



## Thomas A. "Tom" Powers

September 25, 1942 - May 2, 2019

Thomas A. "Tom" Powers, age 76, passed away on Thursday morning, May 2, 2019 at his home surrounded by his loving wife and family. He was born September 25, 1942 in Marion, OH to Francis C. and Mary E. (Lieb) Powers. On December 27, 1966, he married Catherine J. Miller in Toronto, Ontario, Can. Tom attended Marion Catholic High School, Marion, OH. He then attended Mount St. Mary's College, the Mary Knoll Seminary, and The Ohio State University for his bachelor's degrees. He earned a Masters Degree from Eastern Michigan University and his Educational Specialist from Central Michigan University. Those who know Tom, know he was a giver of his time, talents and treasures. Tom started his education career at Toledo Central Catholic High School and then moved to Flint, MI as a Community Education Director. After stints in Flint and Oscoda, Tom assumed the Community Education Director position at Mona Shores where he served for 12 years. In 1983, Tom took over as the Superintendent of the Grand Traverse Area Catholic Schools (St. Francis). From there, Tom came back to Mona Shores as the principal of Hile Elementary, and then spent the last nine years of his education career as the Superintendent of the Greater Muskegon Area Catholic Schools and was President of the Muskegon County Catholic Education Foundation. Tom loved his schools and his "kids." After retiring from education Tom served as the Director of Mission Services for Mercy Health Partners for 5 years. Tom officially retired in 2008 but never really retired. Tom was always a true community servant. He was instrumental in developing the original May Fest and the Muskegon Area Child Abuse Council. Tom served as a member and as past president for the Muskegon Exchange Club and the Muskegon Rotary Club. In 2008, he led a very successful Muskegon United Way Campaign. Tom was the quintessential Irishman. He was a long-time member of the Muskegon Irish American Society as well as the Michigan Irish Musical Festival. Tom served his church parishes of St. Joseph, Our Lady of Grace, and St. Francis de Sales. Survivors include his loving wife of 52 years, Cathy Powers of Norton Shores; 2 sons, Kelly (Lisa) Powers of Muskegon and their children, Collin and Erin Powers; Casey (Jennifer) Powers of Petoskey, MI and their children, Griffin Powers and Patrick Sheperd; his sister, Penny Sulieman of Manhattan, KS and her children, Gibran and Suad Sulieman. Tom was preceded in death by his grandson, Connor Miller Powers in 1996. Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated 1:00

PM Saturday, May 11, 2019 at St. Francis de Sales Catholic Church (2929 McCracken St.) with Revs. Fr. Michael P. Olson and Fr. Bartholomew Okagbue presiding. Visitation will be held 4-7 PM Friday at The Lee Chapel, 6291 S. Harvey St., (231) 798-1100. Visitation will also be held one hour prior to Mass, 12-1 PM Saturday at the church. Memorial contributions may be directed to the Muskegon Catholic Education Foundation or the Child Abuse Council of Muskegon County. Sign the guestbook online at [www.sytsemafh.com](http://www.sytsemafh.com)

# Events

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**MAY** **Visitation** 04:00PM - 07:00PM

**10**

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The Lee Chapel

6291 Harvey St., Norton Shores, MI, US, 49444

**MAY** **Visitation** 12:00PM - 01:00PM

**11**

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St. Francis de Sales Catholic Church

2929 McCracken, Norton Shores, MI, US, 49441

**MAY** **Mass of Christian Burial** 01:00PM

**11**

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St. Francis de Sales Catholic Church - Main Church

2929 McCracken, Muskegon, MI, US, 49441

# Comments

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“ My prayers are with Cathy and the Family. Tom was a loving husband and father, a man of deep faith, devoted to church and community. I will always be grateful for his support and kindness to me in my years at St. Francis. He is an inspiration.

I join you in spirit today as Tom is commended to eternal rest and peace with our Lord.

Fr. Tom Simons  
Holy Trinity Church & School  
Comstock Park, MI

Fr. Tom Simons - May 11 at 09:27 AM

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“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Thomas A. "Tom" Powers.



May 10 at 05:39 PM

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“ Thoughts, Prayers, and Condolences to the Powers family. My wife Rebecca Monroe used to work in Building Services at Mercy Hospital as a Building Services Attendant I [Building Services Attendant First Shift] from 2001 to 2006 and while Tom was Director Of Mission Services at Mercy Hospital in Muskegon, Michigan; he helped her out greatly by giving her compassionate advice and helped her out by paying off a credit card, and asking for nothing in return to pay him back.

Timothy and Rebecca Monroe  
530 Glen Oaks Drive  
Apartment #2C  
Muskegon, MI. 49442

Timothy Monroe - May 10 at 03:07 PM

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“ Simply Chic Mixed Plant Basket was purchased for the family of Thomas A. "Tom" Powers.



May 10 at 11:56 AM

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“ Kelly and family,  
I am so very sorry to hear of the loss of your father. Such a kind, and giving man, who has left behind a great legacy. He always seemed to have a kind word and a heartfelt smile. May you find strength today and the days to come.

Laura Karafa

Laura Karafa - May 10 at 10:12 AM

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“ So sorry to hear of Tom's passing. We shared a Goddaughter & he once introduced me to his Rotary Club where I was giving the meeting presentation, as his God Wife. What a sense of humor he had. He will be missed!  
Sue Asp

Sue Asp - May 08 at 04:30 PM

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“ Eternal rest grant unto him, O Lord and let the perpetual light shine upon him. May his soul and the souls of all the faithful departed rest in peace. The parish staff and families at St. Francis de Sales Church



Kim Brush - May 07 at 07:57 AM

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“ So sorry to hear about Tom. Tom hired me for my first job out of college to work in Community Education at Mona Shores. His sense of humor and how he never met a stranger made him a great boss to work with. Being a Michigan fan his love of Ohio State was a fun battle we had and having his house decorated with every Ohio State souvenir to the ceiling was just not right. Prayers are with the family.

Steve Kendall - May 06 at 11:09 AM

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“ Eternal rest grant unto him, O Lord and let the perpetual light shine upon him. May his soul and the souls of all the faithful departed rest in peace. The parish staff & families at St. Francis de Sales Church



Kim Brush - May 06 at 09:40 AM

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“ My late husband Scott and I met Tom and his wife Cathy while attending Mass in Maui Hawaii... How ironic to be sitting next another couple from Muskegon MI. Tom was such an interesting man that while visiting Mercy hospital I would stop in to chat with him. My sincere condolences to the Powers family.. Kellie Sochanek

Kellie Sochanek - May 05 at 10:18 PM

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“ To the Powers family,

When I started working at Muskegon Catholic, Tom was superintendent. He was always supporting the staff any way he could. No matter where he saw you, he always had a smile and a hug to share. Tom was also helpful when my students went to the Lakeshore Museum. He shared with them all his knowledge about lumberjacks. The kids really enjoyed what he shared with them and you could tell Tom really enjoyed sharing it.

May God keep all of you in his loving arms until you see Tom again in heaven.

Kathi Kissel

Kathi Kissel - May 05 at 07:10 PM



“ So sorry for your great loss! Tom was an amazing friend to so many in our community. We lost a great man, heaven gained a special angel. Rest in peace Tom in the palms of his hands

**Nancy Robbins** - May 05 at 04:53 AM

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“ Dear Family of Tom Powers,  
I didn't get to know Tom until the past several years as I became active in Rotary youth events. Tom was always present for the kids and such a wonderful, joyful, person who always was giving of his time and talents for others. He was such a grand story teller and joke teller as a proud a delightful Irishman! My prayers and sympathy for all of you, especially Kathy.  
Joanie Smith

**Joan H Smith** - May 04 at 05:18 PM

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“ The line in the obituary about how much he loved his "kids" at his schools was perfect. Any achievement I earned while at Catholic Central he was nearly as proud of me and as happy for me as my parents were. I know others felt the same way. Sports victories, service projects, the theater program, anything. If there was an event he was there, working along side with us or cheering us on, and we all appreciated him. God speed Mr. Powers.

**Steve Sprague** - May 04 at 11:51 AM

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“ Thinking of the entire family at this time. I enjoyed knowing Tom for several years. He always greeted me with a hug and a kiss on the cheek. He was so proud of his entire family telling me story after story of his life, all about his kids and of course his grandchildren! I will remember his smile always!  
Kindra Vilneff

**Kindra Vilneff** - May 04 at 11:20 AM

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“ Jim and I are both so very sorry for your loss. Tom was a fellow boater, neighbor and friend. His big personality will be difficult to forget. We loved his enthusiasm, infectious laugh, generosity and big heart. We were both so impressed that he could remain positive even after his and Kathy's accidents this winter. Prayers for strength during this period of mourning. Again, so very sorry.

Bonnie Morris - May 04 at 09:37 AM

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“ Cathy, Kelly and Casey- Tom was an icon of friendship, love, laughter and support through my life. He has left a legacy in you. Tom helped me learn what it is to be an educator. Thank you all for sharing him with us. Peace be with you.

Karen Nelson - May 04 at 07:57 AM

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“ Dear Cathy, Kelly, and Casey, Your husband and Dad, put his whole self into all of the educational, churches, and community events he served. God Bless your family during this time of sadness. (I knew him as an employee of Mona Shores Schools.) He always had a great smile and upbeat attitude. I know he was a blessing to many children, parents, and fellow staff members. Linda Robertson

Linda Udell Robertson - May 03 at 11:24 PM

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“ When my family moved back to Muskegon in the middle of my Sophomore year, Mr. Powers was our next door neighbor. He made the first day at a new school easier. He introduced me to my first friend at the school and he made me laugh every single day. The world is a lesser place without Mr. Powers. My heartfelt sympathies are with Mrs. Powers, Kelly, Casey and the entire Powers family. God speed, Mr. Powers. You were one in a trillion.

Barbara (Alger) Armstrong - May 03 at 09:54 PM

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“ For Cathy and the extended family: I pray that God will take your aching hearts in His healing hands and bring you all peace.

David R. Alger - May 03 at 09:30 PM

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“ Tom was a great man. He kept faith first, then family and then Ohio State!! All five of our children attended Muskegon Catholic while he was there. He gave great hugs and loved all the kids. The parents, too. He was so generous. I remember visiting him at his house one time after he had had surgery. I commented that I loved his off-white sweater that he often wore. I told him it looked so good on him and looked so comfortable. He began to take it off. He told me it was from Ireland. He said, "Liz, if you like it so much I want to give it to you. I have another one." I of course refused,

since it was his signature sweater. But, not many people would take the clothes off their back and give them away. Tom will be sorely missed. He had a big heart and always wore a smile upon his face. May he rest in peace. Liz & Joe Zagar

**Liz Zagar** - May 03 at 09:18 PM

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“ Tom was always quick to help students. I was learning to throw the discus and he offered to help teach me some finer points. He made a difference in my life. Thank you.

**Dr. Michael Hogg** - May 03 at 08:59 PM

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“ It's just not going to be the same world without Tom's hugs, laughs and Irish jokes. Tom was always look for and doing, something good for his community or someone. He lived life "big" and left a big void to fill. Wes Nelson

**Wes Nelson** - May 03 at 08:00 PM

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“ Cathy,Casey,Kelly,I was so sorry to hear about Tom.When he was here at St France's I taught him to Irish dance,do you remember Cathy,and he was good,and you marched in the parade with us,I was sorry to see you leave.Sending you love,hugs and prayers.God Bless. Bridie from Belfast.

**Bridie** - May 03 at 07:02 PM

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“ I had him as the Principal of Hile Elementary. He was the best. Amazing guy. Deeply missed. Rest In Peace.

**Lee** - May 03 at 05:52 PM



“ Tom was a great friend,I will miss him and his Irish smile. The Mass at the Irish fest just won't be the same without him. RIP my friend

**Pat AndDeb** - May 03 at 09:13 PM



“ My sincere condolences to the Powers family. Tom was a good man, he will be missed.

Debra Cabot

**Debra Cabot** - May 03 at 09:26 PM



“ A wonderful man, his reached out to all he met with such grace. I am honored to have met him. Prayers to Cathy and family...He was so loved....

**Margaret Ann Fox** - May 03 at 11:58 PM



“ A great friend with enthusiasm for all he did in his life. His God, his family and his community. He will be missed by all.

**Otto Borgeson** - May 04 at 08:15 AM



“ I knew Tom from many of the projects that he worked on. One in particular was the Deanery Pastoral Council which we worked on for many years. Tom was an asset to all of his endeavors. My sympathy to Cathy, and the rest of the Powers family. Rest in Peace, Tom

Margaret Platt.

**Margaret Platt** - May 04 at 09:40 AM



“ Cathy, Kelly, Casey....My deepest condolences on your loss. When we moved back to Muskegon in 1983 we bought the house next door to you. Even after all these years, i think of your family and how welcoming you were to new neighbors. Tom was a great guy and did so much good in his lifetime. He also had a bit of the devil in him too and always made me smile. I don't know if you remember Cathy but one Christmas you were out shopping with your mother and he was supposed to get a Christmas tree put up. He did, A Charlie Brown tree. He called me over to observe his creation altho he did say that he had the tree you wanted hidden away. I've never forgotten that day and I'm sure you weren't surprised but the devil just made him do it. My heart and prayers are with all of you during this difficult time. Love,

Ann Alger Waters

**Ann (Alger) Waters** - May 04 at 01:03 PM



“ Kelly and family,

Very sorry to hear about the loss of your father. Our thoughts and prayers are with you.

Matt and Amy Wolff

**Matt Wolff** - May 05 at 06:44 AM



“ Tom was a giant among men. He truly left this world a much better place. Our family has been blessed to have known him, Our heartfelt prayers are with Tom's family at this sad time.

Sincerely,

Fred & Pat McWain & Family

**Pat McWain** - May 11 at 10:09 AM