



## Joseph Donald Merial

April 30, 1990 - August 24, 2025

Joseph Merial, age 35, of Fresno, California, passed away on August 24, 2025. Born in Blythe, CA, Joseph lived a life full of love, laughter, and purpose. He was a devoted husband, father, son, brother, and friend whose presence lit up every room he entered. Joseph proudly served as a second-generation correctional officer, rising to the rank of Correctional Sergeant at a young age. In 2024, he bravely fought in the California wildfires, a testament to his courage and commitment to service. He was transitioning into a career in wildland forestry, where his passion for nature and resilience found new purpose. Beyond his professional life, Joseph was a passionate collector of vintage items and sports memorabilia. His hobby blossomed into a successful business, Mila & Los Mericals, which he lovingly gifted to his daughter Mila on her first birthday—a legacy of creativity and entrepreneurship. Joseph’s heart belonged to his family. He is survived by his beloved wife, Gisela, and their two daughters, Ava and Mila, who were the center of his world. He also leaves behind his father, Shawn—his daily confidant and greatest role model—his mother Diana, and his sister Sarah “Dodo,” whom he fiercely protected. Joseph was a cherished brother-in-law to Jason and a devoted son-in-law to Victoria, with whom he shared daily updates and warm conversations. A true romantic and social butterfly, Joseph dreamed of city life in San Francisco, loved trying new foods, and found joy in music, people-watching, and making friends. He expressed his love through homemade meals and laughter, often performing stand-up comedy to bring smiles to others. His favorite sports

teams—the Miami Dolphins and Los Angeles Dodgers—were part of his daily rhythm, and he found peace in building aquariums and admiring sea life. Among his proudest moments was cheering at his eldest daughter's t-ball game, envisioning Ava's future as an athlete. His legacy lives on in the values he instilled in his children: love, resilience, sports, and joy.

Joseph's memorial service will be held on Friday, September 19th, 2025, from 5:15 PM to 7:45 PM at Chapel of the Light, 1620 W. Belmont Ave, Fresno, CA 93722. His close friend, Miguel Corona, will officiate the service. All are welcome to attend and celebrate Joseph's life. Flowers may be sent directly to the funeral home. During his forestry graduation, Joseph concluded his graduation speech with a simple yet profound message: "Choose happiness and show up." Words that now echo as a guiding light for those he leaves behind. Joseph will be deeply missed and forever remembered by all who knew him. His love changed lives, and his memory will continue to inspire.

# Previous Events

## Visitation

SEP **19**. 5:15 PM - 7:45 PM (PT)

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

## Celebration of Life

SEP **19**. 6:00 PM (PT)

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

# Tribute Wall

MU

“ 8 files added to the tribute wall



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**Mariah Underwood** - September 28, 2025 at 10:59 AM

MU

“ 7 files added to the tribute wall

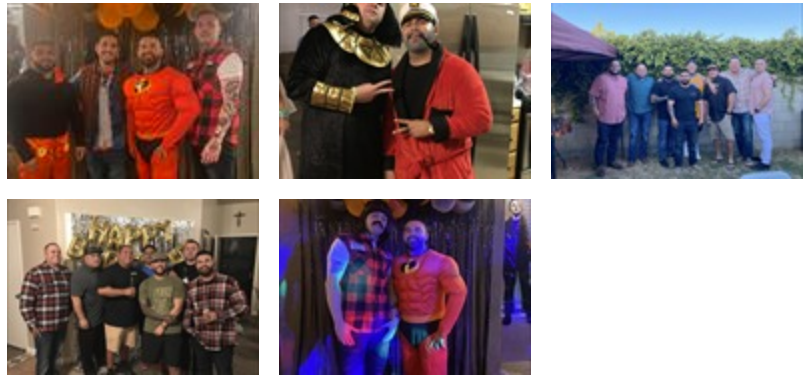


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**Mariah Underwood** - September 27, 2025 at 01:07 AM

DG

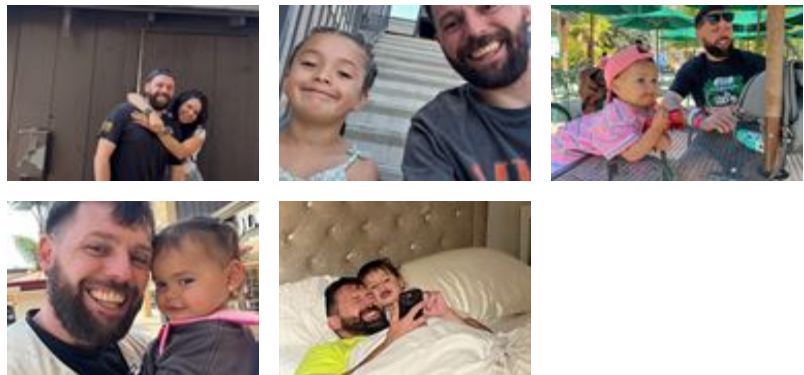
“ 10 files added to the tribute wall



Dexter Guzman - September 19, 2025 at 06:46 PM



“ 147 files added to the album Life Tributes



Chapel Of The Light Funeral Home and Mausoleum - September 19, 2025 at 05:09 PM

FU

“ From Vincent Upton and Denise Upton purchased the Beautiful Heart Bouquet for the family of Joseph Donald Merical.



From Vincent Upton and Denise Upton - September 18, 2025 at 06:33 PM

GM

“ *Gisela Mercial lit a candle in memory of Joseph Donald Mercial* ”



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**Gisela Mercial** - September 11, 2025 at 08:57 PM

GM

“ I waited my whole life to meet Joey, and when I did, I knew my heart had finally found its home. He was a sweet soul who loved without limits, and in his presence, I learned the true meaning of love and family. Joey didn't just change my life—he transformed it. He taught me that love is not just a feeling, but a way of living: with kindness, patience, and unwavering devotion. He had an unlimited patience and so many qualities I lacked and admired.

Every morning, Joey filled our home with music and the aroma of breakfast—his way of nurturing us with joy and care. You could feel the good vibes radiating from the kitchen as he danced between pans, lost in his rhythm, smiling at the world. He lived to talk, to laugh, to connect. His jokes lit up the room, and his laughter echoed through our walls like a warm embrace.

Joey was a true romantic, never losing faith in love. He admired elder couples, believing they held the secrets to lasting happiness. He loved unselfishly, always putting his three girls first—making sure we were happy before ever thinking of himself. His generosity wasn't just in what he gave, but in how deeply he cared.

He became my home. In his beautiful hazel eyes, I found peace. In his love, I discovered life. I dreamed of growing old with him, of raising a family together, of a lifetime filled with shared mornings and whispered goodnights. Though that dream was cut short, the love he gave me will live on forever.

Now I proudly wear his last name and love the two girls he gifted us.



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Gisela Merical - September 11, 2025 at 03:16 PM