

In Loving Memory of



Jonathan Mc Kelly Johnson

Sunrise
December 30, 1924

Sunset
November 4, 2021

Service:
Thursday, November 11, 2021 - 10:00 am

St. Charles Borromeo Church
211 W. 141st Street • New York, New York 10030
Rev. Timothy S. Wiggins, Officiating
Br'von Neal, Organist

Obituary

Jonathan McKelly Johnson was born to the late Jeremiah Abraham Johnson and Anestine Joseph Johnson on December 30, 1924 in Brooklyn, NY. Jonathan, affectionately known to family and friends as Kelly, KJ or Poppa, was the third of five children born of this union. His parents emigrated to the United States from Grenada and Kelly was the first Johnson child to be born in the United States. He was called home on November 4, 2021 and passed away peacefully following a brief illness.

Kelly attended St. Peter Claver Church and Our Lady of Presentation Church in Brooklyn, NY and was educated in the New York City Public School System. Following graduation, he joined the United States Navy. He served during World War II and was later honorably discharged. After returning from the war, Kelly was a New York City Bus Driver. He was also an urban miner, commonly referred to as a sandhog, and worked on a number of underground excavation projects in New York City, including the Brooklyn-Battery Tunnel and Lincoln Tunnel. Kelly also served in the United States Merchant Marines and delivered materiel to military personnel during the Korean War. He also owned a gas station and worked as a taxi driver and security officer before retiring for good in the early 1990s.

In 1972, Kelly met his life partner, Bernice M. Wright Buford. Their partnership created a blended family of eleven children, Ian, Andre and Earl Johnson and Jamice, James, Tobie, Darryll, Marjorie, Angela, Kelli and Shaun Buford. Bernice, Andre and Darryll preceded him in death. Kelly was one of the nicest, kindest, thoughtful, fun loving and smartest person you would ever meet. He was a hard-working man who enjoyed life and was devoted to spending time with his family and friends. He became Poppa to many as he loved sharing his knowledge and wisdom and people, young and old, gravitated toward him.

Kelly enjoyed solving crossword and Sudoku puzzles, playing cards with friends, attending family barbecues, traveling and vacationing with family and going on various bus outings with his senior group. His greatest joy was being a doting grandfather.

In addition to his parents, Bernice, Andre and Darryll, Kelly was preceded in death by his sister Patricia Johnson Charles and brothers Aaron "Alvin" and Philip "Lindy" Johnson. He leaves to cherish his memory nine loving children, fifteen grandchildren, three great-grandchildren, sister Catherine Johnson Richardson, travel partner and best friend, Bernard M. Wright, Sr., long-time family friend and host of his barbecues, Brenda Brown, and a host of nieces, nephews, relatives and friends.

Order of Service

FUNERAL LITURGY

Organ Prelude

Processional Hymn
“Amazing Grace” #173

Opening Prayer

First Reading:
Old Testament – Wisdom 3:1-6, 9
Read by: Jamice Buford-Crawford

Second Reading:
New Testament – Romans 8:31b-35, 37-39
Read by: James Buford

Gospel Acclamation

Gospel Reading
Matthew 5:1-12 - Father Timothy S. Wiggins

Homily
Father Timothy S. Wiggins

Offertory Hymn:
“What a Friend We Have in Jesus” #214

Communion Meditation:
“The Old Rugged Cross” #37

Obituary
Read silently

Eulogy
Shaun Buford

Recessional Hymn:
“Blessed Assurance” #199

Interment
Fairlawn Memorial Cemetery
Fair Lawn, New Jersey

Fill Not Your Heart

**Fill not your heart with pain and sorrow,
but remember me in every tomorrow.
Remember the joy, the laughter, the smiles,
I've only gone to rest a little while.**

**Although my leaving causes pain and grief,
my going has eased my hurt and given me relief.**

**So dry your eyes and remember me
not as I am now, but as I use to be.**

**Because I will remember you all and look on with a smile,
Understand, in your hearts, I've only gone to rest a little while.
As long as I have the love of each of you,
I can live my life in the hearts of all of you.**

Acknowledgments

**The family would like to express their deep appreciation and
sincere thanks for all acts of kindness shown to them during
their time of bereavement.**

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