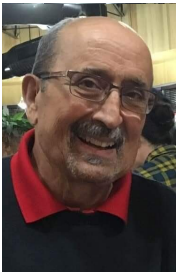




Southwestern Texas Synod

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.



In Memory of Rev. Jose Garcia Jr. January 5, 1947-December 26, 2020

Jose Luis Garcia, Jr. (Joe)., 73, beloved husband, father, grandfather, and brother, passed away peacefully at Audie Murphy Hospital in San Antonio, Texas December 26, 2020, after a bravely fought battle with COVID.

Born January 5, 1947 in Santurce, Puerto Rico to Jose Luis Garcia y Rosario and Andrea Adalaida Melendez, Chaplain Garcia graduated with a BBA from the University of Oklahoma in 1968, and a MA in Divinity in 1977 from Wartburg Theological Seminary, Iowa. He was a graduate of the Air Command and Staff College and the USAF's Advance Chaplains' School. Chaplain Garcia enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps in 1965, was later commissioned and served on active duty as a Marine fighter and helicopter pilot for six years. During his tenure, he served on a Mediterranean Cruise, Southeast Asia (Vietnam) tour and as flight instructor at Kingsville, Texas.

Upon ordination as a Lutheran Pastor in December 1977, he was re-commissioned in the U. S. Air Force Reserves as a Chaplain. In August 1980, he was called to active duty after having served as Senior Pastor of Oak Cliff Lutheran Church in Dallas, for which he implemented a Senior Citizen's Center and a Spanish Ministry Radio Program in the Dallas area. Pastor Joe worked in the United States, Great Britain, Italy, Turkey and Iraq. He was the Regional Moderator for Women's Ministry in Europe. As a Deputy Command Chaplain, he advised the Commanding General on matters of morale, welfare, religion and ethics. His final assignment on active duty was as Command Chaplain of Operation Provide Comfort, a joint command of coalition forces from 13 nations. Upon retirement from active duty in 1994, Pastor Garcia was called to serve at Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church in San Antonio. There he founded Z-Place: Zion Family Center, Inc.

In 2000, Pastor Joe was called by the ELCA to serve on the National Church Staff, as Executive Director for Hispanic-Latino Outreach and Director for Mission Development, covering the U.S., Caribbean and the border between Mexico and the U.S.

Pastor Joe was an active member of Trinity Lutheran Church, where he was a Worship Assistant and choir member. He and his wife, Leta, started the Rotary Club of Blanco County (Membership Chair). He was a past President of the Rotary Club of Fair Oaks Ranch, as well as past Commander and Chaplain of American Legion Post 352, and past chaplain for the district. Pastor Joe worked with Casa del Aguila in Limatambo, Peru as Interim Director and also served on the Board of Directors. He was involved in the Watchdog Program and PALS program at Blanco Elementary, as well as the CoApt Program (drug awareness) for Blanco schools. Joe was highly involved in the community of Blanco, including the flood relief effort in 2015, and was an avid Blanco Panther Basketball fan. He was deeply loved and respected by his family, friends, and community. The lives of a great number of people were impacted by Pastor Joe who believed and fulfilled the purpose of his life, which was to glorify God in all that he said and did.

Joe Garcia is survived by spouse, Leta Meador Schlinke; 5 children Karla Garcia Ross (Steven), Robert Garcia (Amy), and Jennifer Garcia; Brent Schlinke (Marina) and Clay Schlinke (Jessica); 10 grandchildren; Eli and Elizabeth Ross, Joel and Evie Garcia, and Jake, Erik, Rachel, Tyler, Tristan, and Meadow Schlinke, and brothers Gil(Diana) and Grant Garcia. He was preceded in death by his parents, spouse of 42 years, Evelyn Spitzenberger and beloved granddaughter, Hannah Ross.

Memorials may be given to Trinity Lutheran Church, Rotary Club of Blanco County, or American Legion Post 352.

A Celebration of Life will be held January 5, 2020 at Trinity Lutheran Church with ashes to be interred in Shive, Texas. Live-streamed [Facebook](#) Trinity Lutheran Church - Blanco, TX.

We remember Rev. Joe's family in our prayers and trust that the promise of the Resurrection is true and sure.

In Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sue J Briner". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Bishop Sue Briner