



Jesse A. Godinez

February 15, 1935 - February 22, 2017

Jesse A. Godinez, 82, of Ft. Collins and founder of the El Burrito Restaurant died February 22, 2017. Jesse was the fifth son born to Jesus Godinez and Agustina Ayala Godinez in a house on Cherry Street, in Fort Collins, CO., on February 15, 1935.

He was preceded in death by Jesus(Father), Agustina (Mother), Nick(brother), Joe(brother)and Ariana (granddaughter).

Survived by Dorothy Flores Godinez(wife), Daughters: Christi Godinez (Gary Gabaldon); Mona Godinez (Tony Ortiz); Connie Godinez (Phil Campbell); Gigi Godinez, and Jessi Hoodak. Grandchildren Anthony Ortiz (Janet), Isabella Cordova, Amanda Hoodak, Samantha Hoodak, Alison Hoodak and Great grandchildren Anthony Ortiz, Jr., Theresa Ortiz, Catrina Manchego, Jolene Ortiz, and Christopher Ortiz.

Jesse was born in the middle of the Great Depression and at a time of extreme racism but that never stopped him from attaining his goals. At the age of four his father passed away and he remembers not being able to attend his fathers' funeral because he didn't have shoes. In the early days, with his widowed mother, he would help dole out burritos to the migrant farm workers for a small fee.

When he began school, he only knew Spanish but was only allowed to speak English. For fear of corporal punishment, he quickly learned English. Jesse graduated from Fort Collins High school and married his high school sweetheart Dorothy, in 1957. He went on to finish two years of College and was drafted in between semesters. He served twice and was very proud of serving his country.

After serving the first tour, he returned home at the young age of 23, missing his Mom's cooking, he put his entrepreneurial skills to the test. With the help and encouragement from his wife, Dorothy(co-owner); mother, Agustina (Chef 1960-1986); brothers, Joe (logo artist), Guillermo (partner 1960-1981); Augie (manager 1960-1991); and sister in-laws, JoAnn and Rose, on September 23, 1960, El Burrito Cafe (Sam's Place) was born.

In business, he was the man behind the scenes, running the show incognito. He loved being in business. He referred to El Burrito as his "baby." Walking the perimeter each morning and making mental notes. Throughout the last 57 years, there have been numerous people who have helped fulfill and continue to fulfill his dream and legacy. His stubborn and optimistic view helped accomplish anything he set his focus on. As a worker bee, he wore many hats...and wouldn't have had it any other way. At any given time, he oversaw and physically labored as chef, accountant, manager, and maintained the upkeep of his business.

Family was very important to this man whenever anyone needed help he was there. He was there for anyone, really. He didn't realize how much of an impact he had on the community. Throughout the years, he helped so many young people through employment and advice. He was always ready and willing to help anyone who wanted to fulfill their own entrepreneurial dreams, clear to the end of his life. His "baby" is Celebrating 57 years with the same family at the same location. It was and still is a family affair, his bond runs

deep. Now operated by the 3rd, 4th and 5th generations of Godinez's and their extended family.

Jesse was a very generous man (especially with advice). He was a kind man, a true entrepreneur, and most of all he was a Great Dad. If his body would have allowed, he would still be walking the perimeter of El Burrito Restaurant "Sam's," and making mental to do notes. Rest in peace Jess, Dad, friend, entrepreneur, good citizen, and mentor. A big grateful thanks to everyone who consoled and helped during this trying time. Those of you who knew him stop by El Burrito and share your stories, the Family would love to hear them.

Cemetery Details

Resthaven Memory Gardens Cemetery

8426 S College Ave
Fort Collins, CO

Previous Events

Rosary

FEB 27. 10:00 AM (MT)

St. John XXIII Catholic Church
1220 University Center
Fort Collins, CO

Mass of Christian Burial

FEB 27. 10:30 AM (MT)

St. John XXIII Catholic Church
1220 University Center
Fort Collins, CO

Tribute Wall

GP

“ My name is Greg Pavel. The first time I ate at Sams was 1962. I remember Sam as well. Went to school with Christie Godinez and others. I remember Mrs. Godinez always giving me free Super Bubble gum while checking out. 3 bean burritos smothered in her green chile was eating in heaven to me. I still eat there today. Miss you guys. Greg

Greg Pavel - December 05, 2021 at 01:27 PM

MM

“ A Pioneer in the restaurant business where so many of them have failed and had to close down. It shows that hard work and a close knit family is the recipe for a successful family business. I had the honor going to school with his daughter and to this day she still works at El Burritos. My heartfelt sympathy goes out to the family. God Bless

Michael Mawhinney - March 10, 2017 at 10:29 AM

DE

“ My heart goes out to you and your family. So many fond memories flood my heart! Went there from the 60's and every time I came back to Fort Collins that was the first place I wanted to go. Thank you for all your hard work and delicious food for so many years! May you have the rest that is so well deserved. Aloha

Debbie - March 04, 2017 at 07:29 PM

LL

“ So sorry for your loss. Adrian & I had our first dates at El Burrito & always felt like family. We will have a margarita in honor. Love & condolences, Lola & Adrian Logsdon

lola logsdon - March 04, 2017 at 05:05 PM

GS

“ Dear Dorothy and all the Godinez Family~ So sorry for your loss. Am glad I got to see you and your family at El Burrito this past December. Peace~
~Gloria Sanchez Standing~

Gloria Standing - March 02, 2017 at 02:26 PM

HB

“ Dear Dorothy and all the family, my heartfelt thoughts love and prayers are with all of you. I pray for God's peace, comfort and everlasting love to strengthen you now and in the days ahead and always.

Your old school friend,
Harriet Kittel Bliss

PS I'm sorry I couldn't make it to Jesse's service.

Harriet Bliss - March 01, 2017 at 09:18 PM

DW

“ Jesse, You were a great guy with lots of talent, and a wonderful personality. You will never be forgotten. Doug (Buddy) Wayker

Doug (Buddy) Wayker - March 01, 2017 at 01:02 PM

SG

“ So saddened to hear this. My husband and went ther when we were dating. 1967 til present. Beautiful family. Lived sitting with Dorothy and Jesse hearing stories of how 'Sams'. Came to be. Heart felt sympathy to you Dorothy, and family.



Sona & Duane Genzlinger - March 01, 2017 at 12:53 PM

RE

“ Sure sorry to hear about Jesse. Our thoughts and prayers are with you Dorothy and your family. Dan and Rheta

Rheta Eychner - March 01, 2017 at 12:01 PM

RE

“ Thank you for all the years of memories at Sam's. I started eating at El Burrito in 1967 when I was at Poudre High School. My children grew up sitting in high chairs eating rice and tortillas and my grandchildren do the same now. Sam's is now and always will be my favorite Mexican restaurant.

Renie - February 28, 2017 at 08:28 PM

LI

“ Dorothy...the SMITH family is thinking of all our wonderful times at El Burrito. Saw you last summer at the soccer fields with our grandchildren playing. Thinking of you and your family. My dad, Don, and mom, Shirley enjoyed seeing you almost every week, enjoying your food, while they were alive. The Smith Family, Don, Shirley, Linda, Ron, Steve and Mark

Linda Smith Ingram - February 28, 2017 at 09:14 AM

LW

“ I was introduced to what would become your Patriarch's Legacy in the 1960's. I was in the booth at the North window (it is no longer there, the buffet is now in that area). I ordered a pork taco and was warned it would be spicy. My dad tried to dissuade me from ordering it unsuccessfully. Oh my Goodness it was and I loved it!! I in turn introduced it to my children and the El Burrito is our family's go to!!

My thoughts and prayers are with you as you travel through this time of grief.

May God Bless you and keep, May the Lord look down on you and grant you His peace.

Ladelle West - February 28, 2017 at 07:46 AM

JB

“ *Feels like we lost a family member. So so sorry for your loss .
Jeff and Jane Boulter*

jeff and jane boulter - February 27, 2017 at 10:53 PM

JL

“ *Dorothy and the entire Godinez family,
We are so saddened by the loss of Jessie, but he is alive in our memories of all of you. We thank you for allowing us to be a part of your lives and watching the family and business grow and thrive.
Our thoughts are with you always.
The Ley family...Jana, Rodney, Sam, Bradford, Greg*

Jana Ley - February 27, 2017 at 01:50 PM

ES

“ *Godinez Family,
For almost 40 years now, our family has felt as at home in your dining room as we did in our own restaurant. We hold these memories as we hold your family in our prayers.
God bless you,
Eric and Margie Spanier*

Eric Spanier - February 27, 2017 at 10:56 AM

BM

“ *Our thoughts and prayers are with all of you at this difficult time.*

Bo and Shari Morrison - February 27, 2017 at 10:33 AM

MH

“ *Dear Godinez Family, one and all,
With Jesse's passing, we have lost a significant member of our community. Dorothy and Jesse made quite a team as you created and sustained El Burrito over the years. One of my favorite restaurants since my arrival in Fort Collins in 1970. Thanks for it!*

One of my favorite quotes on the passing of a loved one is from a 4th century bishop:

"He whom we love and lose is no longer where he was before. He is now wherever we are."

May this become so for each of you.

*warmest greetings,
Mims Harris*

Mims Harris - February 27, 2017 at 10:29 AM

DB

“ I would like to thank Mr. Godinez for giving me my first job and allowing me to work with great people and teaching the value of teamwork. He had a beautiful smile and you could see the love and pride he had for family
Fort Collins lost a great entrepreneur with his passing. Rest in God's loving arms.

Debra Bueno - February 27, 2017 at 09:39 AM

SS

“ Dear Dorothy and family. My family has been coming to El Burrito for fifty years and always enjoys seeing Dorothy and Jess ! Wishing you peace to bring you comfort. Courage to face the days ahead, and Loving Memories to hold forever in your heart! You are in our thoughts and prayers! Love Susie Strauch and family❤️

Susie Strauch - February 27, 2017 at 08:57 AM

DE

“ Dorothy and Family,
May your fond memories of Jesse and faith in Christ strengthen you as you grieve your loss. May God bless you all.
David Everitt

David Everitt - February 27, 2017 at 08:37 AM

 Natalie Anderson

“ Natalie Anderson lit a candle in memory of Jesse A. Godinez



Natalie Anderson - February 27, 2017 at 07:33 AM

 Natalie
Anderson

“ *My deepest sympathies to the Godinez family. My God wrap you in love during this difficult time. I have a lot of fond memories of El Burrito. Still the best Mexican restaurant in town.....Natalie Anderson*

Natalie Anderson - February 27, 2017 at 07:32 AM

WE

“ *Our thoughts and prayers to Dorothy and her wonderful family. Thank you for all the years of wonderful food and memories.*

wendy - February 26, 2017 at 10:15 PM

C(

“ *Dorothy, my mom, dad, and I loved eating at El Burrito. You all were so friendly. My dad, Roy, passed away 3 years ago. But my mom, Lillie Wire and I (Christina) want to extend our love and prayers to you from San Antonio, Texas.*

Christina Wood (Wier) - February 26, 2017 at 08:23 PM

AG

“ *From the family of Joseph "Frank" (dec.), (previously of 320 Cherry St.) & Anna Gonzales (Loveland), please accept our sincerest condolences during this time of your great loss.*

Annette Gonzales - February 26, 2017 at 06:10 PM



“ 44 files added to the album *Life Tributes*



Bohlender Funeral Chapel - February 26, 2017 at 05:26 PM

KT

“ *My thoughts and prayers are with you. My mom, Fran Thompson, was the director of Volunteers Clearing House, across the street from El Burrito and I have many fond memories of the Godinez family.*
Kacy Thompson

Kacy Thompson - February 26, 2017 at 05:17 PM

CO

“ *My condolences to the Godinez Family and my ex-wife Christi , Jesse eldest daughter Im so sorry for your loss*



Cresencio Ortiz - February 26, 2017 at 04:28 PM

GO

Condolences to the family.my sister Marcie and I had the great pleasure of working for them many years ago in our teen years.so sorry for your loss.

Gloria Ortiz - February 26, 2017 at 05:49 PM

JB

“ We're saddened to hear of Jesse's passing and we send our condolences to the Godinez family.

Jim Burrill - February 26, 2017 at 02:47 PM

BS

“ Dear Dorothy and the wonderful Godinez family,
We were so sad to hear of Jesse's passing. We will always remember Jesse and his friendliness and his love of life! We are hoping that your many happy memories will help ease the sadness. Sending love at this difficult time.
Barbara & Perry Springer & family

Barbara Springer - February 26, 2017 at 09:17 AM

BW

“ Jesse will be missed. We send the family our fondest regards.

Bill and Diane Warren

Bill Warren - February 25, 2017 at 06:49 PM

DS

“ On behalf of the FCHS class of 1955, we send our condolences to Dorothy and the Godinez family for the loss of their beloved Junior. May you take comfort in all of the memories he left to help you during this difficult time.

*Donna Schott
Class of "55"*

Donna Schott - February 25, 2017 at 06:00 PM



My condolences to you and your family, my prayers always.

Virginia Hernandez - February 26, 2017 at 03:27 PM

DE

“ *My thoughts and prayers to the Godinez family.*



Debb - February 25, 2017 at 10:54 AM

 Jeremy Vasquez

“ *Our condolences to your family in your time of loss. The Vasquez family*

Jeremy Vasquez - February 25, 2017 at 09:07 AM

EB

“ *Our condolences to the Godinez family. God bless you all. Freddy and Estela Baca*

estela baca - February 25, 2017 at 07:58 AM

LE

“ *Our Hearts go out to you.. He was a Great Man, and we will miss seeing him at El Burrito. Blessings to you and your Family.. Leslee Bujack Garcia and Lenore Bujack Elliott*

Lenore Elliott - February 25, 2017 at 05:43 AM

DW

So sad to lose half of one of our most beautiful FCHS couples. How blessed you are to have had so many wonderful years together. Our prayers are with you. David & Carol Wood

David & Carol Wood - February 25, 2017 at 09:14 AM

DB

Our thoughts and prayer to you and your family. God Bless all of you....

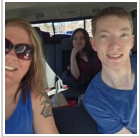
Debbie Clerkin Biedron - February 26, 2017 at 03:40 PM

CS

“ *My thoughts and prayers are with your family.*

Cindy Salazar

Cindy Salazar - February 25, 2017 at 04:49 AM



“ *Our family sends our deepest sympathy to you all. My parents would visit with Jesse and Dorothy while us girls ate and played at El Burrito. Your memories be beautiful and sustain you through the sadness.*

The Geist family

Samara Geist - February 24, 2017 at 06:27 PM

KN

“ *So sorry to hear of Jesse's passing. It was a privilege to work at the El Burrito for all those years, and to get to know Jess and Dorothy. Jess had a wonderful smile, and was always so kind to stop and visit with several different families as he made his way through the restaurant on a regular basis to sit down for a meal. Jess would also make it a point to go back into the kitchen and look over things, joke with the staff and give Jose a hard time.. :) Jess made such a positive impact on our community, and I know he will be missed very much by family and friends, as well as many, many longtime customers.*

Kirsten Nicholson - February 24, 2017 at 05:04 PM

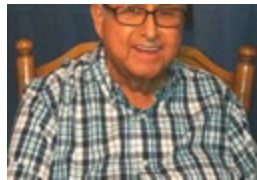
JG

“ We are so sorry we cannot be there in person to help remember what a great guy Uncle Jess was. He was always so kind and generous to me and my family. You could tell he was very proud of his family and the restaurant. He has built a legacy that impacted the Ft. Collins community for almost 60 years and he will be missed. all of our love- Joe, Andrea, Joaquin, and Evangeline Garcia.

joseph garcia - February 24, 2017 at 04:28 PM



“ 1 file added to the album Memories Album



Bohlender Funeral Chapel - February 24, 2017 at 02:05 PM

CA

“ For more than 45 years El Burrito has been my favorite Mexican restaurant in Fort Collins. Since I worked across the street from the restaurant for 30 years it felt like my lunch cafeteria. Thanks to Jesse and family it has been a gift to the community. My thoughts are with you. Carolyn Andrews

CAROLYN ANDREWS - February 24, 2017 at 01:15 PM

TG

“ Dear Dorothy and girls,
Some of my fun memories growing up, was playing, competing and wrestling with Jess and our brothers.
We really enjoyed our childhood together.
Love, Cruz

Tony Godinez - February 23, 2017 at 05:12 PM

TG

“ Dear Aunt Dorothy, and the girls,
We were so sad the hear about Uncle Jess' passing.
He was such a great guy. Always happy and optimistic.
A successful business man and the reason many young
workers had a job and money in their pockets.
Also, your family is the reason Tony and I met each other and
have been happily married for 40 years.
All our love and prayers,
Tony, Jeanne and family

Tony Godinez - February 23, 2017 at 05:03 PM