



Donald Junior Parks

April 2, 1933 ~ January 17, 2025

Our sweet "Papa," Donald Junior Parks, 91, born April 2, 1933, received his heavenly reward on January 17, 2025. He was the oldest child born to Donald and Ila Parks of Chelsea, OK. Don attended school in Bushyhead and Chelsea, OK, completing his education at Apostolic Christian School in Tulsa. Soon after, Don was drafted in the Army and spent 1953-1955 serving in Alaska. After returning, he met Frances Wingard in Tulsa while she worked at the local Kress' Five and Dime Store. They married on June 14, 1956, and had a wonderful marriage of 66 years before her passing on August 8, 2022.

Don and Frances were an incredible team and worked hand in hand together in all their business ventures until the very end. After marriage, they lived in Tulsa and Don drove a delivery truck for Rainbo Bread, until he fell asleep while driving, crashed and burned much of the countryside. They moved to Haskell and both worked as meat cutters at Parks' Grocery Store. They also owned and operated a laundry mat, car wash and trailer park in the small town of Haskell. In 1970, a tornado took everything that Don and Frances owned. They moved to Little Rock to build the first Western Sizzlin Steak House west of the Mississippi River. They owned and operated five restaurants in Central Arkansas, some of which were the highest volume in the Western Sizzlin franchise during the 70's, 80's and 90's. They employed thousands during those years, giving many their first job and teaching great work ethics, leading by example. Don and Frances helped numerous Western Sizzlin franchisees get started and made themselves available to help troubleshoot any problems that would arise. They were never selfish with time or finances.

Don was an incredible handyman and could repair almost anything, or at the least, give it a temporary fix. After the restaurant business, he enjoyed tinkering with different projects, traveling with friends, spending time on their houseboat, fishing at Lake Ouachita, attending grandkids' sporting events, activities and swimming with them in the backyard pool.

He and Frances loved to cook and could feed a crowd like no other. They had a reputation of making sure everything tasted great. Everyone was always welcome in their home and they made sure to never let anyone leave hungry.

Don faithfully attended New Life Church and he was a true follower of Jesus Christ. He and Frances were hard workers, but gave credit for their success in business to the Lord for showing His favor and greatly blessing them. They had a desire to humbly give above and beyond to build many church buildings, orphanages, and other church related projects in numerous states and countries, never wanting recognition for their contributions.

He is survived by son; Keith Parks, daughter and son-in-law; Regina and Mat Seelinger, grandchildren; Mason (AnnMarie), Payton (Chelsea) and Carson (Hope) Seelinger, Nik, Lacye, Weston and Colten Parks, great grandchildren; Palmer, Livian, Josie Claire, Greer, Winnie, Eloise, Jett, Grady, Penny, Wilson, Brixton, Baker and unborn baby Colson Seelinger, sister; Betty Archer, sister-in-law; Danice Mimms, brothers-in-law Cameron, Raymond and Joe (Angie) Anderson, and numerous nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his twelve year old daughter LaDonna Kaye Parks, his parents, his brothers-in-law Claude Archer and Roy Mimms, sister-in-law Sandra Anderson and all brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law of the Wingard family.

Visitation is 3:30 to 5:30 PM Friday, January 24, 2025, at Smith North Little Rock Funeral Home, 1921 Main Street, North Little Rock, followed by a 5:30 PM funeral. Interment will be at 2:00 PM Saturday, January 25, 2025, at Haskell Cemetery, Haskell, OK.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to the charity of your choice.