

## Joseph B. Shaughnessy, Architect

“I’m like Dad,” I told Kathleen and Carol many times. “No, you’re not. You’re like Mother,” they insisted. I knew they meant it as a compliment, that Mother was smart and literary and had good business sense—even though she never went to college, but I wanted to be like Dad.

A brief bio of my father: Joseph Bernard Shaughnessy was born in Kansas City, Kansas in 1897, received his degree in architecture from the University of Notre Dame in 1922. There he worked with Professor Frank Kervick on the master plan for Notre Dame. After graduation he worked for Rose and Peterson in Kansas City Kansas for 2 years, then spent 4 months traveling in Europe with fellow architect Homer Pfifer. Upon his return to Kansas City, he wanted to work for Louis Curtiss, but Curtiss didn’t have enough work, so Dad joined the firm of Robert Gornall in Kansas City, working there for 4 years. He associated with Gornall when he brought in school work from Acheson. He also designed residences in Mission Hills, including the Katz home on Stratford and Ward Parkway, and the Reid home on Verona Drive. In 1928 he married Frances Shepherd, our Mom, and went into business for himself. He eventually took Edwin Bower and Frank Grimaldi as associates.

Mother was always at home, telling us to clean up our rooms or go to the store or do the dishes, calling us “hellions” when we fought. But Dad was a special treat. He went to work every day and didn’t get home until just before dinner. When I saw the lights from his car shining in the dining room windows I felt my heart expand. He brought fresh air from the outer world into the emotional hothouse created by my mother’s close focus on us. He laid his plans down on a sideboard in the kitchen, hung up his coat and went into the living room to sit down and maybe have a glass of sherry. It was like we had company! The focus shifted from us children and our timid problems to him and the people he interacted with. I liked to stand behind his wing-back chair and comb his wavy white hair from his high forehead while he talked to Mother about jobs, contractors, priests, bishops, libraries and schools and churches. My life expanded with him. Mother might try to bring him down to our level, scolding us or complaining of some neighbor, but he wasn’t interested in hearing about this. Mother had opinions about people, but Dad never spoke badly of anyone. When he came home, he brought peace with him. He sometime waited till after we had gone to bed to come home. “Are the children in bed yet?” he would ask. We thought it was because he didn’t like our noise, but probably it was because he didn’t like Mother bringing him down to rub his nose in the daily arguments that she had with us or about a neighbor.

Dad loved to get out of the house. He went to a lot of meetings, in the evenings after work. He had meetings with clients in their homes in the evenings and had the kind of social life that didn’t include Mother or us. Dad was very respectful of clients; perhaps Mother was a little jealous that he preferred to go to a meeting at

a parish hall with a parish council than stay home and listen to her berate us. On Sundays, he got us out of the house with him. We went for a RIDE! Back then in the thirties and forties a ride was a treat. Our rides always were out into Mission Hills to see all the beautiful homes and they always ended up at the Ice Cream Parlor on 31<sup>st</sup> and Linwood or Country Club Dairy at 57<sup>th</sup> and Troost. Later there was Nu-Way Drive-in, on the Plaza or perhaps Fairway? During the work week, Dad liked to get out of the office by meeting the “Jesse James Gang” for lunch at Myron Green’s Cafeteria on 12<sup>th</sup> and Main. When they moved to Prairie Village, he liked to go to Waid’s Cafeteria for dinner. This kind of simple outing still seems to me to be the most fun.

Mother didn’t have a car, so her social life centered on us. We could get out of the house by playing in the neighborhood around our house at 65<sup>th</sup> and Cherry, or walking to the library at Southwest High over at 65<sup>th</sup> and Wornall or going to Brookside Shopping Center to buy milk or bread. Mother liked to shop too. Shopping with her was the main form of fun we had with her. Otherwise, she had to wait until Dad could take us out on the weekends for Sunday family dinners with Aunt Meal and Uncle Fred Daly and Aunt Hannah (until she died) and Jack and Fred Daly (who were priests), and sometimes the Garies uncles—Herb and Leo, and our Garies cousins. Mother was all about family; life was very domestic. But when we occasionally got together with Dad’s sisters, especially Marguerite and Ruth, they were more fun-loving. They didn’t get together for dinners, except at our house; rather they liked to play card games (men and women), or drive to Arizona or Las Vegas or even Mexico. Their lives were more focused on adults, and the men had a role equal to the women. In Mother’s family the women dominated.



Being confined at home with us gave Mother the opportunity to engage in crafts—especially sewing. She loved to sew and made most of our clothes. She made us new skirts and dresses, even suits. Very occasionally she would buy us a dress or sweater. Her greatest delight was to make dresses for graduation or dances or proms; indeed, she put us into sewing classes. As a result, all of us girls grew up knowing how to sew; and a really big present was a new sewing machine. Mother would become so involved in her sewing projects that she wouldn’t notice the time and wouldn’t miss not going out often. Kathleen and Carol and I all get into these craft projects and can get so engrossed by interesting projects at home that we don’t need to go out, and in fact turn down invitations to go out.

### **Diocesan Architect**

Practically all Dad's clients were priests, bishops and nuns. One of the earliest clients I remember were the Sisters at Clyde, about whom I wrote at length in these memoirs Dad became the main architect for the diocese of Kansas City. Dad was deferential to all his clients, but especially to priests and bishops. He had been in the seminary while he was in high school, and carried that awe of the priesthood in him all his life. He loved Notre Dame; his favorite book was the biography of Father Hesburgh. Mother was less reverential than he, but both seemed to migrate toward clergy in any gathering. Dad did buildings for the diocese and naturally socialized with his clergy clients. I remember their entertaining Bishop O'Hara at a very strained formal dinner party at our home on Cherry. Bishop O'Hara wasn't a partying man. However Bishop Cody, his successor in the diocese of Kansas City, was. Dad could tell the difference. "Cody lived in Rome, where he learned to live like a prince." They traveled to Europe with Cody on the QE 1, and were delighted to have Cody's "cousin" Helen Wilson, along for the voyage. Mother liked her because she would tell off-color jokes. I wonder if Mother had any suspicions that she was more than a cousin. I'm sure Dad never had any.

It seemed that as we grew up, Dad was designing all the buildings we studied or worshipped in. The bishops were in a building mood. Dad had already designed two new Catholic high schools—Glennon and Lillis by the time we were ready. Fortunately he had just finished one in our neighborhood, at Meyer and Troost, in time for us. that Bishop Hogan High School's cornerstone was laid in 1941, and by the time I was a freshman there were four years, and a first senior class, the class of 1945. Hogan (right) endured as a diocesan high school until around 2000 when it became Hogan Academy, a charter school under the auspices of Central Missouri State University. I have many happy memories of Hogan, which I've written about elsewhere in these Memoirs.



As Dad designed a lot of churches, he was interested in the liturgical arts movement, and subscribed to the "Liturgical Arts" magazine, edited by Maurice Lavanoux. Articles in that magazine had no doubt influenced him in the design of some of his churches, especially St. Peters.

### **St. Peter's Church**

St. Peter's is a new-Gothic church with contemporary touches, especially in the interior. Outside, the church has the feel of a Gothic cloister in the churchyard.

The blogger *Kansas City Catholic* posted these pictures on his blog , for which I am very grateful.



The artist Effie (E. Charlton) Fortune, the eccentric California painter, who specialized in liturgical subjects, painted the panels from the life of St. Peter on the reredos. (left) She had a cleft palate and spoke with a lisp. She must have thought all of us in Kansas City were extremely provincial, having lived in San Francisco, Europe, New York (the Catskills), and having studied with William Merrit Chase; at the time she was living in Carmel, California. Dad had never met such a strong-minded, opinionated woman. She had her own ideas about everything. Dad didn't know what to make of her but in his words, he "got a kick out of her." Mother thought she was affected.



St. Peter's, at 6400 Charlotte was dedicated on September 8, 1946. We have a memento of the dedication in this picture (from the parish bulletin) showing Joe Jr., dressed in cassock and surplice and looking a bit confused, standing in front of Bishop O'Hara incensing the new church.



*Blessing the New Church*

## St. Francis Xavier

The most famous church that Dad was associated with is St. Francis Xavier Church in Kansas City, 1949. The church was designed by Barry Byrne, from Chicago; Dad was the associate architect, the local architect in charge of the construction. Dad enjoyed working with Barry Byrne and his associates—Emil



Frei who did the windows, and Alfonso lanelli who did the sculptures and the interior design. Dad got a kick out of working with artists, especially if they were a little eccentric, like Effie Fortune. Byrne wasn't eccentric—in fact Dad said that he was very simple, never playing the “great architect” as his teacher, Frank Lloyd Wright, did. In Chicago visiting Byrne and lanelli, Dad was intrigued by the way lanelli worked, captivated by the community he saw in lanelli's back yard, where he was carving the large stone sculpture of St. Francis Xavier for the front of the church. Friends and neighbors would come over to look and

advise about the work, and have a glass of wine while they were there. Dad's office must have seemed dead when he returned from that lively collaborative workshop of the Italian artist.

The fish-shaped church was derogatorily referred to as the House of Cod. Dad picked up on the conservative attitudes of the community and respected Father Gerst, S.J., the pastor of St. Francis, who had the vision to see that this church would be a work of art and become famous.

The pictures below are taken from this website, and are courtesy of the Byrne family archives [http://turnerscross.com/church/barry\\_byrne/stfrancisxavier.php](http://turnerscross.com/church/barry_byrne/stfrancisxavier.php)

His collaboration with Barry Byrne on St. Francis Xavier Church earned him the American Institute of Architect award for a building with extended use, at the AIA convention in Kansas City in 1979.



### **Summary of His Diocesan Work**

Dad's work included chiefly schools (public and parochial), churches, seminaries, and hospitals. Among his work in the Kansas City area are St. Bernadette's Church; the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary Church (Independence); St. Ann's Church; St. Gabriel's Church; St. Charles Borromeo Church, Convent and School (North Kansas City); St. Mary's Church, High School and Convent (Independence); St. Pius Church and School (Mission); St. Paul's Church (Olathe); Bishop Miege High School (Mission); St. Patrick's Church (K. C., Kansas); St. Elizabeth's Church and Rectory Memorial Hall; St. Peter's Church; Bishop Hogan High School (now Hogan Academy); Lillis High School and

Convent; Glennon High School, Rockhurst College Student Union Building and Faculty Residence Hall; Catholic Chancery Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph; St. Matthew's Church and School; St. John's Seminary (now used as Catholic Faculty Dormitory and Convent); Guardian Angels School; Savior of the World Seminary (Kansas City, Kansas); Dormitory for St. Benedict's College (Acheson, Kansas); St. Francis Hospital (Marceline, Missouri); Rockhurst High School; Visitation School; Benedictine Convent ("Holy Hill", now known as the Lighthouse), Immanuel Lutheran School; Our Lady of Perpetual Help Convent.

### **Working for Dad**

Dad didn't like to see anyone idle. He wanted to keep people working. He had been bringing home his letters for Mother to type in the evenings and on weekends. (She had been a secretary before they were married.) She must have suggested that he give the job to me, because when I graduated from high school at 17, he decided that I should come to work for him as a secretary and factotum in his office—downtown in the Reliance Building then in the Congress Building on Broadway. I was going to WORK! I started off at \$30 a week and eventually, after four years, was making \$50 a week. To someone who had gotten an allowance of a quarter, then a dollar a week, this was a step up!

Besides getting to work for Dad, I got to drive! He taught me to drive on the way to work. He wasn't a very patient teacher. He would scare me with his outbursts: "Watch out!" "Don't keep your foot on the clutch."

He wanted things to be done just right. If my typing of letters, statements, and specifications didn't meet his standards, he made me do them over. When there was nothing to type, he wouldn't let me just sit and read; he would put me to work organizing the files in the tall metal filing cabinet or let me trace floor plans or do title blocks. I was curious about architecture, but he didn't want an apprentice, just a secretary. Once when he was still downtown in the Reliance Building, (1948 or '49) a young architect came to his office looking for a job. As he was showing Dad his work, nosy Rosie got up from her desk and sidles over to have a look, wondering what sort of thing an apprentice would show. . Dad send me right back to my desk. I was glad he put me in my place.

He had standards. There was a right way and a wrong way to do everything, and I usually started off the wrong way. "Don't you use a deodorant?" he asked me in his office one day, wrinkling his nose. Apparently I had BO! Underarm deodorant was just becoming common and I hadn't been using it. I also needed to learn how to answer the phone properly: "Don't tell people everything you know; just take their name and number." The same with typing: "Just type what's there. This is a business letter."

"Is that the standard fee?" I asked when on his monthly billing statements, I saw the 6% billed as "Architect's fee." This was the first I learned about how Dad

actually made money on his work, billing on the “cost plus” basis. Now I think the fee is 10-15% of the cost, when it is a cost plus job. Mother always said that Dad never got enough for his services, that the clergy expected him to do it free. The nuns at Clyde didn’t have to say, “Oh, we’re so poor, Mr. Shaughnessy”; he knew that and accepted the bushels of corn, beans, and tomatoes that they gave him in payment for his visits to Clyde to help solve some construction problem.

### **“Contemporary” Architecture**

How fortunate I was to be introduced into an architectural office at 17, right out of high school, and to continue there over the summers through college. I was happy when Dad let me do a title block or copy a floor plan for him to put in the mechanical and electrical systems. I studied the lettering and renderings of Dad, Frank Grimaldi and Ed Bauer. What a privilege to work in an office with two such wonderful men. I was flattered that they didn’t turn their noses up at me. They were less intimidating than Dad.

I found I liked drafting and architectural rendering. Thirty years later I pursued architecture by studying interior design, and loved doing the drafting and rendering and lettering. Maybe if I hadn’t gone into the convent at 21, I would have become an architect—who knows?

“Contemporary architecture” was the byword. Dad was all for it. “Form follows function” and “Less is more,” were near-gospel sayings by Saarinen and Mies van der Rohe that everyone quoted, religiously and facetiously. The late 40’s and 50’s had a number of such great contemporary architects. The International Style was in its prime. Examples of buildings with lots of glass and steel, little ornament, and new forms abounded in the pages of the Architectural Record, Inland Architect, Architectural Review and other magazines that Dad’s office subscribed to. A new wave was raising all boats, even in the church, as the Liturgical Arts magazine indicated.



Dad eventually (1955) designed a contemporary home at 6445 Seneca in Shawnee Mission. It had a marvelous open feel to it, influenced by Mies and Wright. The picture at the left shows it recently—Dad had the panels painted in rich green and blue, not the bland grey it is now.

### **A Man Who Respected Workers**

I wasn’t the only one who got to work for Dad. As Kathleen’s five boys grew older, he gave them all Saturday jobs doing janitorial work at his apartments—cutting grass, cleaning basements. He could not stop working himself, and

putting others to work. He enjoyed talking to working people—contractors, electricians, plumbers, secretaries. He treated he treated all workers with respect. He showed the same deference to a hard-working parish priest as he did to a bishop. He always called his grandson Brian Connor “Father Brian.”

## Photography

As an adjunct to architecture, he became interested in photography as a hobby. He got a big cumbersome Graflex Speed Graphic camera and formed a relationship with Crick’s at Brookside. He may even have had a basement darkroom in the cellar. He photographed buildings he had designed with that but also family on special occasions like Christmas, with the front of the house on Cherry serving as a backdrop for many in the 40’s. Then after he got a smaller more portable Leica, he began taking pictures as we traveled. This led him into the slide show entertainment field. Slide shows became a regular part of every family get-together, and Dad always had his projector and carousel ready. These carousels of slides have been passed down through the family and after years in David’s possession (David is now a professional photographer), they moved on to Kevin and even Keith, as people get to see them and decide who wants them. Unfortunately, no one knows what or where many of them are, and we haven’t a clue to the identity of the thousands of buildings he photographed.



Traveling became another hobby--not just to Clyde to consult over a new barn or construction problem, but real vacation travel. It was an extension of his Sunday driving; and even though we fought all the way, he bravely drove us out to Colorado in the summers, to Estes Park or Garden of the Gods in Boulder, (he kept us quiet by seeing who could spot Pike’s Peak first). Once he even drove us all the way through the Rockies to the Pacific Northwest, through Nebraska, Wyoming, Montana, Idaho to Oregon, to see the Columbia River, then down the coast to California, passing through Eureka. Dad grew very expansive on these trips. “Open the window and throw out your chest,” he would joke. He “got a kick out of” the name “Eureka!”

## Retirement – 1970

After working for Dad for a few years, Joe Jr. opened his own office, Shaughnessy Associates, so Dad could retire, give up his office, and still go to the office (Joe’s office) everyday. When Joe’s office moved into the basement of the Olde Theatre building in Westport, (where Pat had begun her Olde Theatre



architectural salvage business) Dad was given a desk there too. He had a drafting table where he worked on plans occasionally (he did some drawings of louvered kitchen doors for my condo) and he always wrote his checks to pay bills at the office. Dad was meticulously careful of his accounts and always kept copies. “Copies of copies,”

Mother said. He also had the services of Betty, Joe’s wonderful secretary who was with him until he died. As he had done with me when I worked for him, he kept Betty busy, whenever she looked like she didn’t have anything to do. He took his slide carousels to the office and gave her the job of typing labels which he affixed to the slides. Of course, there was no rush. He just didn’t want her not to have something to do.

## Travel

Finally, after he retired, he and Mother began their years of serious traveling—crossing the ocean on the Queen Elizabeth or Queen Mary, visiting Europe many times, staying at the Grand Bretagne in Athens, visiting Iran and Iraq. They even

went around the world, so maybe they were in China and India. After a while, no one of us paid much attention to their trips, just as long as they were home when we had a big family celebration, like a birthday or wedding, of course.



Mexico was no doubt their favorite destination—they went there almost every year. Dad’s pictures of Mexico

are all marvelous, and we praised them in the slide shows, but Mother belittled him: “Oh, anyone can take a good picture in Mexico. Just open the window and shoot!”

I was the beneficiary of their traveling desires on several trips—once to Mexico and once to Spain, both to celebrate my getting a Phd. In 1973, Dad and Mother took Carol and me on a deluxe trip, by car, to their favorite sites—Taxco and Acapulco, where we stayed at the Princess Hotel. The following summer of 1974, I was invited along on a trip to Spain, to the



Costa del Sol, (which I had missed in 1967 when I was with Joe and Pat, a trip I covered elsewhere in this Memoir). Dad and I enjoyed several outings on our own—one to Marbeille by bus, and another to Ronda, also by bus. In the heat of July, Dad would go by public bus; Mother wouldn't. I shocked Mother on this trip by showing up with a young Spanish man whom I had naïvely befriended when I was touring on my own. She was not amused. She had already formed a tight little group among the travellers and Pablo wasn't invited. That was one of the ways I was like Dad—he would speak to everyone.



**Joe Jr.**

Joe had always been interested in more than architecture—he was a community guy. He felt he could help preserve Westport and other nice old areas in Kansas City by getting into politics. When Joe was elected to the City Council, Dad stayed in the thick of things at the office, well into his 70's. When he came home in the evenings to the Regency Apartments on the Plaza, where they had moved when they sold their house on Seneca, he had a lot to tell Mother over their cheese and sherry in the den before dinner. Life was good. When I visited them in those years, I stayed on the sofa bed in that den and had sherry with them and listened to Dad talk about what was going on at Joe's office. He kept in touch with everyone.



The greatest sorrow of his life was Joe's getting cancer when he was only 42, in 1977. Fortunately, Joe continued to go to the office everyday where he painted landscapes that he had loved and buildings like Mont San Michelle and Carcassone. Dad was about 80 then and going to Joe's office

had kept him going. How painful for Dad to watch Joe struggle over his palate, unable to tell the difference between colors. Joe's illness and death happened about the time of Mother and Dad's 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary. I have written about elsewhere in these memoirs.

After Joe's death Dad moved his office over to the Miller Insurance Agency (Carol's husband Bob's business) on Gregory Blvd. He maintained a desk (right) in an office there, and took his check book and work there to have Bob's sister Mary Anne Hense, who worked there, Xerox



important papers for him. From here he maintained his daily tradition of going out to lunch. His favorite restaurant Wendy's was nearby, where he always got the senior discount. Eventually he gave up driving and gave Kathleen his car with the understanding that she would drive him to and from work each day. And that's what she did till his stroke when he was 94.

We celebrated Dad's birthday every August 19, at Pat and Joe's for years until Pat's death in 1996, then at Carol's after that. After he got his new teeth in 1990, he could give a really nice smile for the picture.



### **Dad's Death**

I like to think that Dad orchestrated his own passing. Until he had his stroke, he hadn't been ill at all. Mother had been the one who was ill, suffering with dementia since the previous October or November, 1991. He had still been going to the office everyday, driven by Kathleen to Bob Miller's agency, where Dad had his own office. I was on Sabbatical that year (1991-92) and had gone to Kansas City in October for three weeks because Dad said Mother was "dying." At that time Kathleen and I had taken him to the art gallery for lunch and a tour by wheelchair. I had also taken him to visit Frank Grimaldi who was his partner for many years and a Notre Dame grad. Frank had a new office and showed Dad that he had kept all the files on St. Francis Xavier. Dad also had wanted to go to the funeral of one of the Jesse James gang, Bill Day, so I had taken him and there he had met the members of the old gang who used to work downtown and go to Myron Green cafeteria for lunch everyday. I had seen how much it meant to Dad to see them all. We had also gone to lunch to Wendy's a number of times, where he loved the "single combo" with the senior discount.

In February I had gone to India, and when I called the folks from New Delhi, Dad said, "Your mother needs you." Mother said, "I'm dying. Come home." I didn't go immediately, but did return from India ahead of time, and after doing my taxes at home in Chicago, and hearing Dad ask every time I called, "When are you coming?" I finally arranged with Gerda to take care of my pets so I could go to KC, but it wasn't until Holy Thursday that I actually drove there. All the way to K.C., I kept imagining what was going to happen. Was mother going to die, as she had been prophesying? Being in India had made me see that death was really a liberation from the body. Wasn't God singing forth in creation with a thousand voices?

After a brief visit with Mother and Dad on Thursday, I checked into my "B & B" at Kathleen's, joining the Connors for supper and Holy Thursday liturgy at Visitation.

Friday, I wanted to take Dad to Wendy's for lunch. I picked him up at the Miller Insurance Agency about 11:30 and we drove to Wendy's. He asked me how I liked India and I began telling him about India. I noticed that he was sucking and not responding. I looked and saw him working his lips. I asked him if he was all right, but he didn't answer. When we got to Wendy's, I opened the door, but he just sat, instead of getting out. He didn't know where we were. I took his hand and then he turned and got out. I led him in and seated him at a table and went to get the food. I put it in front of him. He ate rather slowly (as usual), and gave me a ten dollar bill for the meal and I gave him the change, which he put into his billfold. He munched slowly, asking me how I liked India. After I said something, he asked me again how I liked India. Then he said he was finished. "How did we get here?" He asked. I told him that we had come in my car. He asked where it was, and I pointed outside. Clearly, something had happened and had lasted about 45 minutes. But when we left, he was back to normal, and so I took him for a drive around Mission Hills to see the flowering dogwood and redbud and the spring trees and flowers. He commented, "I haven't been here in years," as we drove over Mission Road to Prairie Village. He pointed out Indian Hills Country Club, told me to follow the curve and turn down Seneca, to pass by his old home at 6445 Seneca.

When we got home, he told mother about driving around Mission Hills and thanked me. Mother thought it was the middle of the night, although it was only 2:30. He and I watched slides of the family--ones with his sisters Marguerite and Merle and Ruth and L.A. that he had brought up to show Sean. Mother finally called out "Can't you take those over to Kathleen's and watch them?" "But Dad is enjoying watching them." "He's seen them dozens of times," she retorted, so I left with the slides, and Dad again thanked me for taking him for the drive.

That night I went to St. Peter's for Good Friday services, and Sean carried the cross in the procession.

Saturday morning, Erminia called about 7:00, to say that Dad had not responded when she had called him. "Ermi never calls," Kathleen said and we immediately went over. I had told her about the episode yesterday and she had remembered and so held his hand when she got there. When I arrived, he was talking to her and me and seemed all right, so we left. After an hour or so, Ermi called again to say that he had not gotten out of bed, so we both went back and noticed that he was breathing very laboriously. Ermi, who had taken care of Mr. Dixon for 5 years, was familiar with this breathing pattern, and pointed out that he would taper off to the point of not breathing at all, then start the labored breathing again.

Mal and Jennifer, his first wife, came over and Mal held his grandfather's hand for hours, while I tried to get a doctor to get some oxygen to ease Dad's breathing. Dad was pressing our hands when we held his and was asking for us to help him blow his nose, and was generally responding, but I noticed that one arm didn't

seem able to move and he was using his right arm to lift his left arm. He must have known something serious had happened to him, but he didn't alarm us. His struggle had commenced, but it was only gradually that we realized how serious it was. He didn't want to alarm us.

Dr. Hartman was not in the clinic at St. Luke's as it was Holy Saturday, and Passover. Dr. Schuss, his partner, told us we could bring Dad to the emergency room, but we couldn't let him go through the trauma of emergency room and cat-scan, remembering how he had become so disoriented and alienated and depressed when he was in the hospital several years before with a broken arm. So Dr. Schuss contacted the home health nurse and Sandy Kobets came over that afternoon, and Tim Allen from Glasrock came to test Dad's oxygen absorption. Sandy said that Dad had suffered a minor stroke, that he seemed paralyzed on the left side, but he could move his toes, so maybe it was just his upper body. His vital signs were all good. She reported to Dr. Schuss. The respiration therapist Tim tested Dad and said that his oxygen absorption was low, so he was put on oxygen through his nose. Dad was "chain-stoking"--i.e., his breathing was labored, then tapered off to the point where he didn't appear to be breathing. During this time, his oxygen saturation ranged from a high of 91 to a low of 86. Normal saturation is 92-93.

We notified everyone, and told Dad that Brian would be coming Sunday afternoon, after his masses at his parish in Nebraska. That night I went to Visitation for the Paschal Vigil at 8 and celebrated the Resurrection. I felt that the course of Dad's stroke was beyond our control. Nurses Mary Beth and Sandy had told us it took 72 hours before a stroke was usually finished, so all we could do was wait and make Dad as comfortable as possible and get as many of the family in as possible. I put Dad into the hands of St. Joseph, who had guided me so wonderfully in all my travels and efforts.

Saturday night Bob, Sean, Keith and maybe David went over and shaved Dad and moved him into mother's hospital bed, so we were much happier, as was Erminia, who could then turn him and change him.

Sunday morning Kathleen and I went over to see Dad. (Carol had been cooking for her big Sunday Easter mass and egg hunt, and now she had the full contingent of about 100 family members ready to descend upon her at 10 a.m.) Dad seemed to be more withdrawn than yesterday, when he was still talking. He wasn't talking today, just sort of concentrating within himself with his eyes closed. He was also having trouble clearing out the mucus, so we were swabbing his mouth with lemon swabs, then with toothettes. Mary Beth gave me a list of things to get. We were concerned that he hadn't eaten anything. The pudding I had given him on Saturday he had vomited up. He was able to swallow liquids, but, as Sandy Kobets pointed out when she came, he was coughing immediately, which could result in his aspirating liquid into his lungs. That was how people got pneumonia, "the friend of the elderly." When I tried to give him liquids, he always

coughed. We got him apple juice, because he liked sweets, and tried to get some nourishment in that way. Ermi also gave him some bouillon. He had taken some in the middle of the night. I was afraid to give him liquids after he coughed, then wheezed when I gave him some.

Sandy told us Sunday about 11 that she thought Dad had had a minor stroke, affecting his cerebellum, which controls the automatic actions like swallowing, breathing, bowels, etc. (She was relieved to hear bowel sounds, and he was urinating, so those weren't affected.) She said that she had known a woman in her 80's to have such a stroke and to be in the hospital for 2 months and walk out. We were much relieved, and I went over to Millers with the good news that it was a minor stroke and he might recover.

Easter afternoon, Brian came in and Dad tried to speak to him, to acknowledge him and give him the respect Dad always showed to priests. Brian anointed him and we all said the chaplet, led by Carol and Bob. That evening I went with Connors over to Pat and Mansour Naim's where I learned that Marjorie had fallen down the stairs and had broken the bone over her eye in three places. Things had happened too fast for anyone to tell me.

Monday, Dad was more withdrawn than Sunday. Mike had called on Sunday to ask whether he should come in. I told him how Dad was but didn't especially urge him to come from Maine. Mal and Jennifer had also talked to him, and Jennifer had said that she was sorry she had not seen her grandfather before he died. That must have decided Mike, for we learned on Monday that he was coming in that night, and we told Dad that Mike was coming. We believed that he understood everything, so we explained everything we did to him. On Monday I became really alarmed about the mucus and wheezing and when Sandy came, she reported this to the doctor and told us that we could call Glassrock and get the suction. Mary Beth had also told us about this, so the suction device arrived on Monday, with a humidifier to prevent the oxygen from drying out his nasal passages. The mucus was preventing us from feeding him, and we became alarmed that he might starve. Sandy had two student nurses with her that day and we got into the debate over whether to tube feed him or not. We hadn't been able to find the living will that they supposedly had, and since neither Dad nor Mother could tell us whether they wanted to tube feed him, we had to decide ourselves. Kevin had told us the night before that he firmly believed we should, and that had kept me up worrying. Kathleen remembered their wishes not to be on tubes. Carol was adamant against tube-feeding, when I polled her. Sandy reported Dad's condition to Dr. Hartman (who also did not have a copy of their supposed living will), who told me the pros and cons and that he had put his 99 year-old grandfather on a tube when he had a stroke. I told Carol to call him, and she had a long talk, and came to realize that you could take him off the tube, but that it was harder to take him off (for him and for us) than to put him on, and she still was against it. Kathleen was against it. So I agreed, and we were settled.

On Tuesday Dad was even more withdrawn and seemed to sleep most of the time and not to eat or take liquids. He also wasn't coughing up the mucus, and the suctioning wasn't able to go deep where the mucus was. Mary Beth came over after work and asked Dad if he was in pain and he answered "No." He roused himself to tell her. She told us we should get a taper tip suction attachment to the mucus, and Glassrock brought it by about 4:30. Mike spent the afternoon with Dad, kneeling beside the bed, holding his hand. We had said more prayers for him that day. Little did we know he was only holding on so long because we told him who was coming in and he was waiting. We had told him Mary Kate was coming that night, but she hadn't been able to get a flight till the next morning, but he waited as long as he could hold out.

Wednesday morning, Ermi called us about 5:45 a.m. to ask us to come right over. We knew that Dad was either dying or dead, so Kathleen, Dick and I each took a car and got there as fast as possible. I found Ermi kneeling on the floor beside Dad's bed. His face was already pale, but his body was still warm. He wasn't breathing. His right side was warmer than the left. I kissed him goodbye and put a mantra in my cassette player for him to hear. (I had heard that the sense of hearing leaves last.) I burnt some incense for him to smell to lead him into heaven. We believed that his presence was still in the room with us and we addressed him. Ermi said that it wasn't good to weep before their spirits for that makes them reluctant to leave the earthly room and head toward the higher plane. Bob and Carol were on their way to Mass when I called, so they went on and came over afterward with communion for everyone, and Bob brought a service for the dead which we all said around his bed. Father Bob Farnan came over from Visitation and blessed him. We called Brian who headed on back down from Hastings immediately. Everyone in the family came over again, as they had been coming in to see Grandfather every day during his illness.

I was so grateful that we had not put him into a hospital, where he would have been put into intensive care and we wouldn't have been able to encircle his bed in great numbers as we did for the four days he was waiting to leave. We kept him home, and that was why he stayed with us these long (for him and us) four days. If we had taken him to the hospital, we couldn't have kept him with us long enough to see everyone. He did as we wished and didn't cause us any trouble. Ermi took care of him better than any nurse, with other patients to look after. He planned to leave during the Easter weekend. I have always felt that Good Friday was the best day to die, or Holy Saturday or Easter. This was our own Dad choosing his day of death, which should be celebrated even more than a birthday, I believe, for this is the day we are liberated into what we will be. "Eye has not seen nor ear heard what God has ready for those who love Him." This was Dad's own passion. St. Joseph really gave him a happy death.

We all did our own thing for Dad's funeral. Kevin and Anne stayed in with Dad and changed the tape, while we started making arrangements. Carol had had instructions regarding the funeral of Mother, so she set about carrying them out

for Dad, calling Melody/McGilley Funeral Home. Kathleen decided that we would wake Dad at Visitation Church on Thursday evening and bury him from there at 10 on Friday. Carol and Bob called the undertaker and got Chuck Miller. They picked out the casket and made all the arrangements for the funeral and Carol opened the grave and chose the spot for Dad (and I told her I wanted to be on his right hand, and Mother on his left and then Pat Shaughnessy will be on mother's left, by Joe.) Kathleen had the family over that night to plan the liturgy and then Friday after the service. She notified Visitation of all that we hoped they could do for us, and they were there ready and willing to do whatever we needed. She ordered the flower arrangement of 49 roses for the surviving family members to go on the casket.

I had written an obituary notice several years before and given it to Dad. He had it in his bottom left drawer marked "To be given to the Star in the event of my death," so I called the Kansas City Star and notified them, and we chose the picture of him that mother wanted and gave it to the undertaker who would get it to him. The undertaker said we had to have the death notice signed by a doctor or someone, and that we should call the police. We all hated the idea of the police coming in for Dad's death, but called them and Carol took care of them (3 of them). I notified the architects Johnny Murphy and Frank Grimaldi and asked if we could have his contemporaries as honorary pallbearers. I also called the Jesse James gang and asked Dan Sturtevant and Roy Housh to get the gang together to be honorary pallbearers for dad. We got the word out to the family members who weren't in town--Kari and Brennan Connor and Mary Rose, who headed home. We felt that St. Joseph and Dad were working hard to get everyone home.



That evening we all met at Connors to plan the liturgy with Martha Roult, and I guess you might say the celebration began. I asked that for two Taize Latin responses ("O Christe Domine Jesu" and "Ubi Caritas") be added to Martha's program so I was happy. Karen Egle would be the soloist as she had at Joe's funeral. Keith got together with Sean and Mike to work on the petitions, and the whole family ended up at the dinner table watching Dad's family slides (which had gradually been making their way through the family). Dad must have engineered that too. All the years when he tried to get us to look at his slides and we wouldn't (because Bob always fell asleep). We finally made him happy, for we watched the slides almost every night. Yes, Bob fell asleep!

Mother was confused on Thursday. We had told her that Dad was dead. (She had been afraid to sleep with him when he was still alive, remembering that as a 4 or 5 year old she had to sleep in the room with her grandfather's corpse.) There were so many family members coming and going through the house that she

became utterly confused and began to think she was on television all day Thursday.

And so we gave Dad a big send-off and funeral Friday, May 24, 1992. Brian said the Mass, attended by a large number of priests and maybe a bishop. Fred Daly S.J. was there. Mother didn't come. She didn't really understand that he was gone, and became more and more confused. She couldn't survive long without him by her side, and she died that fall.

