



## Joseph M. Odell

October 4, 2016

Joseph M. Odell, 81, of Hartford, CT, died Tuesday (October 4, 2016) at home after a courageous battle with cancer. He was born and raised in New Haven, the son of George J. and Mary (Gilligan) Odell, where he attended Hill House High School. After a stint working as a draftsman, he left New Haven to enter St. Thomas Seminary in Bloomfield, CT before graduating from St. Bernard College in Rochester, NY with a B.A. in Philosophy. He then travelled to Belgium where he earned a M.A. from the National Catholic University of Louvain. He returned to Connecticut where he was stationed as a parish priest at St. Gertrude Church in Windsor and then in Meriden, before being transferred to New Haven to minister New Haven's Latino community. While in New Haven he directed and expanded Centro San José from a street front to a large multi-service community center. While there, he developed youth programs, residential substance abuse services, citywide ESL and bilingual education and Hispanic organizing programs. He subsequently served as pastor of New Haven's St. John The Evangelist Church. While there he founded the Casa Otoñal program, culminating in the design and construction of Casa Otoñal, a large housing complex for seniors, in collaboration with the architect César Pelli, and founded Casa Otoñal a program. He in 1984 he left the priesthood and continued to work in the social service sector—primarily with the State of Connecticut's Mental Health and Addiction Services. He retired from the State in 2007.

He is survived by his loving wife and partner of more than 31 years, Luisa M. Peschiera-Odell of Hartford, by his stepchildren Patrick Cullina of New York, Paul Cullina of Ivoryton, CT, Christopher Cullina of Portland, OR, Susana Cullina of Providence, RI, and Matthew Cullina and his wife Virginia Hopkins, also of Providence, and by his grandchildren Tanner McCulloch of Atlanta, GA, Katherine, Sofia and Michael Cullina of Deep River, CT and Ciara, Alexis and Emilia Hopkins-Cullina of Providence. He is also survived by his brother and sister-in-law George and Marthe Odell of North Augusta, SC, nieces Marcie Burnip of Johnston, SC, Katryn Mason of Chattanooga, TN and Charlotte Estabrook and her husband Mark of Signal Mountain, TN and nephews George Odell, Jr. and his wife Suzanne of Arnold, MD, and John Odell and his wife Cher of Gig Harbor, WA by grandnieces and grandnephews Will, Jake and Molly Burnip, Caroline and Mark Estabrook, Katie Jenkins and Jessica Suddeth, Emily, Garrett and Michael Odell and four great-grandnephews and great-grandnieces, and was predeceased by grandnephew Scott Odell. He was eternally generous and incredibly loving man who was loved by family by whom he will be deeply missed.

Visiting hours will take place at Molloy Funeral Home, 906 Farmington Avenue, West Hartford, CT on Monday, October 10 between the hours of 5:00 and 8:00pm. A memorial service will follow on Tuesday, October 11 at 11am, at Molloy Funeral Home. Joe's family thanks all of the family, friends, physicians and care-givers who supported him through his illness and requests that, in lieu of flowers, donations can be made to The Perú Fund, a group that supports the work of Wings of Hope (Ailes de L'Esperance), via their website ([www.perufund.org](http://www.perufund.org)) or by mail: Perú Fund, PO Box 2722, Amherst, MA 01002.

# Previous Events

## Calling Hours

OCT **10**. 5:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Molloy Funeral Home  
906 Farmington Ave  
West Hartford, CT 06119  
(860) 232-1322

## Service

OCT **11**. 11:00 AM (ET)

Molloy Funeral Home  
906 Farmington Ave  
West Hartford, CT 06119  
(860) 232-1322

# Tribute Wall

LR

“ *LINDSEY RODRIGUEZ lit a candle in memory of Joseph M. Odell*



**LINDSEY RODRIGUEZ** - October 10, 2016 at 05:07 PM

LR

“ *R.I.P FATHER JOSEPH M.ODELL YOU WILL BE TRULY MISSED WE WILL ALWAYS REMEMBER THE SWEET MAN THAT YOU WHERE*

**LINDSEY RODRIGUEZ** - October 10, 2016 at 05:07 PM

MA

“ *On behalf of Margarita, Miriam, Rosa and Maribel. We love you dearly.*



**Maribel Aguilar** - October 10, 2016 at 03:57 PM

 Lucas Ortiz

“ *Lucas Ortiz lit a candle in memory of Joseph M. Odell*



**Lucas Ortiz** - October 10, 2016 at 03:08 PM

BT

“ *Blanca S Torres lit a candle in memory of Joseph M. Odell*



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**Blanca S Torres** - October 10, 2016 at 11:04 AM

OR

“ *So many memories if my years in New Haven with Fa. Odell. Yes for us he will always be Fa. Odell. He did so much for the Hispanic community, he made house visits to our place on East St to prepare us for marriage, Centro San Jose was a place with many services a place I visited many times. Our love and prayer are with him and his family. Gracias .*

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**Olga I Rivera** - October 10, 2016 at 08:52 AM

MN

“ *My thoughts and prayers are with you all. Joe was a kind soul and a great "older cousin!" Growing up I'd call him Father Joe and he'd say "Mary, you can call me Joe, we're family!" Rest in peace Joe as you are reunited with the Gilligan/Odell/Carey Clan!  
Love, Mary Bevins-Nichols*

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**mary nichols** - October 06, 2016 at 07:39 PM