



Dr. Russell Charles Romero

August 14, 1947 - February 13, 2020

Russell Charles Romero, D.D.S, M.D.

One of the kindest, most compassionate, and humble men completed his worldly journey and entered eternal peace at his home on Thursday, February 13, 2020. Russell played many roles in his life but the ones that defined him were the roles of husband, father, son, physician, and volunteer to numerous charitable and fraternal organizations.

Russell Charles Romero, D.D.S, M.D., was born August 14, 1947, in Lafayette, LA, to John Harry Romero, Sr., and Mildred Chargois Romero. Russell graduated from Cathedral High School and attended the University of Southwestern Louisiana. After completing two years of pre-dental coursework, Russell was accepted into Loyola Dental School in New Orleans. It was during this period that Russell met his wife of 50 years, Carolyn Romero, née Bird. They were married on November 22, 1969, and Jason Jude Romero was born in 1975, followed by Jordan Thaddeus Romero in 1982. Upon the completion of dental school, Russell began an Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery fellowship at Charity Hospital in New Orleans. During this fellowship, Russell rotated with the Plastic Surgery Department and discovered his true calling.

Russell decided to apply to medical school, but had signed a commitment to serve in the United States Air Force. With help from Louisiana Senator J. Bennett Johnson, Russell was able to defer his Air Force commitment until he completed both medical school and his postgraduate residency training program. Russell was accepted into the new medical school in Shreveport, LA, and was in the fifth graduating class. Because of the basic science coursework he completed in dental school, Russell was given the rare opportunity to test out of several courses in medical school. This allowed Russell to work part time as a dentist during much of his medical school tenure.

Upon completion of medical school, Russell began a combined General Surgery and Plastic Surgery residency program at Saint Joseph Hospital, Houston, TX. The Plastic Surgery program at St. Joseph was staffed by several pioneers of modern Plastic Surgery including, Dr. Thomas Cronin, Dr. Raymond Brauer, and Dr. Thomas Biggs. One of the

highlights of Russell's training was having the opportunity to operate with famous French plastic surgeon, Dr. Paul Tessier, considered the father of modern craniofacial surgery. Dr. Tessier developed many of the early techniques for cleft lip and palate repair and his mentorship had a lasting impact on Russell.

Once his residency was complete, Russell reported to Keesler Air Force Base Hospital, Biloxi, MS, to serve a three year commitment. Russell was appointed the Chief of Plastic Surgery for the Southeastern United States. He credits his time in the Air Force with further honing his surgical skills because of the volume and variety of cases referred to him. In 1985 Russell was honorably discharged from the Air Force at the rank of Lieutenant Colonel and moved home to Lafayette, LA. Russell practiced medicine in Lafayette for 27 years until his retirement in 2012. He was a Fellow in the American College of Surgeons, and a Fellow in the American Society of Plastic Surgery.

His was a life lived in service to others, especially where his medical and surgical talents were needed. Russell served as chairman on the physician's advisory committee for the Louisiana Children's Special Health Services where he gave freely of his time and surgical skills to help children born with congenital defects. Russell also participated on the state and federal level in the fight to make breast reconstruction after mastectomy a covered benefit by health care insurers. His longest lasting and most rewarding volunteer endeavor was helping to coordinate medical/dental mission trips with dentist, Dr. Jerome Smith, of Lafayette, and anesthesiologist, Dr. Tom Watson, of Texarkana. These doctors and teams of volunteers travelled several times a year to a small medical and dental clinic in the town of Atoyac, in the state of Guerrero, Mexico. Over the course of 20 years, Russell witnessed the addition of a small hospital with several surgical suites where he was able to perform a variety of cases. He especially cherished the opportunity to help children born with cleft lip and palate defects. Russell also participated in several Mercy Ship and Hospital Plane medical missions in Central and South America.

Locally, Russell was a sponsor of Acadiana Youth, Inc., and the Carmelite Monastery. He served on the Board of Directors for the Greater Lafayette Chamber of Commerce, Leadership Lafayette Alumni Association (Class of '91), and the Rotary Club of South Lafayette. Because of his many years of volunteerism and mission work, Russell was named a Paul Harris Fellow and presented with the Service Above Self Award by Rotary International. He also received the Service to Mankind Award from SERTOMA International. Russell cherished the time he spent in college at USL and remained especially close to his brothers in the PKT fraternity.

In his free time, Russell was no less busy. As a younger man he was an avid runner and

completed several marathons including the Houston, Duluth, Chicago, and Boston marathons. He ran the Boston Marathon three times and was proud to have had the opportunity to participate in its 100th running in 1996. Russell also loved to snow ski and enjoyed many trips to Colorado and Utah with family and friends. Most of all, Russell and Carolyn's "happy place" was their lake house on Lake Sam Rayburn in East Texas. Many great memories were made there riding dirt bikes, golfing, fishing, waterskiing, and celebrating the Fourth of July with family and friends. Later in life, Russell became an avid golfer, which led to many new and lasting friendships.

Russell was preceded in death by his parents, John Harry Romero, Sr. and Mildred Chargois Romero; his brother, Captain John Harry Romero, Jr., USAF; sister-in-law Carrie Romero Durand; and Carolyn's parents, John Homer Bird and Lois Short Bird. He is survived by his wife, Carolyn Bird Romero; son, Dr. Jason Jude Romero and wife, Tricia Wagner Romero; son, Dr. Jordan Thaddeus Romero; grandchildren, Lauren, Graham, Hudson, and Charles Romero; brothers, Dr. Robert Romero and Jerry Romero, and many nieces and nephews.

Russell accomplished much in his 72 years of life and credits much of his work ethic to time spent with his brothers, helping their parents in the Romero and Montgomery Dry Cleaning business. Russell loved and cherished his family and friends and was supremely proud of his most important legacy, his grandchildren, who loved their "Papa" so very much.

Pallbearers are Richard Fontenot, Vic Fulham, Mike Maraist, Tom Pritchard, Matthew Romero, and Dr. Jerome Smith. Honorary pallbearers are all of his PKT fraternity brothers, and all of the dentists, physicians, and volunteers who made his medical mission work possible. The family would like to thank Dr. Mike Berard, Dr. Ed Lyons, and Russell's very special helpers, Beverly Cribb, Pat Molaison, and Keith Thompson.

In lieu of flowers, consider making a donation to Mexico Ministries (mexicominstries.com), the Lafayette Carmelite Monastery, or the local charity of your choice.

Funeral services will be held in the Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist Tuesday at a 10:00 AM Mass of Christian Burial. Interment will follow in the St. John Cemetery. Reverend Harold J. Trahan will serve as Celebrant of the Mass and will conduct the funeral services. Lectors will be Matthew Romero and Jeanette Alcon and the Giftbearers will be his grandchildren. The Eulogists will be Jason Romero and Dr. Jerome Smith. Musical Selections will be "Pie Jesu", "Psalm 23", "Ave Maria", "Panis Angelicus" and "On Eagles' Wings".

The family will receive friends at Martin & Castille's DOWNTOWN location on Monday from 4:00 PM until 8:00 PM and on Tuesday from 8:00 AM until time of the services.

A Rosary will be prayed in the funeral home Monday at 6:30 PM.

View the obituary and guestbook online at www.mourning.com

Martin & Castille - DOWNTOWN, 330 St. Landry Street, Lafayette, Louisiana, 70506. 337-234-2311

Cemetery

St. John Cemetery
914 St. John St.
Lafayette, LA, 70501

Events

FEB 17 Visitation 04:00PM - 08:00PM
Martin & Castille Funeral Home - Downtown Location
330 St. Landry St., Lafayette, LA, US, 70506

FEB 17 Rosary 06:30PM - 07:00PM
Martin & Castille Funeral Home - Downtown Location
330 St. Landry St., Lafayette, LA, US, 70506

FEB 18 Visitation 08:00AM - 09:45AM
Martin & Castille Funeral Home - Downtown Location
330 St. Landry St., Lafayette, LA, US, 70506

FEB 18 Funeral Mass 10:00AM - 11:00AM
Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist
515 Cathedral St., Lafayette, LA, US, 70501

Comments



“ A tribute video has been added.



Martin & Castille Funeral Home - February 17 at 02:13 PM



“ Words honestly cannot begin to describe the love, respect, and gratitude I have for this man. Dr. Russell Romero was such a blessing not only to me but so many others with clefts. He came into my life as soon as it began and performed all of my cleft lip/palate surgeries at 10 weeks, 4 months, 9 months, and 12 years old. He was such a generous and gracious man. I am so lucky to have had a doctor in my life who was so passionate about what he did. Thank you from the bottom of my heart for everything you've done for me Dr. Romero, I love you so much!



Victoria Cruice - February 18 at 03:13 PM



“ DR ROMERO MADE LIFE MUCH BETTER FOR THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE,AN ACHIEVEMENT FEW CAN MATCH.HIS CHARITABLE WORK WAS EXEMPLARY.HE DESERVES A SPECIAL PLACE IN HEAVEN. HOWARD FRANQUES

Howard Franques - February 18 at 02:56 PM



“ So grateful for his talent and his heart for children. He was a huge part of our family and gave my baby his forever smile. We were blessed to have known him. Mitch & Faith Blanchard



Faith Blanchard - February 17 at 10:52 PM



“ Was so bless to have known this family mr.russell was a sweetheart .. such an honor to have been a part of his life .. helping with his needs .really enjoyed my time with him .. god bless family and friends

monica vargas - February 17 at 05:57 PM



“ 100 files added to the album LifeTributes



Martin & Castille Funeral Home - February 17 at 02:08 PM



“ Where do I begin...
Our hearts are truly saddened to hear of the passing of this great man, Dr. Russell Romero, our ANGEL ON EARTH. We don't know what we would've done if it wasn't for his loving, kindhearted, compassionate heart. We will always be thankful, grateful and blessed to him, for taking our newborn baby boy, Laik, who had a complete cleft lip and complete palate and operated on him out of the goodness of his compassionate heart. Not only did he help us at such a worrisome, heartbroken time in our lives, he saved our precious baby boy by doing his amazing doctor skills and creating the most beautiful smile for our baby boy. I told him that GOD knew what he was doing when he created you to become a Doctor.
My heart truly aches with sadness with his passing. He will forever be our ANGEL ON EARTH.
R.I.P. DR. ROMERO
Photo was taken after Laik's hard palate surgery and removal of hemangioma behind his ear.



Bridget & Kevin Clause - February 17 at 09:14 AM



“ He also did this surgery free because of his compassionate heart, knew of our financial struggles at that time. He will never be forgotten and we were so blessed that GOD sent him to us.

Bridget & Kevin Clause - February 17 at 09:17 AM



“ Serene Reflections Bouquet was purchased for the family of Dr. Russell Charles Romero.



February 16 at 08:29 PM



“ Catherine Miers purchased the Full Of Love Bouquet for the family of Dr. Russell Charles Romero.



Catherine Miers - February 16 at 12:59 PM



“ Joyce Nurdin lit a candle in memory of Dr. Russell Charles Romero



Joyce Nurdin - February 16 at 08:43 AM



“ I am blessed to have met Mr. Russell, such a kind and happy man. Will never forget his happy smiles. Bless his family at this time.

Joyce Nurdin - February 16 at 08:48 AM



“ Where do I begin...

Our hearts are truly saddened to hear of the passing of this great man, Dr. Romero, our ANGEL ON EARTH. We don't know what we would've done if it wasn't for his loving,

kindhearted heart. We will always be thankful, grateful and blessed to him for for taking our newborn baby boy who had a complete cleft lip and palate and operated oh him for free because of our financial situation. Not only did he help us at such a worrisome, heartbroken time in our lives, he saved our precious baby boy by doing his amazing DR skills and creating the most beautiful smile for our baby. I told him that GOD knew what he was doing when he created you to become a Doctor.

My heart truly aches with sadness with his passing. He will forever be our ANGEL ON EARTH.

R.I.P. DR. ROMERO

Bridget & Kevin Clause - February 17 at 06:49 AM



“ Dr Romero treated me with 3 separate surgeries in 1985. I will never forget the gentle care he gave me as a young, naive 8th grader! He holds a special place in my heart for saving my foot, and being willing to explain everything on my level. Sending many prayers and much sympathy to the family.

Tia Perdomo Turner - February 15 at 09:25 AM



“ Thanks to Dr Romero so many people lives where changed by the surgery he did. He was a very nice and caring person. I will always remember you.
Russell Linscombe

Russell Linscombe - February 14 at 07:24 PM



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Dr. Russell Charles Romero.



February 14 at 06:27 PM



“ For Carolyn, Jason & Jordan - our sincere condolences for your great loss. Dawn and I really enjoyed the little time we could spend with your father. He was always friendly and kind to us in-laws. Our daughter Tricia cherished his love and acceptance in your family.

Mike & Dawn Wagner

Mike & Dawn Wagner - February 14 at 04:47 PM



“ Dear Carolyn....my heart is aching for you and your incredible family. I've known Russell since middle school days at Mt. Carmel and Cathedral.....He ALWAYS had a smile and a kind word for everyone!!!! I didn't realize how brilliant he was until high school graduation and later!!!! Always humble and down to earth!!!! WHAT A GUY!!!!

Paulette Doucet Provost - February 14 at 02:21 PM



“ Russell and I grew up together. He was 1 year behind me at Mt. Carmel and Cathedral. We played football together and spent a lot of time together at USL. following my Graduation, I spent 3 years in the US Army. I then returned to USL where I took 2 years to take courses to get accepted to LSU Medical School in New Orleans. At this point, Russell was in his Plastic Surgery Residency in Houston Texas. He set up an interview with the Chief of the OB/GYN Department where I was accepted. WE spent 4 years together. I returned to Lafayette in 1982. Russell returned in 1985. we took many trips to Atoyac, Mexico which is 60 miles NW from Acapulco at the base of the Sierra Madra Mountain Range. I helped start the OB/GYN service with Our Lady of Lourdes furnishing all the instruments for GYN Surgery. Hard work and good times were had. Russell had a Genius IQ and was a Genius of a person also. He was loved and cherished by all. He used to the Fullest, Every Gift that GOD gave him. Ictus Xiro. JerryB, MD

jerome broussard - February 14 at 12:49 PM



“ Share the Health was purchased for the family of Dr. Russell Charles Romero.



February 14 at 10:25 AM



“ Russell, you were inspiration to us all. A light on earth has gone out, and we will all miss you!

Dr Patrick Magee - February 14 at 10:22 AM



“ Dear Carolyn, our prayers continue for you and the entire Romero family. We have no doubt that Russell is now being greeted by loved ones who went before him, and by the countless guardian angels of the lives he has impacted with his surgical skills and his calm, loving manner. Kathleen & Dr. Jim Godchaux



Kathleen - February 14 at 08:54 AM



“ Carolyn, our and prayers are with you and the entire family. Dr. Romero was such a kind, gentle man and a pleasure to work for. May he Rest In Peace.

Mary and Al Jumonville - February 14 at 08:41 AM



“ RIP Dr. Romero. We did missionary work together in Mexico. He was such a kind man and gave his all to help the poor people in Mexico.

Ann Broussard - February 14 at 08:16 AM



“ A kind soul -- I have too many good times and happy memories with/of him and his immediate and extended family while I was growing up to count!

Jason Peck - February 13 at 10:59 PM



“ Pat Molaison lit a candle in memory of Dr. Russell Charles Romero



pat molaison - February 13 at 09:46 PM



“ Reid Family, Jason, Danielle, Madison, Macy, Brook purchased the Guiding Light Bouquet for the family of Dr. Russell Charles Romero.



Reid Family, Jason, Danielle, Madison, Macy, Brook - February 13 at 08:32 PM



“ Carolyn,
Kevin and I send our love and prayers to you and your family.
Kevin & Lisa Bird

Lisa Bird - February 13 at 08:04 PM



“ Carolyn,
You are in my thoughts and prayers.

Dianna and David Byrd
Kelly Byrd Family

Dianna Bryant - February 13 at 07:57 PM



“ Our sincerest condolences to the family. Russell was a fine man, very personable and considerate and an excellent surgeon. I knew the Romero family a very long time as I attended Cathedral where Russell and his brothers attended school. My wife and I lived next door to his mother when we first married. She was a wonderful, kind lady and I remember when his brother John died. Fortunately Russell was the plastic surgeon who did some facial work on me after removing two basal cell carcinoma on my temple and ear lobe; the result of sun damage. Apparently the Romero gene pool for the professional of physician is full, as his sons joined their dad and uncle in the profession. May the Good Lord offer comfort and solace to his family and all who knew him, and may this son of Lafayette continue to share his compassion with those in Heaven with our Heavenly Father. Rick LeBlanc

Rick LeBlanc - February 13 at 06:11 PM



“ A New Sunrise Spray was purchased for the family of Dr. Russell Charles Romero.



February 13 at 03:41 PM