

## Jay Elpert

Jay Elpert was an absolute pillar in his family, in this cathedral community, at the workplace, among the Knights of Columbus, and for all of us who came to know him. God surely decided Jay needed a large physique to accommodate the largeness of his heart and the size of his emotional presence whenever people saw that Jay was near. He calmed the waters of your life with an easygoing demeanor and pleasant voice that told funny stories and bestowed endless wisdom. When Jay was around, people just felt better about life.

He served this cathedral community in many ways. On Sundays he was one of the first people you'd see upon entering the building, ready to greet you and help in any way. He pledged to our annual campaigns, helped in our gift shop, and served on the finance council, bringing his decades of sales experience to our humble needs. Our doors open to those who are blessed and those who are troubled; Jay was the right person to greet them all. As a faithful member of the Knights of Columbus, he found a community of men who shared his values of prayer, service and friendship. He embodied those ideals and offered a role model for others seeking to improve themselves.

Jay loved his family, and they loved him. There was no artifice in this; he genuinely enjoyed time with them at home or out in the city. They have lost not just a wonderful man, father and grandfather; they've lost a dear friend.

Jay visited the sick and served food to the homeless. He was the accidental videographer who captured one of the most memorable moments in my life when, here at the cathedral, I sat at a broken-down piano and accompanied Yo-Yo Ma before an inattentive audience of homeless men more focused on a much needed hot meal than on live music from the world's most famous cellist. Jay was there to feed the hungry. When his own health began to falter about five years ago, he acted responsibly, taking care of himself while he continued to help others.

Jay continually showed other people the way. He could do that because he himself had come to know the way, the truth, and the life that is Jesus Christ. Jesus used those words for himself in conversation with the apostle Thomas at the Last Supper. Jesus was also describing the future using the metaphor of a house. He said, "In my Father's house there are many dwelling places. If there were not, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you?" Jesus described the purpose of his own life as carpentry and interior design. You might say that throughout his ministry and beyond his death, Jesus brought the right color of life to his disciples. He was a *Farbenmeister*, a master of colors.

Jay liked that title. It fit him not just because of his work, but because of his life. Jay brought color to us. He made us laugh, he brought comfort, he gave us hope, and he showed us the way—not his own way, but the way he followed, the way of Christ. The world is a better place because of Jay's life, and we pray that that he will find open to him the dwelling place Christ has prepared. We ourselves can best express our gratitude for the gift of Jay by following the way, the truth and the life.

Saturday, July 6, 2024