



## Deacon Michael "Mike" E. Helfter

February 3, 1948 - October 30, 2025

[www.becherkluesner.com](http://www.becherkluesner.com)  
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Deacon Michael "Mike" E. Helfter, age 77, of Jasper, Indiana, passed away at 7:53 a.m. on Thursday, October 30, 2025, at home surrounded by family.

Deacon Mike was born in Osage, Iowa, on February 3, 1948, to Donald J. and Marilyn E. (Reed) Helfter.

He grew up and was raised in a devout Catholic family, in New Haven, Iowa, where he helped with the family turkey farm, Helfter Turkeys. During his time on the farm, he developed a deep bond with his grandfather, Lorenz Helfter, whom he worked aside for most of his life.

He attended St. Mary's Catholic School in New Haven, Iowa for 11 years, where he was an altar boy and participated in various activities at St. Peter's Catholic Church. He then graduated from Osage Iowa High School and started college at Iowa State University.

On October 28, 1966, he met his wife, Eileen Marie Kennedy on a hayride that was hosted at Iowa State University in Ames, Iowa, by the Newman Center in conjunction with the St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church and the Lutheran

Church. Their love grew out of their faith, and during their courtship, they attended Mass every day and were then married on January 13, 1968, at St. Thomas of Aquinas Church on the Iowa State University campus.

He was a United States Navy Veteran and was SFP3 LPD-3 USS La Salle from 1968-1972. While in the Navy, he was a Ship Fitter and was licensed in welding, electric, and plumbing work. Due to the death of his grandfather, Lorenz, he was honorably discharged two months early from the Navy to continue his work on the family farm until he and his wife moved to Jasper in 1978. Upon the move to Jasper, he worked for Bartley Feeder Service in Huntingburg, Indiana, for five years. He spent over 30 years with Agri-Central Sales in Huntingburg, where his expertise, dedication and kindness left a lasting impression on co-workers and customers alike.

In preparation for his Diaconate, he attended classes for four years, from 2001-2005, at Sarto Retreat House in Evansville and at St. Meinrad Seminary in St. Meinrad, Indiana. He was ordained by Bishop Gettelfinger on July 9, 2005. Since then, he was a Deacon for Holy Family Parish, serving with Fr. John Boeglin and now, Fr. Jeff Read. In preparation for the Holy Saturday services every year, he proclaimed the Holy Exsultet. He also assisted with Masses, Funerals, First Communion, and Confirmation, among many other spiritual development events and activities within the parish. He just celebrated his 20th anniversary of being ordained a Deacon on July 9, 2025.

As Deacon, Mike lived a life of service, compassion, and faith. Whether at the altar, or delivering his candid and heartfelt homilies, visiting the sick, or comforting the grieving, he exemplified Christ's love through action. His legacy continues in the hearts of all who were touched by his ministry.

He and his wife, Eileen were faithful members of Holy Family Catholic Church in Jasper, Indiana, where they did Eucharistic Minister, lector, and altar boy

training, and provided marriage preparation for couples. He was lay director for CHRP, Christ Renews His Parish (now known as Welcome), which is open for both men and women. He was also a member of the Holy Name Society, the American Legion Post #147, a 4th degree Knight of the Jasper K of C, and the Navy Club. He was a volunteer at Memorial Hospital for many years, where he visited the sick and distributed communion as a Eucharistic Minister. He dedicated many volunteer hours in helping and training the counselors at Anderson Woods.

Deacon Mike enjoyed golfing and driving and giving rides on his ATV. He took so much time to care for so many people and served as caregiver for his mother-in-law and father-in-law for many years. He especially loved spending time with his family, children, and grandchildren.

Surviving is his wife of 57 years, Eileen Helfter, Jasper, IN, two children, Todd (Anne) Helfter, Summerville, SC, and Ryan E. (Rui) Helfter, Edison, NJ, one son-in-law, Ronald "Ron" Wagner, Salem, Indiana, six grandchildren, Mark, Galen, and Kaitlin Helfter, Justin and Dylan Wagner, and Ridley Helfter, siblings, Francis "Frank" (Joni) Helfter, of Iowa, Theresa "Terry" (Dale) Newton, of Iowa, Ellen (Mark) Vogel, of Arizona, Henry "Hank" Helfter (Kevin Anderson), of Florida, Mary Helfter, of Iowa, Rebecca "Becky" Helfter, of Arizona, and Tony (Kristy) Helfter, of Iowa, and many nieces and nephews.

Preceding him in death is one daughter, Rhonda Helfter-Wagner and one grandson, Tyler Robert Wagner, who both passed the day of Tyler's baptism on August 17, 1997. Also preceding him in death is one brother, Kenneth Helfter, and one brother-in-law, Bill Thompson.

A Mass of Christian Burial for Deacon Michael "Mike" E. Helfter will be held at 10:00 a.m. on Saturday, November 8, 2025, at Holy Family Catholic Church in

Jasper, Indiana, with burial to follow at a later date in St. Peter's Cemetery in New Haven, Iowa. The American Legion Post #147 will conduct military honors at Holy Family Catholic Church after the Mass.

A visitation will be held from 3:00-7:00 p.m. on Friday, November 7, 2025, at the Becher-Kluesner Downtown Chapel in Jasper, Indiana. Holy Family Parish will pray a rosary at 2:30 p.m. at the funeral home. The Dubois County Navy Club, Ship #90, will conduct a memorial service at 6:00 p.m.

In lieu of flowers, due to Eileen's allergy, memorial contributions may be made to Holy Family Parish, St. Meinrad Archabbey, or to the wishes of the family.

Online condolences may be made at [www.becherkluesner.com](http://www.becherkluesner.com).

# Cemetery Details

## St. Peter's Cemetery

New Haven, IA 62867

# Previous Events

## Visitation

NOV 7. 3:00 PM - 7:00 PM (ET)

Becher & Kluesner Funeral Home - Downtown  
214 East 7th Street  
Jasper, IN 47546  
(812) 482-4141  
email@becherkluesner.com

## Visitation

NOV 8. 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM (ET)

Holy Family Catholic Church  
950 Church Ave  
Jasper, IN

## Mass of Christian Burial

NOV 8. 10:00 AM (ET)

Holy Family Catholic Church  
950 Church Ave  
Jasper, IN



# Tribute Wall

KK

“ My deepest condolences, dear cousin Eileen. I happened upon this sad news looking for your address online. I am so very sorry. I echo Jami's sentiments below. He no longer feels earthly pain and resides surrounded by our loved ones who've passed, in eternal bliss with our Father.

Kara Lee Kennedy - December 09, 2025 at 04:22 PM

JC

“ My sincere condolences to my cousin Eileen. I just heard of the passing of Mike. Please know my thoughts and prayers are with you. Mike is no longer in pain and is at peace with our heavenly father. God Bless and much love to you. Jami Kennedy Clevenger

Jami Clevenger - December 09, 2025 at 02:08 PM

SC

“ Our deepest sympathies to Eileen and the entire family. We are so sorry for your loss. Dear Eileen and family, you are in our thoughts and prayers. Mike was such a loving father and grandfather. We have such cherished memories of our mutual visits. Thank you for your great hospitality. We thank God for the time we were gifted to spend with you this summer. May Mike rest in peace in God's loving arms. Love in Christ,  
Your German daughter Sonja & Harry Clauss with Nina & Tobi, Leila & Elias and grandpa Heinz Hueppe



Sonja Clauß - November 06, 2025 at 04:39 PM

SF

“ Dear Helfter Family, please accept my thoughts, prayers and condolences for you. I am not able to visit personally. I have always been thankful for Mike and all of you. Rest assured of my continued thought and prayers. Dear Eileen may our dearest Lord enfold you and yours in His amazing love, comfort, & strength as you walk the way of the cross without your beloved Mike.

Love in Christ,  
Sandy Fehribach

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**Sandy Fehribach** - November 06, 2025 at 10:18 AM

TH

“ 1 file added to the album Photos of Mike



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**Todd Helfter** - November 01, 2025 at 10:49 PM

BN

“ When my Mom and Dad passed away Mike and Eileen were there for me and my brother they will always be in my heart  
Hugs and prayers  
Brenda (McNallin) Nixon



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**Brenda Nixon** - October 31, 2025 at 01:47 PM

CM

*It is difficult to put in words what impact Mike Helfter had on me as his son-in-law and all other family members and friends he touched with his kind words and helping hand with a strong faith in God. A true example of this is when he made sure my siblings, other family members, and I would see our very sick sister in the nursing home in Princeton, Indiana. Because my truck literally died, Mike drove my siblings, niece, our Mom, and me to see Donna. This was such an immense act of kindness!! He has been like a second father to me, especially after the death of my wife and his daughter, Rhonda. He will forever have a lasting impact on me and those around him. We will miss you. Rest in peace!!-Ron Wagner, son-in-law of Mike Helfter*

**Carol ( Wagner) Medlock** - October 31, 2025 at 07:28 PM

CM

“ *Carol ( Wagner) Medlock sent a virtual gift in memory of Deacon Michael "Mike" E. Helfter*



**Carol ( Wagner) Medlock** - October 31, 2025 at 12:43 PM

CM

“ *Carol ( Wagner) Medlock lit a candle in memory of Deacon Michael "Mike" E. Helfter*



**Carol ( Wagner) Medlock** - October 31, 2025 at 12:42 PM

RH

“ TO THE HELFTER FAMILY:

OUR DEEPEST SYMPATHY TO YOUR  
FAMILY MEMBERS  
FROM ALL OF THE NEIGHBORS IN  
WHODERVILLE.

MAY HIS SOUL RISE TO HEAVEN WITH THE ANGELS,  
AND MAY GOD WATCH OVER HIS FAMILY MEMBERS.

SENDING OUR LOVE TO ALL ~~ REST IN PEACE, MIKE.



Rosie Henriott - October 31, 2025 at 12:02 PM

DW

*DEACON MIKE has been an outstanding Deacon. He will certainly be missed. He was very well liked he was pretty good at whatever he did. Our prayers are with the family and we know that Mike is in a very good place. Dcn Jim & Marilyn Woebkenberg.*

Dcn Jim & Marilyn Woebkenberg - October 31, 2025 at 12:41 PM

GC

*Deacon Mike, it was a pleasure getting to know you and Eileen during all the classes and retreats for the diaconate. Prayers for all the family and you, Mike. May you soon join your deacon brothers in heavenly peace. Ginny Cook*

Ginny Cook - October 31, 2025 at 07:12 PM

KF

*We are sorry to hear of Deacon Mike's passing. We are keeping Eileen in our thoughts and prayers. May you find peace and love through friends and family during this difficult time.*

*Noel and Kay Fleck*

Kay Fleck - November 02, 2025 at 01:04 PM