



Joseph L. Papay

May 18, 1929 - August 14, 2020

Joseph L. Papay, age 91, passed away peacefully in hospice care at Orlando Lutheran Towers on Friday evening, August 14, 2020. Joe was born in Hoboken, NJ on May 18, 1929, and was the son of Joseph A. Papay and Elizabeth E. Corse.

Joe earned his undergraduate and post-graduate degrees at Fordham University where he was awarded a PhD in Philosophy in 1952. Shortly thereafter, he began a teaching career as Professor of Philosophy at St. Peter's College in Jersey City, NJ, where he taught for 35 years until taking early retirement in 1988 to join his wife, Twila, who had accepted a position as Professor of English and Director of Writing Programs at Rollins College in Winter Park, FL. Joe and Twila met when she joined the faculty of St. Peter's College as an Associate Professor of English. A previously self-proclaimed bachelor, Joe found his soulmate in Twila, and although he didn't marry until 1976, at age 47, he and Twila were married for 40 years until her passing in 2017.

Joe's passions were trains, trolleys, travel, and Twila. And when he was on sabbatical — either his or Twila's — he managed to combine them all. He and Twila traversed the world several times over and spent time on six of the seven continents. They almost made it to the seventh, Antarctica, as well, but missed out when their tour ship ran into rough waters and had to turn back.

Whether he was booking passage on the Orient Express, riding trolleys throughout Europe, or celebrating his 90th birthday on SunRail, Joe always knew the routes, the timetables, and the points of interest along the way. When he was just 10-years-old, Joe was already writing to transit authorities and station masters around the country asking for published routes and timetables. The letters he got in reply, stuffed with all he requested and more, came from as far away as St. Louis, Los Angeles, and San Francisco. So began his lifelong passion for trains and trolleys. It didn't matter to Joe that he couldn't ride them all then. He knew he would eventually — and he did.

And in retirement, when he got together with his fellow aficionados from the Electric

Railway Clubs of Florida (ERCF), Joe was in his glory. His own model railroad layout took up two rooms in the Altamonte Springs home where he and Twila lived for almost 30 years. It started in an upstairs loft and made it's way into an adjacent bedroom by way of a custom-designed drawbridge, which could be lifted to allow entry. Invariably, service techs who came to the house to make repairs would see the layout, and upon realizing that it took up two whole rooms, had much the same to say: "Your wife must really love you!" And they were right.

Joe is survived by his brother, Eugene Papay, of Montvale, NJ; and was preceded in death by his wife, Twila, and brothers Ray and Lawrence Papay.

In respect of Joe's last wishes, a private memorial service will be held on Sanibel Island. In lieu of flowers, please consider a memorial contribution, in Joe's name, made payable to the OLT Employee Christmas Fund. Checks may be mailed to Orlando Lutheran Towers, Al Stinson, Unit 615, 300 East Church Street, Orlando, FL, 32801.