



## Tony Rodarte

April 20, 1924 - October 20, 2023

Our beloved father, grandfather and great-grandfather passed away on October 20, 2023. He was 99 and 6 months young.

Tony, a native Californian was born on April 20, 1924. He was a Navy Veteran serving in World War II on the USS Ingersoll in the Pacific. Throughout his long life he worked as rancher, relator and entrepreneur in the San Joaquin Valley and restaurant owner in Oakland, California. He came to live in Texas ten years ago. Self-educated, he was a voracious reader and loved politics. He worked on numerous presidential campaigns including the campaigns of Adelaide Stevenson, John F. Kennedy and even in his late 80s, campaigned for Barack Obama. He worked alongside Cesar Chavez fighting for the civil rights of the farm laborer and worked to help migrants gain legal status during Reagan's Amnesty program. Tony and his wife were foster parents for several homeless boys and many persons have attested that his counseling and intervention changed the course of their lives for the better. In the 1940's he was president of the Club Gaona and member of the Knights of Columbus. He loved music, especially jazz, studied ballroom and salsa dancing and loved gathering with his family and friends. His friendly character, his wit and insatiable humor made him unforgettable to anyone who met him.

Tony was preceded in death by his wife Ophelia Rodarte; his parents Rita and Ernest Gray; his daughter Cynthia Duran; his sister June Bosquez; his brother

Jess Rodarte; his granddaughter Gina Rodarte and grandson, Graciano Rivera.

He is survived by his daughters Gloria Vanderbilt, Diana Rivera and her husband Jose Rivera, Evelyn Beltran, Delia Rodarte and Ayme Rodarte; grandchildren Danette Webb, Ruben Flores Rios II, Tizoc Rivera, Semilla Rivera, Maizal Rivera, Nazul Rivera, Christina Beltran, Leah Salinas-Preciado, Tony Duran, Lilly McCormick, Ismael Garcia-Rodarte, Aurora Vargas; 14 great-grandchildren.

He was loved and will be sorely missed.

A Memorial Mass will be held at Saint Alphonsus Catholic Church on Wednesday, November 15, 2023 at 10:00 a.m.

# Cemetery Details

## **Saint Peter's Cemetery**

264 N. Blythe Avenue  
Fresno, CA 93706

# Previous Events

## **Memorial Mass**

NOV 15. 10:00 AM (PT)

St. Alphonsus Catholic Church  
351 E. Kearney Blvd  
Fresno, CA 93706

# Tribute Wall

DA

“ *What I loved of Uncle Tony was his humor. The one I remember the most is: When Rita Faye was about 8 years old, and I was about nine years old. We were in Grandpa and Grandma's house. Rita Faye was standing at the door a few feet from there bedroom door, at the end to the Sofa. Uncle got some lotion out of a bottle and poured some in his right hand. He looks at me and said watch this. Uncle walks from the other end of the Sofa where I am watching T.V. He acts like he hacks real loud and cough/spit in to his right hand. Uncle then grabs Rita Fay's arm and smears the Lotion on her arm. Rita thinking it was Mucus screams in shock eyes bulging out. Uncle is laughing and I'm laughing. It was that kind of strenth that he showed me that made my life a better life.*

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**David** - November 05, 2023 at 03:34 AM