

## **Eulogy for... Richard J. MacDonald**

Good Morning. I'm Rick, actually Richard Jr. and today, again like so many before it, I couldn't be more proud of carrying my Dad's name. I loved and respected him deeply. He was my best friend. The outpouring of love and admiration for him over the past 24 hours has been absolutely inspiring and heart-warming.

On behalf of my brothers and sisters...Larry, David, Susan, Gary and Marybeth, our spouses who were just as much Dad's children and who he loved dearly, his (14) Grandchildren and (11) Great Grandchildren, his brother John and my Mom's sister Carolyn...

We thank you and we welcome you to our Celebration of Family, Friendship and Faith.

Today we honor, respect and remember a **Good-Good** man who touched and enriched all of our lives in so many different ways.

Let me try to put everyone, including myself at ease here. He did not want this to be a sad day in our lives. He really didn't. He told me so a couple of times and asked me to make sure I let all of you know that too.

So please, for him...for all of us...let's take a moment to shift our thoughts from how much we'll miss him to one of your own many funny, joking, laughing, happy and comical times that you shared with him...and there were many for all of us. So briefly...relive it...enjoy it and **SMILE!**

Whether you knew him as Dad, Bumpa, Richard, Mac, Uncle Mac, Dick or just Mr. MacDonald, **he was exactly** the same guy to us all. He was your trusted friend. You knew it and you felt it the moment you met him.

His disarming smile, great sense of humor and “gift of gab,” allowed him to quickly and **effortlessly** befriend just about every person he ever met. Young or old, family, friend, neighbor...friends of family, friends of neighbors, friends of friends of neighbors...if you were a warm body and crossed his path...he was your friend! He just had such a friendly, warm, upbeat, positive, non-judgmental and endearing personality. It was fun, adventuresome and always exciting to be his friend.

I can't begin to tell you how many times I have heard these five words...

**“I Just Love Your Dad!”**

There is simply no bigger compliment or testimonial to me and my brothers and sisters than those five words. How fortunate and wealthy we are to have heard those words over and over again for so many years.

Unfortunately time will not permit me to recount and retell even a fraction of his most memorable moments with all of you.

My Mom, his departed Shipmates and our Country have been patiently awaiting his arrival this morning at the MA National Cemetery on Cape Cod where he will receive full military honors for his Navy service to his country in WWII.

Most of you know how much he valued the friendships he forged with his Shipmates so many years ago and how passionate he was about ensuring those friendships were rekindled and enjoyed so many years later.

40 years after the war he and another Shipmate painstaking found and contacted 128 of his long-lost Shipmates. Year after year he organized the USS Metivier (DE-582) reunions that kept those very close friendships alive and then he made sure that as each departed, they were remembered and honored.

He was proud of being their friend and leader and they loved him for it. Today it's his turn and I know he couldn't be happier about today's reunion with his departed Shipmates.

I know he was very proud of my Navy career and accomplishments. I can't begin to tell you how fulfilling it was for me to have that common connection with him and to provide him such pride.

I have really struggled all week about how to approach this Eulogy this morning. As we all know...*he was Facebook before that word or concept ever existed.*

It was just an impossible task to even recall, yet single out individual family members and friends as well as the many, many memorable moments, holidays, vacations, special events and stories we all shared with him.

I just couldn't bring myself to mention one person or tell one story at the expense of another...and there are so, so many to choose from. Frankly, it was just overwhelming. So rather than recount a specific event, or person or story that most of you already know, let me just briefly focus on the three things that defined his life...again...**Family, Friends and Faith.**

I think I've already covered how important his Friendships were, now a few words about family.

**If Faith was his anchor and Friendship his crew...Family was his ship.**

He was "Richard" to his own MacDonald family. I used to love to hear them retell their funny "Mischievous Richard" stories and everyone...again...had many. They were a close-knit devoutly Catholic family, who enjoyed just being together, bantering one another with witty comments and stories and they **LOVED** playing cards...sound familiar!

He was “Mac” to my Mom’s family and everything I just said...times it by 10! He was a Simonds as much as he was a MacDonald. He was the brother the Simonds sisters never had and they loved him. What Hobart, Maasbyl and King doesn’t have many favorite “Uncle Mac” stories.

To the rest of us he was “Dad” and “Bumpa.” husband, father, grandfather and great grandfather...it seems all those roles and qualities came to him naturally, I know he was “The BEST.” He’s way too big of a Hero and a Legend in all of our eyes for me to specifically and unemotionally discuss how much he meant to all of us. I know I’m the oldest...but I just can’t do it and I really don’t think it’s necessary.

All of us know we are the luckiest family alive for being his children...his friend.

I know with 100% certainty that through each of us, our children and our grandchildren his boundless and unconditional love for each of us, his sense of humor, the sound of his laughter, the twinkle in his eyes and his warm ever-present smile, will be remembered and emulated to each and every MacDonald generation. His spirit in all of us...**WILL live forever.**

Lastly...it was his deep, unconditional and unwavering Faith in Jesus Christ as his Lord and Savior that was most important to him.

It truly was the foundation of his being. It was what defined him and molded him into the man, the son, the brother, the husband, father and friend that we all knew him to be. It was where he got his exceptional character and the strength to overcome the most difficult challenges and times in his life.

Although he didn’t push his faith on others, he never missed an opportunity to let others know about his relationship with Jesus and the Catholic Church.

Who hasn't received one of the St. Jude prayer cards he gave to everyone. He bought them by the hundreds and even put one in the envelope with every Visa and Mastercard payment he ever made!

He comfortably prayed with many of his family and friends and for just about everyone in his life at one time or another...and he **always** let his example do the talking.

His Faith was by far, his most important relationship and that's why he **really is fine right now**. He was absolutely ready, prepared, confident and **FEARLESS** about finally meeting his Lord and Savior...Jesus Christ this past Easter morning.

Many of you have so many great personal stories about your own friendships with My Dad that always start out "**I remember that time when.....**"

Please share those special "Uncle Mac" moments with us... and with each other today...and long into the future. They were carefully created with you by a very, very special friend and they are meant to be retold and enjoyed time and time again.

So Dad...on behalf of all your family and friends here today and the many, many other friends and Shipmates throughout the country that could not be with us...

**THANK YOU** for all the great memories, relationships and life experiences we have shared with you. **WE LOVE YOU**. We will think of you often and we will look forward to being with you again one day. May you finally rest in peace in Heaven with Ma and all your departed friends ...**You Will Never, Ever Be Forgotten.**