



## Laurence G. O'Donnell

June 30, 1935 - July 18, 2025

Laurence Gerard O'Donnell, 90, formerly of Ridgewood, NJ, passed away peacefully on July 18 after a lengthy illness in Stamford, CT, in the loving care of his family. Larry was born in 1935 in Brooklyn, New York. He was the son of the late Thomas and Dorothy O'Donnell. He was a devoted husband to his wife, Joan, and he presided with a sense of humor and a twinkle in his eye over a close-knit and joyful (some might say a bit loud) family.

Larry had an exceptional career at the Wall Street Journal, where his journalistic integrity and leadership defined an era. He joined the Wall Street Journal as a reporter shortly after graduation from the College of the Holy Cross. He worked for the Journal and its parent company, Dow Jones, for his entire career, moving from real estate reporter to Detroit Bureau Chief, where he oversaw reporting about the auto industry at its height. As the WSJ Managing Editor 1977-1983, he presided over a period of major improvements and expansion. He earned a reputation for recruiting and mentoring some of the Journal's most distinguished reporters, while continually upholding and enhancing the paper's standard of excellence in journalism. After stepping down as managing editor, Larry continued to serve the Journal and Dow Jones in various capacities including his role as President of the Dow Jones Foundation, focused on mentoring a next generation of diverse journalists into the profession.

A faithful and devout Catholic, Larry remained deeply involved in his church and related community activities throughout life. He cherished the undergraduate education at the College of the Holy Cross, and was proud of the O'Donnell five-generation legacy. After graduation, Larry served as Agent for the Class of 1957 and a member of the Board of Trustees and Advisory Board.

Larry was a dedicated outdoorsman, and with his family explored the vast wonders of the United States and Canada, traveling thousands of miles to camp and hike at numerous state and national parks in a Ford station wagon carrying Mom, Dad, the children and a large dog. He cherished Wellfleet on Cape Cod, where he started visiting as a child in the 1940s and continued to vacation over many decades with his family. His time on the beaches and ponds of Wellfleet were unique, and he spent countless hours sitting under his decades old beach umbrella engaged in conversations with family and friends, complemented by an end of the day barbeque or lobster clambake.

An extended family and many dear friends, including those from Grosse Pointe Park, MI, and Ridgewood, NJ, were an essential aspect of Larry's life. He loved engaging with them over the dinner table, on the back porch, in beach chair circles, on the tennis court, and on the dance floor where he would "keep low and keep moving". He was known for his engaging approach and gift for listening to friends, family and strangers alike. To put it simply, his enduring life legacy will be the impact he had on many in his circle and the amazing community of family and friends that he helped to create.

He is survived by his loving wife Joan after 65 years of marriage, as well as sister Dorothy (Ned) Reilly and brother the Reverend Monsignor Peter O'Donnell; he was predeceased by an older brother Todd and sister-in-law Alice. He leaves behind his children Christopher (Kim), Carrie (David) Gurney, Jeffrey (Antoinette) and Tony (Luisa) as well as 11 grandchildren, Lindsey

(Tim) Welch, Matthew (Samantha) and Stephen Gurney, Adrienne (John) Lefeber and Conor (Katlin), Alex, Ailish, Marco, Kylie, Kyra and Luca O'Donnell, and two great-grandchildren, Brian and Sophie Welch. Over more than two decades, Larry and Joan generously welcomed 19 foster children into their home and hearts-many of whom continue to share close bonds with the O'Donnell family.

Larry's life will be celebrated at a Funeral mass at 12 noon on Friday July 25, 2025 at Our Lady Star of the Sea Catholic Church at 1200 Shippan Avenue in Stamford, CT. In lieu of flowers, contributions can be made to [Innercityscholarshipfund.org](http://Innercityscholarshipfund.org).

If you wish to make a remembrance for the family, you may sign the family guestbook at [www.bosakfuneralhome.com](http://www.bosakfuneralhome.com) or [www.facebook.com/bosakfuneralhome](http://www.facebook.com/bosakfuneralhome) .

# Previous Events

## Funeral Mass

JUL **25**. 12:00 PM (ET)

Our Lady Star of the Sea Church  
1200 Shippan Avenue  
Stamford, CT 06902