



Patrick J. Fenton

November 5, 1945 - April 13, 2020

Patrick John (Pat) Fenton, 74, died as he lived, with dignity, courage, integrity and peace. A man of faith and deep regard for the value and importance of his communities, of which there were many, his deeply bereaved survivors include his wife Virginia (Ginny) Cunningham; children by love if not by blood: Christine Concari (Gabriel); Catherine Smith (Robert Miller); David Smith (Mary Beth); grandchildren by love if not by blood, who knew him as "Paddy": Katherine Elizabeth and Jessica Anne Heinrich; Erin Hamill, Richard William and Anna Elizabeth Smith; and a sister Margaret (Peggy) Wagner (Thomas), niece Kate Marie Driscoll (Adam) and nephew Ryan Christopher Wagner (Amy); great-nieces Erin and Grace Wagner, and great-nephew Patrick Driscoll. He is also survived by numerous cousins, their spouses, children, and grandchildren. He is predeceased by his parents Margaret Dunne, native of County Galway and Patrick Fenton, who immigrated from Dingle; and his brother James Joseph.

Pat's dedication to the human family and to humble service was exhibited to many who came to know him during his 20 years as a Roman Catholic priest. On his ordination in 1972, he requested assignment to an inner city parish with significant needs. But, you go where you are sent, and Pat was assigned to an affluent parish in Butler, Pennsylvania, which he endured with grace despite his disappointment. He went on to pastor Pittsburgh's inner city parishes, including St. Joseph in Manchester on Pittsburgh's North Side and

Corpus Christi in East Liberty, among others. He was central to the establishment of Northside Common Ministries on Pittsburgh's North Side; a dedicated board member of the Thomas Merton Center and a catalyst for parish collaboration in diocesan parishes near Corpus Christi, as well as Dorothy Day Apartments, Inc., the first of its kind transitional living residence for low-income single-parent families.

On departing ministry in 1991, Pat entered a new form of ministry at Action Housing, Inc., where he was able to continue service to vulnerable populations through development and administration of social support for the elderly, at-risk youth, and low income individuals and families. Prior to and since his retirement from Action, he has continued project management at Wood Street Commons, a 270-unit affordable housing community in Downtown Pittsburgh. Students in the OSHER program at the University of Pittsburgh may remember Pat's familiar presence, as will those who encountered Pat as he volunteered with East End Community Ministries.

The circles of relationships in Pat's life extended far and wide. He graduated from Central Catholic and maintained many ties that were bound there. Most recently, he gathered a disparate group of strangers into a Saturday afternoons during Lent and Advent that grew quickly in friendship, faith and intimacy. Sunday mornings were times for breakfasts at JJ's after Mass, occasions that he sorely missed when all gatherings were halted by the virus.

In his almost 25 years with Ginny, he dragged her onto long bike trails and she dragged him to Europe. He gave no reason to think it wasn't a fair trade. They loved each other well.

Pat was struck down by a rare cancer whose first symptoms appeared only a month before his death and whose diagnosis was only declared four days before he died. While all those who know him, especially his beloved

grandchildren, will find his passing stunning and incomprehensible, he would want them to embed in their own spirit the words that he concluded long ago that he would live by: In all the struggles, achievements and puzzles you encounter, go with the most positive and life-giving option: "Choose life."

A memorial Mass and celebration of life will be announced at a later date. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made in his honor to the Pittsburgh Community Food Bank, 1 N Linden St, Duquesne, PA 15110

****The service will be streamed on facebook live, <https://www.facebook.com/105616694431715/live/>

If you do not have a facebook account, please sign in using the user name: pghstreaming and the password: shsr2020

Cemetery Details

Penn Forest Cemetery

121 Colorado Street
Verona, PA 15147

Tribute Wall



“ *Patrick J. Fenton*

January 13, 2023 at 04:43 PM



“ *Judy and I extend our deep sympathy to Ginny and the rest of the Fenton family on the death of Pat.*

He and I were part of the Mt. St. Mary Seminary class of 1971. Although we had never met each other, since I had left that seminary class before Pat had entered the seminary, his death deeply saddened me when I heard of it this afternoon. I will remember him in my prayers.

*Eternal rest grant unto Pat, O Lord,
and may he shine in the Perpetual Light of Jesus.
My he rest in peace.
Amen.*

Ray and Judy Feldman - July 26, 2020 at 05:42 PM

LH

“ Ginny and Family,

My apologies for not sending my condolences sooner. I have had the privilege of working with Pat for my entire 20 years with ACTION-Housing, and I can truly say that Pat is one of my coworkers that I admired most. He was such a kind and good-hearted man who was completely dedicated to our clients and our mission. We at ACTION-Housing are all heartbroken at the loss of such a wonderful man. Pat will be truly missed by so many people here and in the Greater Pittsburgh community. His legacy is meaningful and strong. I hope that you find peace and comfort in your memories of him and your life with him.



*In deepest sympathy,
Lyn Hibbert*

Lyn Hibbert - May 16, 2020 at 03:38 PM

TC

“ *My sympathies to Pat's family. I grew up with Pat , Greenfield, Grade school and High School. We played Football and softball in Schenley Park. I will miss him dearly. Just a few months back my wife and I saw him running on the horse trail at Schenley. We talked for a few minutes and said we half to get together again. I will miss him, what a great guy he was.*

Terry Cain

Terry Cain - April 17, 2020 at 05:13 PM

JW

“ Deepest sympathy to the family. Pat was my supervisor for several years. I enjoyed working with Pat. He was kind and caring. He taught me many life lessons. He loved and embraced life. He loved his family. He was an excellent worker. He was very organized. Just over the past week, I remembered him as I organized my files. He loved sports. He enjoyed the outdoors. At lunch time he would head out and walk in East Pittsburgh or downtown. He knew how to enjoy life from right where he was. He proved that you can have a rich life without all of the lavish and material things that people seek today. He could have had all of the materials things. A good conversation. Just heading outdoors was great for Pat and the love of his family. Thank you Pat. Rest in peace.

Julie Motley Williams - April 15, 2020 at 11:37 AM

SH

“ Pat was a quiet supporter of East End Community Thrift. All we had to do was ask and Pat gave his time, money and his mind to us. Submitted on behalf of all the volunteers at Thrifty.

Shawna Hammond - April 15, 2020 at 09:37 AM

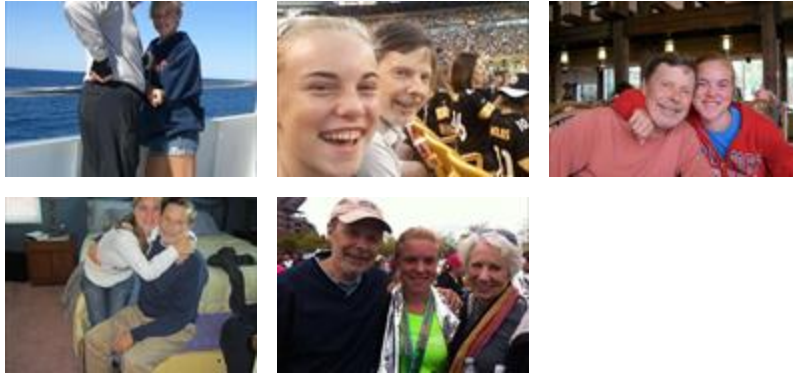
PP

“ Our sincere sympathy to Ginny , Peggy and family on the sad death of Pat. Our thoughts and prayers are with you all during these dark days. Very fond memories of Pat especially when he was on his visits to Ireland, they will be always cherished. Pat will be such a big loss to his family and his many friends and colleagues. May he rest in peace. From Padraic & Maura Dunne, Athlone.

Padraic Dunne a cousin of Pat - April 15, 2020 at 04:19 AM

JH

“ 8 files added to the tribute wall



Jessie Heinrich - April 14, 2020 at 07:36 PM

DH

“ A shock! I have known Pat since high school. Sympathies to all for this very sad loss. Another example of the good dying young!!!

David Hughes - April 14, 2020 at 03:45 PM

PM

“ Always cheerful and welcoming, Pat was a gracious gentleman. My first encounter with him was when he visited me in the old Pittsburgh Hospital on Washington Blvd when I had surgery for a breast tumor. He prayed with me and said kind, comforting and gentle words. What a loss. But what a legacy of commitment to justice, community, faith. He will definitely rest in peace. My deepest condolences to his extended family and friends.

Pat Morgan

Patricia A Morgan - April 14, 2020 at 01:16 PM

FC

What a Christian role model Pat is. Knew him briefly through SMOMP Small Discipleship Group. I am so grateful that our paths crossed. I am humbled & honored to have met him and Ginny. Fran Casillo

Frances Casillo - April 14, 2020 at 02:35 PM

RM

“ *Stunned and saddened by this loss. I worked with him at TMC for 10 years and he brought wise calming intelligent presence to every table. I know he had a great concern for peace - I loved it when he would leave meetings on time and say he had something "grandchild" to attend to. Enjoyed hearing about his European vacations, he urged me to be brave about riding a foreign subway system. Clearly had a sharp witt and interest in life and would tell about Osher classes.*

I only know a small piece of his life but a total pleasure to have known him - very sadly missed he will be by very many.

Roslyn Maholland - April 14, 2020 at 10:01 AM

FN

“ *So sad to hear of Pat's passing. I was a classmate of his in the ordination class of 1971. He will be missed by all who knew him. Peace to his family and friends.*

Fr. Jack Nanz - April 14, 2020 at 09:27 AM

SM

I'm sorry to hear of your friend and classmate's death. We're at home. Please call when you can.

Sheila Morris - April 14, 2020 at 06:11 PM

CS

“ 3 files added to the tribute wall



Cathy Smith - April 14, 2020 at 07:33 AM

JR

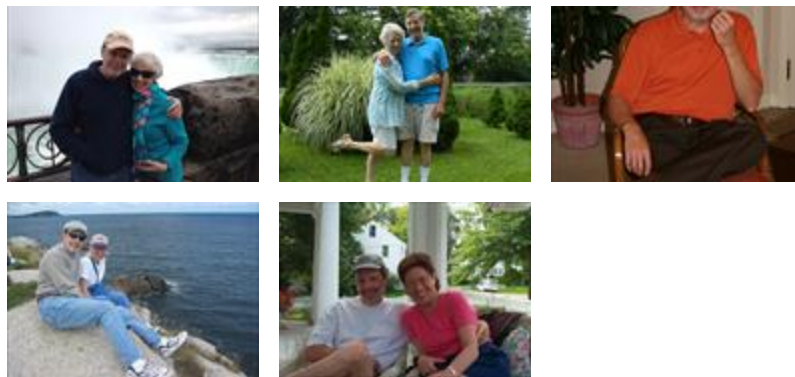
We were so sorry to hear of Pat's sudden passing. Pat was a kind, gentle, thoughtful man dedicated to his faith and especially to all the organizations he worked for and with. We shared in many of his activities where his kindness and commitment were always present. The last event we shared with Pat was when Art McDonald came to town to introduce his new book "A Progressive Voice in the Catholic Church-- the Association of Pittsburgh Priests." Pat was truly a progressive voice in the Catholic Church. Condolences to Ginny and the rest of their wonderful family.

John Haer and Joni Rabinowitz

Joni Rabinowitz - April 14, 2020 at 12:27 PM

BS

“ 6 files added to the album Memories Album



Bob Salen - April 13, 2020 at 09:07 PM