



Leonard George Urban

November 6, 1931 - September 26, 2024

Leonard Urban passed peacefully in his home in Fort Collins on September 26, 2024. Leonard was born in Wallace, Kansas on November 6, 1931. His parents, Rosa Bittel and Adam Urban, moved with their family, to Denver, Colorado in 1934. There, Leonard grew up with his 10 brothers and sisters; Geri, Cora, Romilda, Veronica, Alfred, Elmer, Richard, Virginia, Peter and Katherine. His sister, Katherine said and his siblings acknowledged that Leonard was the culmination of their father and mother, the joy of interacting with family and any group at all, an appreciation of so many encounters of a long life. He was love personified.

Leonard attended Mesa State College for one year, then, returned to Denver to enter St. Thomas Seminary with his brother, Peter, soon earning a Master's Degree in philosophy. Leonard was then called to study in Rome, Italy, at Gregorian University where, in 1956, he was both ordained and granted his License in Sacred Theology, LST. Later, Leonard earned a second Master's in psychology at Catholic University in Washington DC.

Leonard's ministry, teaching, writing and parish work encompassed more than thirty years as a Catholic priest. During that time, he served eleven years in Denver, Colorado, as the Head of Counseling and Guidance at Cathedral High School. He continued his ministry at Colorado State University as a pastor, student counselor and spiritual leader at John XXIII University Center,

together with Sister Elizabeth Dyer. In time, Leonard ministered to several parishes in Colorado, including Denver, Longmont Frederick, Mead, Erie, Fort Collins and Greeley. During those years, he was in ministry together with his brother, Father Peter Urban.

In 1990, following his departure from Catholic priest ministry, Leonard became a licensed marriage and family therapist. He continued that work with and for so many people until his passing in 2024. He married Elizabeth Cushman in 1991; together they made their home, working and creating community for thirty-four years in Fort Collins.

Leonard loved life, and he celebrated all the amazing opportunities it offered. He was an avid fly fisherman and great golfer. He loved poetry, really literature of all kinds, as well as music and laughter. He was a writer, a teacher and a beloved spiritual leader to many. He loved learning from others and sharing freely all he learned. His effort was always to serve the poor, the sick, and the lonely. He especially loved his family, considering even those he did not know, as family. He touched many lives with his caring wisdom and gentle soul. He will be remembered for all he taught us and for all his many gifts he openly shared with us. He will be forever missed.

Leonard is survived by his wife, Liz Urban; sister-in-law, Cheryl Workman-Avery (Ron); brother-in-law, Milo Cushman (Linda); step-son, Christopher Roelle (Simone Barrelier); step-daughter, Jenna Krosschell (Rocky), and grandchildren, Hunter and Vince. Also surviving are his brother, Peter Urban and sister, Katherine Day, as well as many nieces and nephews, and dear friends.

A celebration of life will be held on October 26, 2024 at 12:00 noon, with a reception following the service, at Mary of Magdala Ecumenical Catholic Church at Trinity Lutheran, 301 E. Stuart St., Fort Collins.

Previous Events

Celebration of Life

OCT **26**. 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM (MT)

Mary of Magdala Ecumenical Catholic Church at Trinity Lutheran
301 East Stuart Street
Fort Collins, CO 80525-1438

Tribute Wall

TW

“ *Fsther Urban was my gofing partner on many occasions back in the day. I will always remember him for his kindness, generosity of spirit and humanity. I will always remember and admire him. - Terry Wolfe*

Terry Wolfe - April 10 at 04:52 PM

WC

“ *So sorry Lizzy! sending you lots of love wendy*

wendy cohen - November 04, 2025 at 11:48 AM

RW

“ *Father Leonard George Urban, Thank you for all you did to help make humanity more compassionate with the love of Jesus that you helped others to see at St. Peter's in Greeley.*

Robert Waltman - November 22, 2024 at 06:50 PM

GJ

“ *I've just read about Leonard's passing from this earth. I met Fr. Urban at John XXIII. He was a wonderful priest, compassionate counselor, brilliant speaker with a very keen sense of humor. After our dad died, our mom met a man she fell in love with and Leonard performed the marriage. I am glad Leonard found love and he & Liz & family enjoyed a full life together. He was an amazing man and I'm fortunate for his life on this earth. God bless him.*

Gayla Johnson - November 09, 2024 at 03:10 PM

DH

“ I’m just learning of Fr. Urban’s passing. In 1959 while he served at the St. Philomena parish in Denver, he officiated at me father’s funeral. I remember him as a kind man. But I was fascinated when I was in the rectory delivering a humble honorarium from my family, we sat down and talked. I have no idea of the subject because I was mightily distracted by his cigar, which he smoked just like a cigarette. Oh the things little boys react to.

David F. Hallet - November 06, 2024 at 03:17 PM



“ A sympathy card was purchased for the family of Leonard George Urban.



October 29, 2024 at 11:45 AM

BF

“ In my 79 years that included 20 years of Catholic education and 12 years in four seminaries studying for the priesthood, I have watched, known, seen up close, and learned from probably hundreds of priests. You, my friend, Father Leonard Urban, are among three who showed me and helped me feel God's Unconditional Love for me and for all who crossed your path. Thank you, Father Leonard. Bob Fetsch, 10/26/2024

Bob Fetsch - October 26, 2024 at 12:27 PM

RO

“ I always cherish how he brought so many of us together from many backgrounds and faiths to truly make us a family at John the XXIII. He truly was one of the most inspirational people I ever met. I am sure my other friends that knew him totally agree. Blessings, prayers and love
Rufus Opferman

Regis Opferman - October 26, 2024 at 10:58 AM

RC

“ I was saddened to learn of Leonard's passing. He was campus minister in Fort Collins when I was in college. I asked & he agreed to write a reference for me to the Peace Corps. I was accepted & that changed my life. I have many great memories of attending Mass in university auditoriums before St John XXIII was built, & at the church once constructed after I returned from 2 years abroad in Peace Corps. He & his family are in my prayers.

Rosemary Casey - October 26, 2024 at 04:17 AM

JN

“ Leonard was pastor at St. Peter's in Greeley in the late 80's. His intuitive humor and cheer were a blessing to any occasion. Who can forget spontaneous recitations! "Glory to God for dappled things -- for skies of couple-clour and brinded cow; For rose-moles all in stipple upon trout that swim;" Leonard, with Fr. Peter, established The Guadalupe Center, the first shelter for single men in Greeley, which today has grown to add single women and families. During his time here he expanded the parish outreach to more of those struggling in our community. It was a gift to have known him and worked with him. I am sad for your loss but happy that you had so many years with him!!

Jean Noblitt - October 25, 2024 at 02:41 PM

JF

“ Had it not been for the fact that Leonard met and married Liz, I very probably would not have met him. That would have been a great loss to both me and my husband, Ken. We were together with Liz and Leonard at special dinners as well as at many other functions including their wonderful Christmas parties. Who led the singing of all those Christmas songs but Leonard -- with so much love and joy!! I have so many happy memories of getting to know and love this very intelligent, kind, and funny man. Thank you, Liz for sharing this special person with us. Please know how very sorry I am for your loss.

Jeni Forbes - October 24, 2024 at 07:07 PM

KD

“ The news of Leonard's passing caused me to reflect on his impact on my life. Despite not having seen him for nearly 40 years, I've come to recognize that Father Leonard taught me something invaluable: Do the right thing, and help people whenever you can. Do so even if others disapprove, or even if it gets you into trouble.

Leonard was kind, and funny, and a man of his word. I'm happy to know that he found love, and family, and seems to have enjoyed a full life. He deserved it. I hope that he and Sister Elizabeth have been reunited and are once again getting into mischief. My love to Leonard's family and friends.

Kristin Dell'Orso - October 24, 2024 at 03:03 PM

TM

“ Whenever Leonard was invited by Jim Reid to speak at the John XXIII adult education sessions, people turned out in droves. They knew they would hear:

* a song or two

* great stories often from his own life experience

* a couple poems recited from memory

* an important message that resonated deep in our hearts

And interspersed with it all, we'd be laughing to the point of tears at his sense of humor and jokes. The man was brilliant, insightful, grace-filled, holy. God love and keep you, Leonard. Prayers and sincerest condolences to all the family.

Tom Moos - October 23, 2024 at 08:18 PM

GK

“ We are honored to have known Leonard Urban. Although our opportunities to spend time with him over the years were brief, he left an indelible impression on our lives. It only took a few moments in his presence to realize that here was a man of great compassion, intellect, and phenomenal memory. The softness of his voice invited you to come closer, so you would not miss a word, which sometimes happened. Perhaps his goal was to help us listen better with our hearts.

In 1993, Leonard agreed to marry us outdoors in nature, which was especially important to us. We were very relieved and grateful for his spiritual presence at our wedding providing comfort for the Kaufman family in a setting outside of a church. He went on to preside over the happy occasions of both Greg’s brothers’ weddings as well. When our beloved Mom, Rosemary, passed away, he again was there bringing comfort and light.

So, like the evening of our wedding in Lory State Park, after an afternoon thunderstorm, the sun came out, a rainbow in the sky, air fragrant with rain, this is how Leonard Urban’s life has left us. With love and admiration,

Greg and Gail Kaufman



Greg Kaufman - October 22, 2024 at 08:53 PM

LJ

“ All these years later, the memory of Leonard still pops into my life. He was and is significant as a role model for loving people as they are. If there was a person that I would want to be a father figure it would be Leonard. Thank you, kind sir, for inviting me into your fold, and treating me as a son. I feel your presence and warmth even now now as I'm writing this . Thank you, thank you. Love,Lyle.

Lyle Jones - October 22, 2024 at 10:47 AM

CG

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Christine Pieper Gaebler - October 20, 2024 at 01:53 PM

CG

“ I first met Leonard, Liz and Jim Reid after seeing a notice for Soup Supper on Wednesday evenings and volleyball in the summer when I was a sophomore at CSU. I learned about a different expression of the gospels through real life actions such as discussing the Great Books with Leonard and inmates at the county jail. As college students, we made small loaves of bread which we delivered to the home of people in the richer parts of town at Thanksgiving. I attended New Core Retreats where we discovered ourselves and made lifelong friends. J23 is where I met one such friend named, Francis Gaebler, whom I married in 1976. When we asked Leonard if he would marry us, he said "I'll marry you anywhere except on horseback because I'm allergic to horses". I'm so happy for Leonard that he too was able to fulfill his passion for love by marrying Liz and continue his personal values of caring for the poor. I will always remember Leonard for his smile, his keen memory for names which he used when delivering communion, story telling and musical talents; all used to live out the gospel!

Christine Pieper Gaebler - October 20, 2024 at 01:41 PM

NP

“ I attended John the XXIII in the early 1970's as a young lonely college student. Leonard made a profound impact on my life by breaking open the gospel message for me and through his unconditional love and acceptance of me. I am eternally grateful. My sincere condolences to his family. Nettie Post

Nettie Post - October 14, 2024 at 10:48 PM

AN

I was there at that same time. Thank you for your words, they speak my experience exactly - "broke open the gospel message for me" and "unconditional love" Thank you Leonard Urban!

Ann - October 17, 2024 at 12:18 PM

CW

“ Leonard was a guiding light for our family and so many others. He was funny and bright and so kind. He always welcomed me into his home. He would tell my sister when I'd call to say hello to them, “Tell Cheryl to get her butt over here. “. Leonard and me had long talks together about life and love and a loving God. I know that Leonard is now in the presence of his creator and sharing poems and jokes with God; no doubt cracking him up. My sister found a gem in Leonard. Their love was written in the stars and someday they both dance through them again. God bless my sister as she finds her way through this time of loss. God bless his family and dear friends who will miss him as well. And may God spread healing to us all.

cheryl workman - October 13, 2024 at 05:32 PM

RA

I met Cheryl in March 2023 and she introduced me to her family and meeting Leonard was blessing i enjoyed listening to his stories and his take on life, he always had something of interest on life and how we should live it. I enjoyed our conversations on football and fishing, i will miss all the wisdom he had to give. I am very thankful I met Cheryl and the welcome I received in the family and Leonard was the cornerstone. He will be truly missed.

Ron Avery - October 13, 2024 at 08:02 PM

LU

Dear Cheryl and Ron, dear sister and new brother, thank you for your wonderful words and your support always to Leonard and me. Love you both so very much.

Leonard Urban - October 13, 2024 at 08:07 PM

AW

“ *Father Leonard was our priest at Guardian Angels Catholic Church in Mead for many years. He was a wonderful and compassionate leader for all of our parishioners. I will not forget how easy it was to talk with him and ask for his guidance. It's been over 30 years but he is the kind of person that you don't forget. My condolences to his family and friends. What a tremendous loss.*
Allison Walsh (Morehouse)

Allison Walsh - October 13, 2024 at 03:38 PM

SP

“ *Leonard was my mentor at Cathedral high school from 1960-64. We stayed in contact for many years. He was a blessing to my life and I know to many others. My condolences to his wife and siblings.*
Sharon Karry Petersen

Sharon Petersen - October 13, 2024 at 03:37 PM

CB

“ *My First summer at City Park Nine I was introduced to Leonard as he was playing golf, usually on a stormy day when few golfers would venture out. We would remark when the weather was iffy, it was a perfect Leonard Day for playing. As he and I visited I found out about his eye surgeries that helped him maintain sight so he could play, I then saved the bright yellow/green balls I would find so they were easier for him to follow as he ventured down the fairways. He always had a positive comment for me to ponder upon our visits. When he could no longer drive himself to the course the younger men who would bring him were amazed at his smile and positive remembrances of times we had shared. I have missed his smile and wit and now know he is able to see exactly where his golf ball landed and make it to the green.*
Charlie Brown

Charlene K Brown - October 13, 2024 at 10:58 AM

JA

“ I moved to Fort Collins in the fall of 1969 and attended John XXIII for Mass.
Father Leonard was the priest. I found him to be very "user friendly". He treated everyone, young and old and in between, with such respect and caring. When my parents from Nebraska came to visit, he greeted them the same way. They were very impressed.

Later on When Leonard found Liz, they were a great example of true love.

I was fortunate to have taught her two children in second grade. They made a great loving family. I feel blessed to have known all of them. He will be missed by his family and all the many friends he made over the years.

Janie Arnold

Janie Arnold - October 09, 2024 at 08:16 PM



“ As a freshman at CSU, Leonard was the perfect person to help your faith grow wider and deeper. I treasured the evenings gathered in his home where we could ask any question at all about God, faith. As a person he was so personable and funny. everyone from little children to adults loved his humor and empathy.

Kerrie Anderson - October 06, 2024 at 09:18 AM

MA

What a wonderful man god bless him and his work , may he rest in peace

ma - November 03, 2024 at 02:14 PM

MA

I just read the article from Valerie McCullough in todays paper , we need more great people like him , thanks to her for putting that in 🙏

ma - November 03, 2024 at 02:15 PM

MW

“ *Everyone at MVG knew and loved Leonard. He will be missed.* ”



Mike & Linda Walz - October 02, 2024 at 04:15 PM