



Joseph "Joe" John Helminiak, of Manistee, died of natural causes Saturday morning, February 13, 2021 at his home of over 50 years. He was born March 19, 1936 to John Edward and Pricilla "Sadie" (Adamski) Helminiak.

Joe was employed as a marine upholster at Fortier Industries Inc. He started there when he was eighteen years old, and he fell in love with the boss's daughter. Joe and Helen Fortier married June 16, 1956, sharing 64 wonderful years together. Joe was employed at Fortier Industries for 30 years, until he retired, and he and Helen had six daughters together.

When asked if he ever wished he had any sons, Joe would respond, "Heck no, I love my girls. Wouldn't trade them for the world."

Joe's favorite activity was to sit in his chair and listen to his family laugh while they played cards. He was known for his humorous stories of "the good ole days," his love of vintage cars, and for cooking delicious spaghetti dinners. He was a member of Divine Mercy Parish (Guardian Angels Church) where he served as an usher. Joe was also a member of the Knights of Columbus and St. Joe's Civic Club. In 1957, he proudly served in the National Guard.

Joe is preceded in death by his parents John and Pricilla Helminiak; sisters Elizabeth (Betty) Purgiel, Leona Ake, Evelyn Abramcyk and Annabelle Johnson; and brothers, Edward (Spades), Frank (Chummy), Anthony (Tony), John Jr., and Louis Helminiak; and in-laws Lawrence Sr. and Neva Fortier.

Joe is survived by his loving wife, Helen Helminiak of Manistee; six children: Susan (Jim) Kolanowski of Manistee, Bonnie (Stephen) Bielefeld of Milwaukee, Audrey (Dan) Lafforgue of Brinnon, Washington, Leanne Quinn of Manistee, Julie Loeweke of Manistee, and Janine (Sebastian Orbe) Bravo of Bensonville, Illinois; his grandchildren: Jennifer (Jarrod) Howes of Brethren, Andrew (Heather) Kolanowski of Manistee, Ashley (Crystal) Sorenson of Marysville, Ohio, Nicholas (Olivia) Kolanowski of Manistee, Abigale (Charles) Racine-Hyde of Urbana-Champaign, Illinois, Joseph Quinn of Manistee, and Patrick Quinn of Manistee; his great-granddaughters: Jocelyn and Jolie Howes of Brethren, and Claire Kolanowski of Manistee; his brothers-in-law: Fred Johnson and Lawrence Fortier Jr. of Manistee; and his sisters-in-law: Marian Johnson, Lois Green, Carrie Jayne Devereaux, Joanne Fortier, and Jeanne Pefley of Manistee, Denise Fortier of Manistee, Terri Tytar of Grand Rapids, Clare Shipstead of Traverse City, Renee Harrison of East Lansing, and Emily Helminiak of Ludington.

Numerous nieces and nephews also survive him. Framed in the family upholstery-workshop was a sign that read, "Old upholsterers never die, they always recover."

Happy recovery, Joe. We all miss and love you so much.

Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated Tuesday, February 23, 2020 at 11:30 AM at St. Joseph Catholic Church in Manistee with Reverend Zeljko Guberovic celebrant. Burial will follow at Mount Carmel Cemetery also in Manistee. The family will receive friends at the church on Tuesday morning one hour prior to the funeral mass.

The Herbert Funeral Home of Manistee is in charge of funeral Arrangements.