



## Mikel de Irala

July 7, 1950 - November 24, 2024

Mikel de Irala, age 74, passed away peacefully on Sunday, November 24, 2024 after a short battle with cancer. He was born of Basque heritage in St. Jean de Luz, France to the late Anton and Begoña de Irala. Dear brother of Xabier (Martine), Iziar (Jon), Andoni (Miren), Jon (Olatz), Jokin (Beatriz), and Ander (Itxaso). At the age of 12, his family moved to the Philippines, where he lived for 7 years. When his family returned to Europe, Mike chose to go to the United States. With only one suitcase, he arrived in the United States by himself when he was 19 years old. He completed his college education and earned his MBA at the University of Detroit Mercy. After over 30 years, he retired from Ford Motor Company as the Executive Director of Manufacturing and Powertrain Operations, in charge of 15 plants and 20,000 employees in three countries. Mike's multilingual ability enabled him to reach and influence people all over the world. His career took him and his family to Hiroshima, Japan, Michigan, Ohio, and Indiana.

He married Barbara on July 29, 1978 and they were devoted to each other for 46 years. He was the proud and dedicated father of Karen (Chris) Sabados, Anne, Paul (Martina), Sandra (Matt) Montaña, Mark (Jenni), John (Heather), James (Lindsay), Andrew, and Matthew.

Mike was a man of great faith, integrity, generosity, adventure, courage, and intelligence. He loved being with people and was known for his dedication to his wife and family, huge smile, friendly personality, sense of humor, thoughtfulness, laughter, and concern for others. Throughout his recent

illness, he never complained and faced each day with faith, humility, and strength.

He enjoyed golfing, traveling, and reading. His greatest enjoyment was spending time with his 9 children and 16 grandchildren.

Friends may join the family for a time of visitation on Thursday, December 5, 2024 from 1:00 P.M. until 7:00 P.M. at the Robison-Bahnmler Funeral Home in Saline. A Rosary Service will be held that evening at 6:00 P.M. Visitation will continue on Friday, December 6, from 10:30 A.M. until 11:30 A.M. at the St. Andrew Catholic Church in Saline. A Mass of Christian Burial will be held at 11:30 A.M. with Fr. John Linden as Celebrant. Inurnment will take place following the Mass and will be held in the St. Andrew Church Columbarium. To continue his legacy through The de Irala Foundation, please make a check payable to: University of Detroit Mercy, 4001 W. McNichols Road, Detroit, MI 48221 Attn: Dennis Carlesso, University Adv. In the memo, please write: Mikel de Irala Scholarship. Or to support his other philanthropic endeavors, please donate to: St. Jude Children's Research Hospital <https://www.stjude.org/donate/donate-to-st-jude.html> To leave a memory you have of Mikel, to sign his guestbook or for directions please visit [www.rbfhsaline.com](http://www.rbfhsaline.com).

# Cemetery Details

## St. Andrew the Apostle Catholic Church Columbarium

910 Austin Road  
Saline, MI 48176

# Previous Events

## Visitation

DEC 5. 1:00 PM - 7:00 PM (ET)

Robison-Bahnmler Funeral Home & Cremation Services  
301 E Michigan Ave  
Saline, MI 48176  
(734) 429-9760  
rbfhsaline@hotmail.com  
<https://www.rbfhsaline.com>

## Rosary Service

DEC 5. 6:00 PM - 6:30 PM (ET)

Robison-Bahnmler Funeral Home & Cremation Services  
301 E Michigan Ave  
Saline, MI 48176  
(734) 429-9760  
rbfhsaline@hotmail.com  
<https://www.rbfhsaline.com>

## Visitation

DEC 6. 10:30 AM - 11:30 AM (ET)

St. Andrew the Apostle Catholic Church  
910 Austin Dr  
Saline, MI 48176-1157  
(734) 429-5210

## Mass of Christian Burial

DEC 6. 11:30 AM - 12:30 PM (ET)

St. Andrew the Apostle Catholic Church  
910 Austin Dr  
Saline, MI 48176-1157  
(734) 429-5210

## Inurnment in Columbarium

DEC 6. 12:45 PM (ET)

St. Andrew the Apostle Catholic Church Columbarium  
910 Austin Road  
Saline, MI 48176

# Tribute Wall

RC

“ I worked with Mike two times...mid 80's and mid 90's. Mike was appointed Resident Engineer at Batavia Transmission Plant in the mid 80s. Because of our jobs, we often interacted. His humor was infectious and his easy going manor would put you at ease. We became good friends. He left Batavia to do other things, then came back to Batavia as Plant Manager in the mid 90s. I was working a lot of hours as we were launching a new transmission. He walked by my desk late one night as he was leaving and we were talking about the number of hours, and I mentioned that I was working 12+ hours. He immediately said “that's only half a day, what are you doing with the other half.” Of course, he was kidding. He would always ask about my family.

---

**Ron Condrey** - December 02, 2024 at 01:57 PM

AV

“ I worked for Mike during my career at Ford. He was a true gentleman and treated everyone with due respect. So sorry to hear of his passing. My deepest condolences.  
Abe Vadhavkar

---

**abhay v vadhavkar** - December 02, 2024 at 07:05 AM

PT

“ Worked with Mike, Barb and Barb's brother Larry at Ford for many years. Great people and professionals all. Mike had a great sense of humor and a worldly perspective unlike few others I have known.

*Prayers for Mike and family.*

*Paul Troy*

---

**Paul Troy** - December 01, 2024 at 11:28 PM

RP

“ Mike and I traveled to Mazda in Hiroshima, Japan in December of 1999 for a technology review. For Mike this was like a mini reunion as he was able to connect with many of the engineers he worked with during his assignment while stationed in Japan. They treated Mike-san like a favorite son returning home. We even had dinner with the Mazda Chairman of the Board. It was a great honor and Mike really enjoyed it.

*Mike had a great quality of relating to people on a personal level and was respected by all on a professional level, He will be missed.*

*Rich Pearson*

---

**RICHARD PEARSON** - December 01, 2024 at 05:35 PM

MI

“ 3 files added to the album Mikel



---

**Mark de Irala** - November 29, 2024 at 10:35 AM

SW

“ Mike was upbeat in everything he did. He inspired those of us around him. In a world where ethics did not always apply, Mike was always ethical. His word was his bond. We are truly sorry for his passing. Steve and Cindi Weiner

---

**steveb weiner** - November 27, 2024 at 04:21 PM

JR

“ I worked with Mikel at Ford and remember him as a man of integrity, kindness, and friendly soul. He will be greatly missed. Sorry for your loss. Prayers for all of your family.

-----  
**Jim Robinette** - November 27, 2024 at 10:18 AM

TA

“ From the Arnold family our hearts ache for you, with you. Mike equals integrity. Love of family. I loved his laugh. His positive attitude. He will always be a positive influence to me. One of my favorite memories was when I was coaching Sandra in soccer and we were playing in a tournament. The weather turned bad and it started raining. Mike came across the field at the end of the half and gave me his coat to keep warm and dry. In penalty kicks Sandra scored the winning goal to send us to the finals. Mike was so proud. Another one was he would lay the kicks across his knees as he ate. Bouncing them to keep them happy while he ate. He told me all their clothes had food stains on their backs because of all the food he spilled on them. You will be missed Mike but never forgotten. Rest in the peace of Christ my good and faithful servant.

-----  
**Tim Arnold** - November 27, 2024 at 06:56 AM

RI

“ My deepest condolences to you and your family, Iziar. From Manila, I am with you in thoughts and prayers. Take care, Rica

-----  
**Rica** - November 27, 2024 at 04:44 AM

SD

“ Barb and family, I am so saddened to learn of Mike's passing and extend my sincere condolences. It was a pleasure knowing you, Mike, and your family during many years living on Quincy Court. I hope you find great comfort in your family, friends, and faith.

-----  
**Steve Davis** - November 27, 2024 at 12:38 AM

AY

“ *My deepest and heartfelt condolences to Barbara and all of the Irala family. I remember fondly when you and Mikel visited us in Connecticut. My thoughts and prayer are with Mikel and all of you. He is now with our God and Savior basking in His eternal light.*

-----  
**Andoni Yturralde** - November 26, 2024 at 08:43 PM

RN

*Deepest condolences to all that knew and loved him. My heart is with you all.*

-----  
**Roberta Noppe** - November 26, 2024 at 11:31 PM

RG

*Mi más sincero pésame . Todos mis rezos para Mikel y para ti . Que descanse en paz . Un beso grande para ti y familia .*

-----  
**Regina Got** - November 27, 2024 at 03:05 AM

BP

*Dear Barb, Karen, Anne, Paul, Sandra, Mark, John, James, Andrew, Matthew; Linda and I are saddened to learn of Mike's passing. Our deepest condolences and prayers are with you for strength in this time of grief. We will always remember the great Shawnee Trace neighbors you were. Mike's smile and good humor will be missed but always remembered. With our Love, Linda & Bob Pautke.*

-----  
**Bob Pautke** - November 27, 2024 at 10:30 AM

MM

*Worked with Mike over several years at Ford -- top notch guy -- very capable and honest*

*Condolences to his family*

-----  
**Martin Mulloy** - December 03, 2024 at 01:01 PM

BC

*I just learned of Mike's passing. I am very sorry for your loss, and the loss to his entire family. Mike was a terrific person and a tremendous asset to the Ford Motor Company. I hope that you take some comfort in knowing that he was blessed to have you as his partner, as were you. I am deeply sorry for your loss.*

---

**B. Clemens** - March 09, 2025 at 03:45 PM