



Gordon Michael "Spike" Gielczyk, age 99 of Manistee, died Wednesday, February 17, 2021 at Cedar Ridge AFC Home in Brethren.

He was born on August 17, 1921 the son of the late Michael and Mary (Kaleta) Gielczyk, who preceded him in death.

Gordon graduated from Manistee High School in 1939 after attending St. Joseph's Parochial School. He was a member of the United States Army, being drafted on his 21<sup>st</sup> birthday and was immediately shipped overseas without a furlough. He didn't receive his first furlough until three years later. After first being assigned to the European Theater for a time, Gordon was re-assigned to the Central Pacific. He was awarded a bronze battle star. He was honorably discharged from the Army in December, 1945.

He married Rogene Jacobson on September 1, 1951. She preceded him in death on October 22, 2003. He is survived by a son Gregory, who lives at home, and a daughter and son-in-law Sheryl Ann and Dan Martin of Manistee.

Taking advantage of the G.I. Bill, he attended Western Michigan University and graduated with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Biological Science. While at WMU, he participated in baseball and boxing. He received his Master's Degree from Central Michigan.

After serving as the Manistee Saints semi-pro baseball team's first bat boy when Fr. Julian Moleski formed the team in 1934, when he was older Gielczyk starred as a third baseman for the Saints prior to his being drafted (1941-42). He re-joined the team when he came home from the service, and was inducted into the Saints Hall of Fame after a stellar playing career.

He would also play fast-pitch softball, and would often be asked to be a fill-in for several teams.

After teaching for a time in Fruitport, Gielczyk landed a position at Bear Lake and spent the remainder of his 33-year career at the school, although he coached varsity boys' basketball at St. Joseph Catholic School from 1961-63. Later, he would coach Bear Lake's varsity boys' basketball team, guiding the Lakers to the school's first district title in 25 years in the 1967-68 season.

An avid fisherman, Gordon often spent hours in the fall fishing for steelhead, in all manner of weather. He eventually became what might be called a "gentleman farmer," had a barn built (which was much larger than he had originally envisioned) and always had four head of cattle, having the cows bear calves. Earlier, he raised everything from rabbits to ducks, geese & chickens...including laying hens.

He was a die-hard Chicago Cubs and Notre Dame fan, and was overjoyed when the Cubs finally won a World Series title and the Irish a national championship under coach Lou Holtz.

He was preceded in death by six brothers, Al, Frank, Jerome, Richard, Walter and Adrian, and three sisters, Blondine, Bernadine and Margarette.

A Memorial Mass will be celebrated on Wednesday, July 21, 2021 at 11:00 AM at Saint Joseph Catholic Church in Manistee with Reverend Basil Lek Celebrant. The family will receive friends at the church on Wednesday morning, one hour prior to the funeral mass.

A memorial has been established in Gordon's name for the Manistee Saints.

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