



Luis B. Medina

February 13, 1929 - July 20, 2023

Luis B. Medina was born February 13, 1929, and departed on his journey to Heaven on July 20, 2023, in

Alamosa, Colorado at the age of 94.

Luis was born into a family of 14 children in Capulin, Colorado during the Great Depression. He lost his

dear mother when he was eight years old, which affected him greatly throughout his life.

He started work

on the family farm at a very young age and worked on other farms managed by his father caring for the

livestock and working the fields. During WWII his two older brothers went to war leaving Luis to begin

his work at 12 years old as a campero. He assisted the setup of camp and cooking for a sheepherder he

would always remember, Señor Elfido, who taught him with great patience and kindness the skills to be a

campero and eventually a sheepherder in the high San Juan Mountains in Southern Colorado. Luis

considered himself a sheepherder at his very core throughout his life and shared that he found his faith in

God in the high mountains as a teenager and held onto his faith throughout his life. He worked very hard

through his teen years, but also played all sports in high school. He worked in the steel mill in Pueblo,

Colorado and eventually earned a certification in Teletype communication. Latinos were not hired by the

railroad in Colorado so his instructor guided him to Iowa and New Mexico as the only two states he may

be hired, so off he went to New Mexico to work on the Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railroad for a

few years.

He joined the Navy during the Korean War and while spending months on a destroyer ship in the Sea of

Japan, he became aware of the importance of mental health. Luis's concern for others led him to pursue a

higher education beginning with a few undergraduate years with the Benedictine College in Acheson

Kansas. He then returned home to care for his father, and completed a bachelor's degree from Adam's State

College, a master's degree in social work from St. Lewis University, Ph.D. in Social Work Administration

from the University of Utah, and a post-doctoral degree at John Hopkins University and the National

Institute of Mental Health in Maryland.

Dr. Medina was one of the first Latinos to earn the degree of DSW, doctorate in social work. He earned this

degree from the University of Utah.

Early on in his career as a social worker, Dr. Medina worked for the state of Colorado to implement the

newly developed child welfare laws. He worked as the Regional Director for the Dept. Human Services.

He traveled throughout the southeastern part of the state of Colorado developing the foster care system and

was responsible for 52 adoption placements.

Dr. Medina was a mentor to two generations of social workers with his faculty appointment at the University

of Southern Colorado in Pueblo, Colorado, Department Chair of Social Work at Highlands University in

Las Vegas, New Mexico, and Dean of the School of Social Work at San Jose State University in California.

He was sought after by university graduate programs in many states and Puerto Rico, to lead seminars and

assist in establishing and /or strengthen programs.

One of his crowning achievements was his work with the College of Bishops for the Catholic Church. He

was instrumental bringing social justice and social change to the mission of Catholic church impacting

churches throughout the country.

He was the executive director of the San Luis Valley Mental Health Center from 1978 to 1981 and was the

assistant director of the Spanish Peaks Mental Health Center from 1975 to 1977. During his tenure at the mental health centers, he worked with the Division of Mental Health to de-institutionalize the state hospital by developing community programs to treat patients with mental illness. He will always be remembered for his commitment to social change in social justice, and for his honest and ethical respect for how clients are treated by the social service system.

Luis enjoyed visiting his father, brothers, and large extended family in the San Luis Valley for great BBQs, picnics, and holidays. He was a traveler and enjoyed visiting relatives around the country. Luis, Bernice, and children lived in many cities, and he spent priceless leisure time with them camping, fishing, rafting, swimming, ice/roller skating and snow skiing. His love of the mountains is shared by his children and grandchildren along with his famous bologna and potato soup!

Luis was preceded in Heaven by his wife of 57 years, Bernice Medina and son, Christopher Medina (Maryann); his father, Juan Medina and mother, Celina Romero; sisters Marie Medina, Sr. Dora Medina, Sr. Lucia Medina, Sr. Celinda Medina, Sr. Aurea Medina, Celina MacFarlan, Sr. Joseph Mary Medina, Sr. Ramona Medina, baby sister Luisa; Brothers Adelmo Medina, Tiofilo Medina, and Gilbert Medina. His loyal companions on the farm and mountains, his horse, Shorty and dog, Rusty. He is survived by his sister, Sr. Rufina Medina, children: Teresa (Mike) Sisneros, Ana (Steve) Vigil, Angela Medina, Anthony (Leslie) Medina, Patrick (Marnie) Medina, and Louise (Frank) Cordova. He is also survived by his grandchildren, Shaunae (Maurissa), Amanda (Derek), Tasha (Joe), Arianne, Benjamin (Devon), Emily (Brian), Rebecca, Hannah (Sebastian), Francisco, Cristina (Tommy), Andrea, Erin, and Cael. As well as his great-grandchildren, Shaunden, Kaitlyn, Gracelyn, Rayna, Maximus, Axel, Elise, Ameeya, Aspen, John, and Celina.

Luis Medina was a loving son, brother, husband, father, grandfather, great-grandfather,

uncle, colleague,

and friend. Our shepherd will be remembered and deeply missed.

Please join us in remembrance and celebration of Luis Medina's amazing life at St.

Joseph's Parish, 19895

Co Rd 8, Capulin, CO 81124, Saturday, August 5, 2023. A rosary will be held at 10:30

a.m. and a funeral

service to follow at 11:00 a.m. A reception will follow at Our Lady of the Valley church

gymnasium, 19617

S. Hwy 285, La Jara, Colorado 81140. In lieu of flowers, please donate to your favorite

charity or Catholic

Charities.

Tribute Wall

DG

“ LUIS was a very special man he told me stories about his life, I really enjoyed talking with him and taking care of him at the bridge at alamosa he always tried to stay independent and strong. he will be missed in our family at the Bridge . RIP my dear friend. My condolences and prayers to the family .
Donna Grey

Donna Grey - August 07, 2023 at 11:11 AM

KS

“ Karen S. planted a grove of 3 [Memorial Trees](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Luis B. Medina.

Karen S. - August 04, 2023 at 06:47 PM

PG

“ It was my honor and privilege to know Luis. It was a pleasure working with him. My condolences Angela and family. Pat Garcia

Patricia Garcia - July 31, 2023 at 12:11 AM