

IN LOVING MEMORY

José A. Santillán

BORN

*May 22, 1952
Guanajuato, Mexico*

PASSED AWAY

*December 20, 2020
Springfield, Missouri*

MEMORIAL MASS

*Sacred Heart Catholic Church
Springfield, Missouri
11:00 am, Saturday
June 26, 2021*

CELEBRANT

*Rev. Gaspar Masilamani, CMF
Rev. Javier Reyes, CMF*

MUSIC

*Guitar: Heather Hill
Marvin Murphree "Ave Maria"
Members of Mariachi Moderno
Violin: Roman
Piano: Zoila Speer-Santillán
Trumpet: Michael Osborn
Bass: Chuck Fugate*



José A. Santillán

May 22, 1952 - December 20, 2020

José A. Santillán Soto was born in Guanajuato, Mexico May 22, 1952, and departed this life December 20, 2020 at Mercy Hospital in Springfield, Missouri due to Covid complications. He comes from a large family of 8 children.. José had a good life and accomplished most of his goals. José and Zoila had a happy and loving life together for 23 years. His mother Angelina Soto lives in Ecatepec, Mexico. She is 84 years old.

José was a very positive person all his life. He always tried to help others when he could. He thanked God for everyday he woke up. He said that after being 60 years of age each day was a gift from God. His response when people asked him how he was he will say "Excelente". Music was his love since he was a small boy in Mexico, and he worked to help his family. When he was young he bought his first guitar and it was bigger than he was. He self-taught himself and practiced a lot. He found great pleasure in playing on festive occasions and eventually started also participating in the church choirs singing and playing the guitar where ever he went. He had a gift from God that helped him with his music, he had a good voice, a good ear and the ability to learn songs very easily. He would hear a song once or twice and immediately he would start putting the chords and singing and playing the song. He had quite a collection of popular songs that he knew by memory. In all the places he lived he always made sure he attended a Catholic Church and ended participating in the music of the celebration. He also was a composer and has some of his songs registered that he composed in Spanish. One that he wrote called "The wounded Eagle/ Aguila Herida" came from seeing the picture of an eagle with a tear in her eyes after the September 11 attack to the towers. The song has been translated into English and is registered in a classical form sung by Marvin Murphree, a Country style recorded by Joe Tinoco and his wife Tamara from the Magnificent Seven Show in Branson. José came to Springfield in 1997 and soon after started participating in the Hispanic choir here at Sacred Heart. He has been a long-time member of Sacred Heart. He was also a member of The Knights of Columbus.

When he came to the United States in 1990 he arrived in Florida to work. He came to the United States to better himself and to see the US. Then he moved to Swedenborg, New Jersey, but as soon as he could he moved where it was warmer. He said that it was cold there and it snowed so much that there were times his car was completely covered with snow that he could not drive it. He moved to Ft. Worth Texas where he has cousins and stayed there until he started working as a lumper (unloader of trucks), they transferred him to Springfield in 1997 where he was supervisor to other Spanish speaking employees, He started attending Sacred Heart and started playing and singing guitar in the choir, where Zoila was the music director at the time. He and Zoila together participated

in helping to bring music to other parishes. Father Bill Hodgson went to different parishes to bring the Mass in Spanish once a month. In 2000 they helped with the Hispanic music ministry in Monett, where both were the music organizers for 6 years, working with Fr. John Braun, then Fr. Allen and Fr. Daniel. After they went to organize the music for the Spanish mass at Lady of the Lake in Branson, MO for about 2 years working with Fr. Rick Jones. José's motto was "that music is a very important part in the celebration of the Mass". One of his dreams was to organize a Mariachi Group and he was able to start "Mariachi Moderno" in 2010. He was the leader and together with all the members made beautiful music for all kind of celebrations. He liked to read and that helped him have an open mind for learning. He became a U.S citizen in 2000, and he obtained his GED in 2004. He always had goals and was very detailed oriented in his jobs. He worked 13 years a St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church and School here in Springfield, where he worked under Fr. Reidy as a janitor and some maintenance. Everyone appreciated him there, the children gave him cards that they designed and celebrated his retirement in 2018. They all tried to write something in Spanish and called him Mr. Jose. He had good memories of those years there. Zoila and José used their music abilities together in bringing music to religious celebrations and had fun playing at family gatherings here in Missouri, Arkansas and Kansas, and Texas. They were a team in music for 23 years and shared their lives and love together. José adopted Zoila's children and grandchildren and in one comment in his memoirs he says now together we have 9 grandchildren. He has 2 grandchildren from his daughters. Beatriz Santillán has a 7 yr old boy named Santiago, and his younger daughter Susana Santillán has a daughter 2 years old named Frida. They reside in Mexico. His family in the United States are his wife Zoila Speer-Santillán of 23 years. Claire Held and her husband Kevin and children Ashley, Justin, Steven, and Kevin Jr. Erica Clark and her daughters Charity, and Jasmine married to Zachary Stensrud, Frantine Speer, and Andrew Speer and his son Andrew Michael Speer.

We would like to thank everyone that came to celebrate José Santillán life and accomplishments. Thank you to all the members of "Mariachi Moderno" group and the musicians that made this celebration memorable interpreting some of his favorite songs.

*Herman H. Lohmeyer Funeral Home
500 E. Walnut Street, Springfield, Missouri 65806
417-862-4433*

Permanent online condolences, stories and photos may be shared at www.hhlohmeier.com.