



## Benjamin (Don) Marion Donaldson

October 4, 1937 - January 26, 2025

BENJAMIN (DON) MARION DONALDSON USAF, Major Ret. died on January 26th, 2025, at his home in Oppelo, Arkansas.

He was born October 4, 1937 in Pine Bluff, AR, the son of Olen Walton Donaldson and Helen Dixon Donaldson Kraft. He was preceded in death by his parents, stepfather Kenneth Milton Kraft Sr., stepsister Kay Kraft Crocker, and brother Robert (Bob) Donaldson. He is survived by his wife of 61 years, Frances (Fran) Grabher Donaldson, son Gregory Keith Donaldson (Christie), daughter Stephanie Donaldson Fox, four grandsons Chandler (Anna) and Adam Donaldson and John and Andrew Fox, and brother Kenneth Milton Kraft of Beaufort, S.C.

He graduated from Pine Bluff High School and was a graduate of Henderson State University in Arkadelphia AR. Major Donaldson served his country for 22 years in the U.S. Air Force. During the Vietnam War he was a Courier Officer in support of Intelligence activities. Following retirement from the Air Force Ben returned to Little Rock AR and was an Investment Counselor for Dean Witter. Due to health limitations, he began a new career at St. Francis House, an outreach service of the Episcopal Church which provided assistance to homeless veterans and to Federal prisoners in transition to society. After working as a staff member for nine years he became Senior Counselor for the substance abuse program. While living in Little Rock, Ben was an active

participant in Toastmasters International and Lions International.

When Ben and Fran retired, they moved back to the Oppelo area, returning to his wife's roots. Ben was an active member of St Elizabeth Catholic Church, Past President of the Parish Council and a believer and active member in World Wide Marriage Encounter. He was a volunteer with the Literacy Program. He was an ardent reader, enjoyed writing short stories and when Fran was not around, he played classic Jazz and light classical music very loudly.

Ben loved God, his family and his country.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Wounded Warrior Project, National Processing Center, P.O. Box 758541, Topeka KS 66675.

Visitation will be at 10 a.m., followed by a Memorial Mass at 10:30 a.m. on Saturday February 22, 2025, St. Elizabeth Catholic Church - Oppelo, AR (89 St. Elizabeth's Rd, Oppelo, AR 72110)

Ben's desire was to give his body to medical science. Burial will be at a later date at St Elizabeth Cemetery.

The family would like to offer special thanks to Rhonda Cody and Nikki Long, his caregivers for many years, to Gentiva hospice, and to all of our friends and family from St. Elizabeth's Catholic Church.

# Cemetery Details

## St. Elizabeth Cemetery

89 St. Elizabeth Rd  
Morrilton, AR 72110

# Previous Events

## Visitation

FEB 22. 10:00 AM - 10:30 AM (CT)

St. Elizabeth Catholic Church  
89 St. Elizabeth Rd.  
Morrilton, AR 72110

## Memorial Service

FEB 22. 10:30 AM (CT)

St. Elizabeth Catholic Church  
89 St. Elizabeth Rd.  
Morrilton, AR 72110

# Tribute Wall

KB

“ I was so sorry to hear about the passing of Don. I am so sorry that I lost touch of Don and Fran over the years. In Don’s obituary, I was not surprised to learn about all the activities he was involved with. He always cared and helped so many people. Don and Fran were two of my biggest supporters during my divorce from my first husband. Looking back on that time, more than thirty-five years ago, was one of the hardest and saddest periods of my life. Don and Fran showed me kindness, love and encouragement. And they kept telling me that everything would work out; something that was hard for me to believe at that time. Today, I am still grateful to them. I hope it brings your family comfort to know that many thoughts and prayers are with you.  
Kathy Bradley

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**Kathy BRADLEY** - February 26, 2025 at 10:12 AM

JP

“ Fran, I'm so sorry to hear of Ben's passing, Praying for you and your family.

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**Jettie and Jettie Parrish** - February 18, 2025 at 08:52 AM