



Dolores Marie L'HommeDieu

November 3, 1935 – June 5, 2026

Apollo Beach, Florida
formerly of Smithtown and Calverton, New York

Dolores Marie L'HommeDieu, of Apollo Beach, Florida, formerly of Smithtown and Calverton, New York, died on June 5, 2026, at St. Joseph's Hospital–South in Riverview. She was ninety.

She was born Dolores Marie Michels on November 3, 1935, in Bay Shore, Long Island, the daughter of Wilbur Russell Michels and Elsie Caroline (Nelson) Michels. She was baptized the following April in St. James and grew up on Hallock Avenue in Smithtown Branch, one of three sisters.

On February 7, 1953, at seventeen, she married Richard George L'HommeDieu in a Saturday afternoon ceremony at the Smithtown Presbyterian Church, with the Rev. Raymond Case officiating and a reception afterward at the Sons of Norway Hall in St. James.

Richard, born June 24, 1929, had served six years in the United States Marine Corps and was then with Grumman Aircraft at Bethpage for a short time before becoming an engineer for the Long Island Rail Road.

They began married life on Terry Road before building a home on River Road where they raised three children. They were together fifty-seven years, until his death in 2010.

She was working at Dow's Music Mart the year she married. She dealt antiques for a good stretch of her life, which is its own kind of education in what a used thing is worth and who might need it.

Later she became Director of Volunteers for Christian Nursing Hospice — a job that came down to finding compassionate people to sit with the dying, making sure they were not alone and their needs were met.

For twenty-eight years she was president of the Society for Lending Comforts to the Sick, the Smithtown organization founded in 1906 by a group of local women who wanted to ease their neighbors' suffering by lending out hospital and recuperative equipment. It buys wheelchairs, walkers, canes, and hospital beds with money raised at community fundraisers and lends them, free, to anyone in the township who needs one — no waiting, no paperwork.

Dolores ran it for nearly three decades, and remembered the annual fair as a day the whole town turned out, the Bank of Smithtown and the Town Board bidding each other up over a cake. Beyond the lending closet, the Society puts what it raises back into Smithtown in scholarships and direct help to families in trouble.

In 1992 the Smithtown Chamber of Commerce named her Citizen of the Year, only the second person to receive the honor and chosen by unanimous vote of its board; the proclamation read that her skill, devotion and love had made Smithtown a better place.

In May of 2000 she was honored at the Junior League of Long Island's Volunteer Merit Awards Luncheon, where the New York State Assembly, Nassau County, and the Town of Hempstead each sent certificates.

She and Richard later moved east to Calverton. After Richard passed, she gave years to Calverton National Cemetery, where the Department of Veterans Affairs recognized her dedication and commitment. It was not easy work. It meant standing with the families of veterans on the hardest morning of their lives, over and over, for people she had never met and would not see again — and she did it for veterans and their families.

She was never comfortable being singled out for any of it. Writing to a newspaper editor after an article about her, she accepted the compliment only to hand it on: "I realize that we cannot recognize everyone that strives to make the lives of others a little brighter," she wrote. "Receiving an honor such as this turns my thoughts to anyone that has ever put aside their own needs to reach out to someone else." She asked to be thanked on behalf of the many others who, in her own phrase, also managed to traverse that extra mile in easing the existence of others.

Next, she moved to Apollo Beach, Florida, to be near her son Russell. It did not slow her down. She took a weekly shift at Calvary's Angel Attic, the all-volunteer thrift store in Ruskin whose proceeds support the Community Cupboard food pantry — the same arrangement that had funded her lending closet in Smithtown for twenty-eight years. She kept that shift until the last month of her life.

She is survived by her three children, Richard George L'HommeDieu, Jr., and his wife Toni, of Georgia; Joyce Noel Barry and her husband Robert, of New York; and Russell Alan L'HommeDieu and his wife Karen, of Florida; by nine grandchildren; and by seven great-grandchildren. She was predeceased by her husband, Richard, in 2010, and by her parents.

She was laid to rest beside Richard at Calverton National Cemetery — the same ground where she had spent years helping other families lay their own veterans down.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks that gifts be made to Calvary's Angel Attic or the Community Cupboard at Calvary Lutheran Church, 1250 East College Avenue, Ruskin, Florida 33570, or to the Society for Lending Comforts to the Sick, 71 Blydenburgh Avenue, Smithtown, New York 11787.