, and he loved to garden and care for his lawn.

Family meant everything to Max. His first health scare came in 1987 with a widowmaker heart attack but because of his drive to not miss out on living out future family memories and the driving force of Alita, he made it through. Alita was mostly successful in tamping down his love of pastries and chocolate to keep him with us and of course, his stubbornness had a lot to do with that too. Despite his frequent medical challenges over the next 35+ years, he never complained. He was focused on being there for his family and making their lives amazing.

If anyone has been around Max, especially the past few years, you know he's an accomplished dad jokester and would make Errol Flynn envious with his cane (sword) play. We're certain when he met St. Peter at the Pearly Gates and was asked, "Max, how are you doing?", Max replied, "Better than you!"

Max's family and friends will carry his memory forever in their hearts. He leaves behind a legacy of love, laughter, and a commitment to faith that will never be forgotten.

Knights of Columbus 4th Degree Chalice Ceremony and the rosary will be prayed at 5 p.m. Wednesday, February 19, 2025, at Mother Teresa of Calcutta Catholic Church, 2014 NW 46th Street, Topeka KS 66618, where visitation will follow until 6:30 p.m. Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated at 10:30 a.m. Thursday, February 20, 2025, at Mother Teresa of Calcutta Catholic Church. Private inurnment will be in Mount Calvary Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations to the Mother Teresa building fund or American Heart Association, and sent in care of Kevin Brennan Family Funeral Home, 2801 SW Urish Road, Topeka KS 66614.

Condolences may be sent online to www.kevinbrennanfamily.com

Previous Events

Knights of Columbus 4th Degree Chalice Ceremony and Rosary

FEB 19. 5:00 PM (CT)

Mother Teresa of Calcutta Catholic Church
2014 NW 46th Street
Topeka, KS 66618

Visitation

FEB 19. 5:30 PM - 6:30 PM (CT)

Mother Teresa of Calcutta Catholic Church
2014 NW 46th Street
Topeka, KS 66618

Mass of Christian Burial

FEB 20. 10:30 AM (CT)

Mother Teresa of Calcutta Catholic Church
2014 NW 46th Street
Topeka, KS 66618

Tribute Wall

BB

“Max was one of a kind. Always jovial but sharp-witted; you had to mind your P’s and Q’s around Max or he’d get you with one of his zingers. He didn’t miss much. I was always impressed with the work he did for our parish and for the Knights. His quiet strength and visibly steadfast faith was a model for us all the follow. His passing leaves as large a whole in our parish as it does in his family. He will be sorely missed. Rest in peace Max. I was supposed to sing at Max’s funeral but am getting over some health issues of my own that reared their head that morning. I regret that a lot. I sing a “Songs of the Angels” for every single one of my friends that pass. Singing one for you right now Worthy Sir.

Brett Bitner - February 23, 2025 at 04:40 PM

RZ

“I’m sorry to hear about your loss. Max was always such a happy and kind man. I still have some of his carvings from the tree we cut down in my front yard. Mark, you played a big role in my life as a young scout. I always looked up to you. I saw this because we lost my father a few days after your dad. I hope they are hanging out and smiling down on us. Bobby Zeller

Robert Zeller - February 20, 2025 at 04:21 PM

PB

“Alita, Pat & Mark Mom and I were saddened to hear of loss of Max. I have good memories from long ago Max. Sorry for your loss.

Pat Bargas - February 18, 2025 at 04:35 PM



“ A grove of 3 [Memorial Trees](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Max Kennedy.

February 18, 2025 at 02:42 PM



“ Much love, Sam and Leanne Kennedy purchased the Serene Retreat for the family of Max Kennedy.



Much love, Sam and Leanne Kennedy - February 18, 2025 at 01:32 PM



“ Serene Retreat was purchased for the family of Max Kennedy.



February 17, 2025 at 03:21 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Max Kennedy.

February 17, 2025 at 03:21 PM



“ Alita and Family, sorry to here about Max, he was the nicest person and he truly loved his Family and his Lord. May God Bless you all.

Pamela Rabe - February 17, 2025 at 10:00 AM



“ Florist Choice Bouquet was purchased for the family of Max Kennedy.



February 16, 2025 at 12:22 PM



“ Max was 13 years ahead of me. I adored him. He always had something kind to say to me and my brothers. Even though he was my uncle and my Dad's baby brother, he was like a big brother to us. Throughout the years Max was someone I knew would always be there for us. I will miss him.

Karen S Wright - February 14, 2025 at 05:26 PM



“ Max was such a delightful man with a wonderful warm heart, outstanding sense of humor, and deep love for his family. I am honored to have known him. He was loved by alland will be missed by all.

Cris Collier - February 14, 2025 at 08:32 AM



“ Adele, Julie, David, Mary and AI planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Max Kennedy.

Adele, Julie, David, Mary and AI - February 12, 2025 at 05:38 PM

AA

“ Adele, Julie, David, Mary and Al purchased the Sereene Retreat for the family of Max Kennedy.



Adele, Julie, David, Mary and Al - February 12, 2025 at 05:38 PM

TL

“ Mrs. Kennedy, Pat and Mark - My sister and I grew up across the street from you in Topeka. What great memories I have of Mr. Kennedy out on his riding lawn mowing working hard on his beautiful landscaping and lawn. He was also so very thoughtful to Katie and me. Prayers to you all.

Tiffany (TJ) Lenoir

Tiffany Lenoir - February 12, 2025 at 03:25 PM

KN

“ I am so grateful to Max for his many years of keeping our Class Of 1956 reunions going. Those events made it possible for me to reconnect not only with him and meet Alita, but to also spend time with my other Hayden HS classmates.

Kay McNeive Negash - February 12, 2025 at 02:46 PM

DS

“ Alita, Pat and Mark & Families - Max was always a wonderful man and so kind. His faith was great example. I think of him especially at Christmas since we have one of his Santa Clause carvings. Love and prayers to you all.

Donna (Wohletz) Suarez - February 12, 2025 at 11:43 AM

TB

“ Pat - my heartfelt sympathy to you and the entire family.

Trey Burton - February 12, 2025 at 07:01 AM

RW

“ I remember growing up on Sioux Lane, hanging out with the neighborhood kids, including Pat and Mark. Mr. Kennedy always kept the most meticulous lawn. He was always out keeping up the trees and flowers. He was so kind to all of us. Mrs. Kennedy, Patti, Mark, and all of your family, you are in my thoughts and prayers. May God bless all of you during this time of sorrow.

Rita (Milazzo) Wilson - February 11, 2025 at 11:26 PM

MG

I will always miss Max asking me if I have been good and then waving his cane and then acting like he was going to trip me! A true Irishman he was! God rest his soul

Mary Lou Gudenkauf - February 12, 2025 at 06:46 PM

SH

I remember the Kennedy family vividly from my teaching years at Northern Hills. The entire family was a "class act", deserving of admiration and respect. I send sincere condolences, as well as kindest greetings to Pat and Mark. ---Steve Henry --- jshmozart@gmail.com

Steve Henry - February 14, 2025 at 06:15 PM