



## John Anthony Merino

June 29, 1972 - October 9, 2025

John Anthony Merino, known to friends and family as Anthony, passed away on October 9, 2025 in Fresno, CA. He was 53 years old.

Anthony was born on June 29, 1972 to parents John Merino and Janie Muñoz in Fresno, CA. He is described as a happy and loving child, who was known to be a travieso, or mischievous. He was doted on by his nanas and his tias, as he was only the second-born grandchild/nephew on his Muñoz side of the family, whereas he was the first-born grandchild/nephew on his Merino side. As the family grew, he spent countless time with his cousins who came after him.

He was a lifelong 49ers & Giants fan, a love which was fostered from spending his youth watching games with his uncle George. He also had a lifelong love of professional wrestling, with some of his favorite wrestlers being Macho Man Randy Savage, Ric Flair, Shawn Michaels, and his #1 favorite Eddie Guerrero. His fandom was so great that he would later train to become an independent pro-wrestler and later a referee, under the ring name of Tony Tequila, though his first— and perhaps greatest opponent—was his baby sister Carina, their matches held on many a couch and bedroom mattress. Anthony married his wife Grace on October 27, 1994, and passed on many of his hobbies to his children and grandchildren, who he loved and devoted his life to.

He is survived by his wife Grace Merino and their children Samantha Rodriguez, Jermaine Rodriguez, Josie Uribe, Aaron Rodriguez, Keana

Merino, Dolores Jane Merino, Kiara Amidala Merino, and Jarel Merino; his father John Merino and his mother Janie Muñoz-Tafoya, his dad Jose Tafoya, his sister Carina Gonzalez, his brothers Jared & Veloy Tafoya, and his eleven grandchildren and four great-children.

He is pre-deceased by his twin siblings Trisha & Eric Gonzalez-Muñoz, and daughter Raven Merino, in addition to his grandparents and many aunts and uncles.

His memorial service will be held on his favorite holiday—Halloween—on Friday, October 31st, 2025 from 11:30am at The Chapel of the Light at 1620 W Belmont Ave, Fresno, CA 93728, with reception to follow at a venue to be determined. As a tribute to his love of the holiday and his many fandoms, guests are encouraged to wear 49ers/Giants jerseys, as well as wrestling, super-hero (Batman!), and Star Wars T-shirts, or costumes to mark the holiday that would honor him.

# Previous Events

## Celebration of Life

OCT 31. 11:30 AM (PT)

Chapel of the Light  
1620 W. Belmont Avenue  
Fresno, CA 93728  
michael@chapelofthelight.com  
<http://www.chapelofthelight.com>

# Tribute Wall



“ *Beautiful in Blue* was purchased for the family of *John Anthony Merino*.



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October 31, 2025 at 10:22 AM