



Dr. Gerald Christian Keller Sr.

April 24, 1934 - December 21, 2020

Dr. Gerald Christian Keller, 86, a man of great faith, died peacefully at home on December 21, 2020. Jerry, as he was lovingly called by friends and family, was a devoted husband of 61 years to Joan Arnold Keller, (deceased May 2019), loving and supportive father to his children and grandchildren, and civic leader both locally and nationally. Jerry graduated from Jesuit High School, Loyola University, and LSU Medical School New Orleans. Jerry began his medical calling as a Family Practice Physician in the U.S. Army where he and Joan moved from Louisiana to Tacoma Washington to Kitzingen and Heidelberg Germany. He moved to Mandeville in 1963 to practice family medicine with Dr. Roy Gregory (affectionately known as Uncle Roy), where he raised his growing family.

Jerry soon became active serving on many school and local boards at Our Lady of the Lake Church and School, St. Scholastica Academy, and St. Paul School as well as 4th Ward, Mandeville Chamber of Commerce and bank boards. He served as medical team doctor to both Mandeville High School and St. Paul School. Jerry was an active member of the Knights of Columbus, the OLL Men's Club and the OLL Choir. Jerry was an Associate Professor at LSU Medical Center, New Orleans. Locally, Jerry served as Mandeville Town Council Member and Mayor, Pro Tem from 1968-1980.

Professionally, Jerry was very active with the American Academy of Family Physicians, serving on commissions and holding all offices at the state level including president and nationally serving as vice-president of the AAFP. His passion was serving as chair on the Task Force on Rural Health and expanding Family Practice as a specialty to medical students who might serve as rural doctors. Jerry served as St. Tammany Parish Hospital Chief of Staff and Medical Director of Lacombe Nursing Home, Pontchartrain Health Care Center, and Heritage Manor Nursing Home. In 1985, after joining Ochsner, Jerry became Associate Chair of the Department of Family Medicine and in 1997 Acting Chair.

Jerry and his partner Dr. Gregory were instrumental in first expanding St. Tammany Parish Hospital and later expanding Ochsner to the Northshore where their picture hangs in the Northshore Clinic lobby. Jerry received many accolades and awards throughout his career

including AAFP President's Award, A. H. Robins Award, Good Housekeeping Doctor of the Year, and many others. He was greatly devoted to his patients. His patients have continued to express to his family their gratitude and appreciation for his personal nature and for his medical care.

His most cherished award was receiving the Order of the St. Louis Award with his wife, Joan, also a devoted Catholic and vested in serving her community. This award highlights a lifetime of lay ministry.

Jerry and Joan shared many great friends from their primary years, military days, and during the many years they lived in Mandeville, where they made their home. They shared church, caroling, camping, travel, playing bridge, bowling but most importantly tennis with these cherished friends.

After retirement, Jerry ate lunch every Wednesday with a group of friends affectionately known as "The Grumpy Old Men" whom we owe a debt of gratitude for their continued care and company even when it was difficult for Jerry.

Dr. Keller is preceded in death by his wife Joan Arnold Keller, his daughter Sharon Marie Keller, his parents Dewey Cornelius Keller Sr. and Aurelie Weber Keller, and his brothers Roger Keller and Dewey Keller Jr. He is survived by his children: Gerald (Chris) Keller Jr., (wife Marilyn); John Keller (wife Midge); Jennifer Walkenford (husband Jon; Jody Birotte (husband Byron), Daniel Keller (wife Wendy), Scott Keller, Roger Keller II (wife Allyson), Joan (Joni) Keller, and Greg Keller (wife Bethany). He is also survived by two grandchildren, Remy (husband Jonathan) and Charles (Mac), who he and Joan raised as their own. Jerry is survived by his loving 30 grandchildren (their spouses), 13 great-grandchildren and a host of adoring nieces and nephews. Jerry and Joan were friends, surrogate parents and grandparents to countless others in the Mandeville area.

A public wake will be held Monday 6pm to 9pm at Our Lady of the Lake Church, 312 Lafitte Street, Mandeville, Louisiana 70448. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, face mask and social distancing are required to attend visitation. A private family mass will be held at a later date. We appreciate our friends' understanding of COVID-19 precautions needed to be taken at this time.

As a family we thank Notre Dame Hospice, Trudy Hall, Jewel Brown and Jazzmin Morris. In addition, we thank Mandeville Bake Shop for keeping us in donuts, Elizabeth Cordes, Mary Adams, Landon Washington, and La Lou for the countless meals for years, and Joni our sister who lived with and cared for both our parents at their end of life.

In lieu of flowers and as an expression of sympathy, memorial contributions may be sent to Kickin' Parkinson's, a Team Fox in support of the Michael J. Fox Foundation located at 3500 N. Causeway Blvd. Metairie, LA. 70002 or <http://www.kickinparkinsons.com>.

The Keller family invites you to share thoughts, fond memories, and condolences online at E. J. Fielding Funeral Home Guest Book at <http://www.ejfieldingfh.com>.

Events

DEC **Wake** 06:00PM - 09:00PM

28

Our Lady of the Lake Catholic Church
312 Lafitte St., Mandeville, LA, US, 70448

Comments



“ I have just learned of the loss that the Keller family and the Mandeville community have suffered. I am truly sorry for everyone's loss. Rest on peace, Doctor.

William Blythe

William Blythe - March 30 at 08:15 PM



“ Dr. Keller was devoted to the Mandeville community, a Christian family man, a good friend to many and the city of Mandeville. His presence was felt everywhere. In the early years in Mandeville, he was a community leader beyond political involvement. He will be remembered in meaningful ways. My sympathy to his family.

Paul Spitzfaden, Jr. - January 06 at 05:35 PM



“ I was very sad to hear the news about Dr. Keller. He will always be the best doctor I ever had! I hope he is up in heaven playing tennis with my parents..... My prayers and thoughts go with his family in this difficult time.

Christine Klebba - January 04 at 12:24 PM



“ Many prayers for the Keller family. Dr.Keller will be dearly missed. He was an amazing physician, father, husband and friend to many. He is with the love of his life watching over their dear family! Much love from Tommy and Kelly Grunditz (and the Shea Family)

Kelly and Tommy Grunditz - December 30, 2020 at 06:38 PM



“ Our heartfelt condolences to all the Kellers.

Patrick and Christi Ferry - December 30, 2020 at 03:47 PM



“ Drs. Gregory and Keller were my personal doctors as I grew up here in Mandeville. After graduation I came to work with them in the Mandeville office. They were so unique and loving people. He cared deeply for his patients. I learned so much working with them for a few years. Prayers for the familys.

TONYA MARIE JORDAN - December 29, 2020 at 06:41 PM



“ Our thoughts and prayers to the entire Keller family. May you all be comforted during this difficult time. ~Bobby and Patsy LaPlante

Patsy and Bobby LaPlante - December 29, 2020 at 01:54 PM



“ My deepest condolences to the family members of Dr. Jerry Keller. Having never had the opportunity to meet Dr. Keller, I have the pleasure of knowing two of his sons who are great family men themselves and who regularly give back to the community in which they live. After reading Dr. Keller's obituary, there is no doubt that this faith-based man was greatly admired by his family, friends, patients and, his entire community. He will always be remembered by what he gave back to the world, which, determines a 'life well-lived'. Dr. Keller gave much of himself to his community; may you rest in peace!

Bonnie Eades

Bonnie Eades - December 29, 2020 at 11:39 AM



“ We first met Jerry & Joan in 2000. Some people come into your lives and leave footprints on your heart...we are blessed to have Jerry's footprints on our hearts. Our thoughts and prayers to the family at this time. Much love, Patte and Nathan Titus

Patte Titus - December 28, 2020 at 09:23 PM



“ I have so many wonderful memories of both Dr. and Mrs. Keller. Every Christmas Eve the Keller and Buchholz family would get together and Mrs. Keller would bring Rum Cakes for everyone. I still make her famous Rum Cakes every Christmas. Dr. Keller always had such a joyful smile.

Melanie Dalmado

Melanie Dalmado - December 28, 2020 at 05:28 PM



“ Our hearts go out to the Keller Family.
Dr. Keller was one of a kind, his legacy will live on forever
A Mass Intention will be at St. Monica's Church
Edmond, Okla.
Love,
The Greenlee Family

Joyce Greenlee - December 28, 2020 at 04:41 PM



“ Dr. Keller was more than a neighbor and doctor to me, he was a close friend. He and I shared many hours riding bikes along the Trailhead. i also enjoyed teaching his daughters dancing. He will be sorely missed.
Marian Rousset

Marian Rousset - December 28, 2020 at 04:17 PM



“ Please accept my deepest sympathy and wishing the family peace, comfort and encouragement during this time. A friend of Chris. Sincerely, Eric Schouest

Eric Schouest - December 28, 2020 at 03:52 PM



“ Sentiments of Serenity Spray was purchased for the family of Dr. Gerald Christian Keller Sr..



December 28, 2020 at 10:50 AM



“ It is an honor to have known Dr. Keller as my physician, neighbor, and friend. "Jerry" will be sadly missed by me and thousands of others.
Karl Thomas Bubrig, Sr.

Karl T Bubrig - December 28, 2020 at 10:16 AM



“ So very sorry for your loss. I called on Dr Keller for many years back in the day and he was always so nice to me and very appreciative. Went out of his way to make me feel welcomed in his clinic. He was a real prince!

Jennifer Jung - December 27, 2020 at 08:38 PM



“ Both of us had a good feeling when we had Dr. Keller as our doctor. He was a giant asset to our community!
Patty and Frank Massara

Frank Massara - December 27, 2020 at 06:38 PM



“ Dr Keller was an outstanding doctor, husband, father, and friend. It was Al's and my privilege to have his both as a doctor and a friend. He stitched up every one of my children at least once. Many of his children and ours were and still are close .They enjoy good friendships, My daughter Karen was good friends to Sharon all during school years. Kevin and John are still friends, as is Chris, Kevin's wife, and Jennifer. When we need banking assistance Chris Keller is always at hand. The children are following their parents' example.

Gerry will be happy reuniting with Joan. They were a wonderful couple here and will continue this relationship in heaven.

Al and Diane Kramer

DIANE KRAMER - December 27, 2020 at 01:03 PM



“ Mary Beth and Dennis Fangman purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Dr. Gerald Christian Keller Sr..



Mary Beth and Dennis Fangman - December 27, 2020 at 11:12 AM



“ He treated my family until he retired. We all admired him. He made a very gutsy call that saved my life. It was a priveledge to have known and been treated by him. We don't have enough guys like Gerald Keller in this world.

Bryan Gowland - December 27, 2020 at 10:52 AM



“ I was lucky enough to grow up in Mandeville and spent a lot of time at the Keller house. Dr. Keller and Mrs. Keller always made a point of greeting me and making sure we were on the right path as young men. Many great memories and I will miss him.

Doug Durand

Doug Durand - December 27, 2020 at 10:06 AM



“ Though we have never met, I have heard nothing but awesome things about you from Mrs. Jennifer. The entire Keller family in my prayers.

-Elvie

Elvie - December 26, 2020 at 03:30 PM



“ I first knew Dr. Keller as a patient during summers spent in Mandeville. I then had the chance to teach Jennifer and Jody at SSA. The love he had for his family was always evident especially at Father/daughter dances. The Mandeville community benefitted from his presence in it. The entire Keller family is in my prayers as God welcomes “Jerry” home. Hana Jeansonne

Hana Jeansonne - December 26, 2020 at 02:46 PM



“ I first met Jerry Keller and Roy Gregory 35 years ago. They both became dear friends because that is the kind of people that they are. Jerry has been a role model for me in so many ways. He treated his patients with dedication and respect. His smile and the healing touch of his hands were examples to all of us as core skills of the Family Doctor. He was a leader and pioneer in Family Medicine in St. Tammany Parish, in Louisiana and at the national level as Vice President of the American Academy of Family Physicians. He was also an important part of establishing the Department of Family Medicine at Ochsner Clinic.

His faith in God showed itself in his medical practice as well as in his many giving ministries such as the St. Tammany Parish Food Bank and the American Academy of Family Physicians Foundation. He was an example to me and helped me to get acquainted with the St. Tammany medical community. He invited me to share in his family Christmas dinners when I was on call for the hospital. The love of his family was uplifting. He showed me the way to gradually retire but still be able to provide care for my patients. We had many conversations about our Catholic faith and how it influenced our practice of medicine.

Jerry was one of the most distinctive, memorable people I have ever known and I am sure that a bit of his spirit will live on in all of us who knew him.

Dan Jens

Daniel Jens - December 26, 2020 at 12:02 PM



“ We are so very fortunate to have known and worked with Jerry Keller for most of our wonderful years on this beautiful world He has been and will continue to be in our memories one of the best men we've ever known and his and Joans children are all following closely in their footsteps We love them all so very much Uncle Gred and AuntJackie

roy gregory - December 25, 2020 at 02:16 PM



“ With love, the Kaufman's and Keller's purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Dr. Gerald Christian Keller Sr..



With love, the Kaufman's and Keller's - December 24, 2020 at 08:11 PM



“ I was lucky enough to see Uncle Jerry on the lakefront riding his bike with Joanie last year. He was laughing , enjoying the morning and directing us both. He gave me a heck of a workout, as I was not on a bike at the time. A pillar of the community , my Dads best friend and an empathetic humanitarian who, despite all he had to do, always had time for anyone who reached out to him . I wish I could be with you all, my heart and love go out to each of you. Dr. Gerald Keller, Uncle Jerry... certainly lived a full, positive and enriching life , and left an indelible legacy. Truly a life well lived...Love you- Leah Gregory

Leah Gregory - December 24, 2020 at 05:19 PM



“ I had the pleasure of having three of his beautiful daughters on a synchronized swimming team, late 70's early 80's, Jennifer, Jody, and Joni. Jerry and Joan were always so supportive of that endeavor. My memories will always be good ones. Jane Kolb

Jane Kolb - December 24, 2020 at 03:20 PM



“ Myra Cousin lit a candle in memory of Dr. Gerald Christian Keller Sr.



Myra Cousin - December 24, 2020 at 01:41 PM



“ Condolences to the Keller family. I am lost for words. Dr. Keller touch so many peoples life and I am so blessed to have been one of those people. I Love my Keller family Myra Cousin Crutchfield

Myra Cousin - December 24, 2020 at 01:50 PM



“ Condolences to the Keller family. I was at Loyola with Joan and Gerald and was so happy to reunite with them many years later in Mandeville. He was my doctor until his retirement. Such a caring physician and person. I know he is resting in peace.

Marilyn Stamm - December 24, 2020 at 12:54 PM



“ We will all miss Dr Keller. My 1st encounter with him was in the clinic on Causeway Blvd. He and Dr Gregory were so laid back but so so professional. In later years I visited him and Ms Keller at STPH. I was able to share prayers with them. Peace to Dr Keller, Ms Keller and the family...Chaplain Mike Binnings

Mike Binnings - December 24, 2020 at 09:15 AM



“ Love, Rosine and Clint Dougherty purchased the Divine Peace Bouquet for the family of Dr. Gerald Christian Keller Sr..



Love, Rosine and Clint Dougherty - December 24, 2020 at 05:58 AM



“ What a fantastic legacy Jerry leaves behind! From his professional life to his personal life, Jerry somehow managed to continue to set such an amazing example of giving to others and still finding the time to raise such a loving family.

Jerry (and Joan) were always such generous and loving people and welcomed us into their home with open arms. It was always a fun time at the Keller house! We are so proud of our son-in-law, Greg Keller, and how he was raised to be such a good man.

We will miss you, Jerry...but we are so happy that you are reunited with Joan and watching over all of us...protecting and guiding us from above.

....Sleep in heavenly peace.....

Rosine & Clint Dougherty

Rosine Dougherty - December 24, 2020 at 05:53 AM



“ I was sick and had to see the Dr. Dr.'s Keller and Gregory had an office on Aurora St. across from what is now the Mandeville Jr High School. They were in the middle of moving to the new office at 2810 Florida St. So we went over there to see him. Did he say, "Not now, were moving?" No indeed, he saw me and now I can always say that I was the first patient to be seen in the new office!!!! I'll miss this Dr. very much!!!

Karen Johnston Williams - December 23, 2020 at 09:55 PM



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Dr. Gerald Christian Keller Sr..



December 23, 2020 at 04:14 PM



“ I was so sad to hear this news - Dr & Mrs Keller (and the whole family) were a very bright spot in my years growing up in Mandeville. I hope the fond memories you have will sustain you in this time, and bring a warm smile to your faces in the future. Know that we are thinking of you all, and sending good thoughts.

Tom Hughston - December 23, 2020 at 02:52 PM