



Laura Estelle McKeever Kimmitt

March 12, 1922 - May 10, 2017

Laura Estelle Hurt McKeever Kimmitt (“HONEY”) Date of Birth March 12, 1922
Died May 10, 2017

An extraordinary life as wife, mother, and friend.

Prior to those successful careers, Laura Estelle was born and raised in Sanford, Florida, one of eight children in the Jennings/ Hurt/ Rose Higgins family. Her grandfather was James C. Higgins, who arrived in Sanford in 1902 with his nine children. The Atlantic Coast Line had sent him to Sanford to establish a railroad terminal for central Florida.

Sanford, at that time, was missionary country for Catholics. The Higgins/Hurt home at 1011 Oak Avenue was a hostel for visiting priests and military personnel. Many nights, you would find long hours of poker games at 5 cents a hand, headed by JL, Sr. Laura Estelle and all of the Hurt children became active members of the newly established All Souls Church, which contained a large stained glass window donated by the Higgins family.

After graduating high school, she moved to Alabama, where she entered a nursing training program at a charity hospital founded by a religious order nun who was the sister of James Higgins. Obtaining her degree, Laura Estelle returned to Sanford before enlisting into the US Navy. Prior to her enlistment,

with a natural love for music and dancing, she attended the officers' club at a naval air station recently established there. Again, as human nature does, she gained the attention of a handsome flyer named Edward Eugene McKeever. That relationship blossomed during his tour in the Pacific theater and her tour at Jacksonville Naval Station. Following the end of World War II, Lieutenant McKeever and now Lieutenant Hurt were married at All Souls Church in 1946. After a period of time traveling as a salesman with Auto Lite, Mr. McKeever joined the Ford Motor Company and she entered into a lifelong role of wife and mother.

After rapidly advancing with Ford, the family lived in New Jersey, Atlanta and Memphis, Tennessee. During this time, they focused on raising their seven children, Terry, Mary, Edward, Donald, Laura, Carmel, and Matthew, with strict discipline and strong Catholic faith. Sadly, Eddie McKeever, Sr. passed away in 1973. Four years later, Laura Estelle moved to Florida at the urging of many of her siblings, who lived within a few miles of each other in Winter Park, where she became the glue for her siblings. Within the next few years, five of her children joined her to experience this unique extended family.

Attending mass every morning, she met a wonderful widower, Gerard "Jerry" Kimmitt, in 1986 at St. Margaret Mary Catholic Church. They married and spent the next 30 years focusing on their 14 children, attending myriad weddings, graduations, birth of babies, and many more happy events, as well as traveling the world as a truly blessed couple.

Laura Estelle never met a person who didn't become a friend. As an active member of St. Margaret Mary Church, she became an integral part of the church community, as well as a role model for both young mothers and grandmothers. This activism came from a natural affinity and empathy in family dynamics, as well as from her personal experiences as a widow. She also acquired many friends through the Crosby YMCA. She would hold court

on the exercise equipment while expounding on the need to “keep moving.” Throughout her life, she was a regular at the tennis court and Winter Park golf course. “Keep score?” That ruins a good game.

All who met her loved her and now miss her dearly.

A tribute will be held on Tuesday, May 16, 2017 at DeGusipe Funeral Home, Maitland, FL, 6pm-8pm (5:30-6:00pm Rosary Service, all welcome). Funeral service to be held Wednesday, May 17, 2017 at 11:00am, St. Margaret Mary Catholic Church, Winter Park, FL. For more information, please see: wwwDeGusipeFuneralHome.com. In lieu of flowers, please make donations to the Little Flower Society.

Previous Events

Visitation for Family and Friends

MAY 16. 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

DeGusipe Funeral Home & Crematory Maitland Chapel
9001 N. Orlando Ave
Maitland, FL 32751
(407) 695-2273
todd@degusipe.com
<https://www.degusipefuneralhome.com>

Rosary

MAY 16. 5:30 PM - 6:00 PM (ET)

DeGusipe Funeral Home & Crematory Maitland Chapel
9001 N. Orlando Ave
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Funeral Mass

MAY 17. 11:00 AM (ET)

St. Margaret Mary Catholic Church
526 North Park Ave
Winter Park, FL 32789

Tribute Wall

Neha
Doshi

“ I was blessed to have known you. 95 brilliant years and still an angel! Looking forward to keeping your memory alive.
With love,
Dr Doshi

Neha Doshi - May 17, 2017 at 07:23 AM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of
Laura Estelle McKeever Kimmitt.



May 16, 2017 at 01:56 PM



“ The first time I met Estelle, I was new to Winter Park and was invited to Aunt Joanie's house where we met for a fashion show. Estelle was the life of the party. While she jitter-bugged out of her panty hose, she made me feel as though I was the only person in the room. Her love for her loving family and her faith reflected in her beautiful eyes. She was generous with her pearls of wisdom in navigating life. I am forever grateful to have known and loved her.
Ingrid Cordell

ingrid Cordell - May 16, 2017 at 01:04 PM



“ Your loving niece, Melanie purchased the Sapphire Skies Bouquet for the family of Laura Estelle McKeever Kimmitt.



Your loving niece, Melanie - May 16, 2017 at 12:48 PM



“ Sentiments of Serenity Spray was purchased for the family of Laura Estelle McKeever Kimmitt.



May 16, 2017 at 10:09 AM



“ Rose Garden Heart was purchased for the family of Laura Estelle McKeever Kimmitt.



May 15, 2017 at 09:15 PM



“ Basket Full of Wishes was purchased for the family of Laura Estelle McKeever Kimmitt.



May 15, 2017 at 08:02 PM

LB

“ *Love, Brian & Sue Bellissimo purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Laura Estelle McKeever Kimmitt.*



Love, Brian & Sue Bellissimo - May 15, 2017 at 05:18 PM

TF

“ *Our thoughts and prayers are with the entire McKeever family at this difficult time. Many blessings of comfort to you all.*

Tom Ferrell & family - May 15, 2017 at 05:14 PM



“ *Sentiments of Serenity Spray was purchased for the family of Laura Estelle McKeever Kimmitt.*



May 15, 2017 at 01:10 PM

BD

“ *Estelle, I loved you so very much. You were always my guardian angel. I have fond memories standing together at the SMM flag salutes in the mornings when I taught your grandchildren. Always listening, always raising me up. We shared many trails and tribulations together after I moved to Florida in 1991. You knew my heart...and were always my support.*

Your most recent advice was after my marriage to Manny in 2010 . You and Jerry told us both to listen to and help each another. That was the secret of a great marriage.

My heart breaks now, knowing that I will not see you here again on earth, but joyful knowing you're happy in heaven now.

God bless you. You will be terribly missed.

Love always,

Barbara Bertasi (McDowell) Diaz

Barbara Diaz - May 15, 2017 at 12:20 PM



“ *Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of Laura Estelle McKeever Kimmitt.*



May 15, 2017 at 11:11 AM



“ *Crystal Cross Bouquet was purchased for the family of Laura Estelle McKeever Kimmitt.*



May 15, 2017 at 10:59 AM



“ *Loving Lilies and Roses Bouquet was purchased for the family of Laura Estelle McKeever Kimmitt.*



May 15, 2017 at 10:11 AM



“ *With love Maria Giuliano, Connie and Bryan Daughtry purchased the Florist Choice Bouquet for the family of Laura Estelle McKeever Kimmitt.*



With love Maria Giuliano, Connie and Bryan Daughtry - May 15, 2017 at 07:42 AM



“ *To Matt and his beautiful family, I want to express my heartfelt sympathy on the passing of your Mother. I know your Mother will be greatly missed by all her family and friends. I know she was treasured by all who knew her. May the Lord be with you at this time and rest assured that she is now with our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Larry Herring*

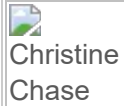
Larry Herring - May 15, 2017 at 06:59 AM



“ *Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of Laura Estelle McKeever Kimmitt.*



May 14, 2017 at 09:14 PM



Christine Chase

“ And just like that our queen, our angel, is at peace. Honey, you were a ball of light, love and laughter for everyone you encountered. You were a mother, a grandmother, a great-grandmother, a wise voice, a caring friend, a beacon of strength, a devout Christian and wife, and an inspiration to all. I can't imagine any of our family gatherings without our star of the show anymore, but I know you're already enjoying the eternal party with our Lord. You lived an exceptional life with the legacy to prove it. Thank you for gracing this earth for 95 beautiful years. You have touched so many lives. We will miss you dearly. ❤️

Christine Chase - May 14, 2017 at 04:05 PM



“ Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of Laura Estelle McKeever Kimmitt.



May 13, 2017 at 11:31 AM



BK

“ Truly one one of God's special people whose earthly beauty is surpassed by the lasting purity of her soul.

Bill & Jeanne Kreuter - May 13, 2017 at 11:09 AM



LM

“ I am so sorry for your loss. She was an amazing woman who lived life to the fullest! She will be very missed. Prayers for the family for peace during this trying time. Lifting you all up in prayer! Laurie Phillips



Laurie Phillips (Paralegal to Don McKeev - May 12, 2017 at 08:07 AM

PS

*Dear family of Estelle,
I will be in Winter Park soon and went online to get Estelle's info in hopes of visiting her.
Alas, I am too late and am so sad to learn of her death. I have many wonderful childhood memories of Ed & Estelle and "crew". I send all of you my condolences. I know how hard it is to lose your mom. Mine (Anne Cannova) died January 19, 2010, the day after her 89th birthday. May Our Lord hold you all close and continue to comfort you.
Blessings,
Pat Cannova Swanton
paswanton@att.net
February 5, 2018*

Patricia Swanton - February 05, 2018 at 10:49 PM

TA

I still miss you, Sugar Plum!!😭 You'll always hold a special place in my heart. - T

Talipha - December 25, 2023 at 01:29 PM