

# IN MEMORIAM

Luis Horacio Toledo-Pereyra, 81, **passed away peacefully at his home in South Haven, MI. Luis built a legacy as a pioneering surgeon, a brilliant researcher, an esteemed professor, a prolific author, a dedicated mentor, and a devoted family man with a profound faith in God.**

Born on October 19, 1943, to Elia Elvira Pereyra and Jose Horacio Toledo, Luis spent his formative years on his family's ranch in Sonora, Mexico. While often finding himself in a bit of mischief as a youth, he also developed a lifelong love of horses, fresh fruit, and norteño and mariachi music.

As the eldest of three children, Luis was encouraged by his parents to value education and pursue a career in medicine. Leaving home at a young age, Luis earned his medical degree from the National Autonomous University of Mexico in 1967. His academic pursuits led him to the United States, where he completed a surgical residency and fellowship in Immunobiology of Transplantation at the University of Minnesota. During this time, he earned two PhDs—one in Surgery and Physiology (1976) and one in the History of Medicine and American History (1984). While at the University of Minnesota, Luis contributed to groundbreaking advances in organ transplantation, including pancreas transplantation, live donor pancreas transplants, islet transplantation, and organ preservation.

It was also during his time in Minnesota that Luis met and married the love of his life, Marjean May Gilbert. Just last year, Luis and Marjean celebrated 50 years of marriage. **Throughout their years together, they loved spending time exploring new restaurants, collecting Mexican art, traveling all over the world, visiting family, watching Lake Michigan sunsets, and rooting for the Lions and Wolverines.**



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After completing his medical training, Luis settled with his family in Michigan, where he built a distinguished career as a kidney, pancreas and islet cell transplant surgeon. He served as Chief of Transplantation and Director of Research at Mount Carmel Mercy Hospital in Detroit and later at Borgess Medical Center in Kalamazoo. He also held academic roles, including Professor of Biological Sciences, Science Education, and History at Western Michigan University, and later as Professor of Surgery and Director of Research at the Western Michigan University Homer Stryker M.D. School of Medicine.

In the months leading up to his retirement, Luis was honored as a Fulbright Scholar in Spain, where he spent three unforgettable months in Valencia with Marjean, savoring the culture, conversations, and paella.

**Throughout his lifetime, Luis performed more than one thousand lifesaving transplants. He authored 23 books, published over 1,100 papers, abstracts, and chapters, and proudly mentored over 50 international medical fellows, many from his native Mexico.** He was awarded a prestigious National Institute of Health grant and was invited to lecture on subjects ranging from surgery and transplantation to the history of medicine and art in over twenty countries. Among his proudest moments was being invited to the Vatican to meet Pope John Paul II to discuss the ethics of organ transplantation.

If you ever spoke to Luis, it was evident that nurturing his children's education and supporting their growth was critically important to him. He cherished memories of taking them on patient care rounds, assisting with their science fair projects, and engaging in thoughtful philosophical discussions around the dinner table. He also formed many enduring friendships throughout his studies in Mexico and the United States. Years later he would look forward to Zoom chats and



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corresponding with dear friends. In his final days, when communication became difficult, his only regret was being unable to share his knowledge and encouragement with those he loved most. Yet, there is no doubt that his spirit and passion endure through the many lives he touched, including his children, grandchildren (who called him Papa), patients, and the students and fellows he mentored worldwide.

**Luis was preceded in death by parents, his brother Carlos Antonio, and his sister Maria del Carmen. He is survived by his devoted and loving wife, Marjean May Toledo; his two children, Dr. Alexander (Courtney) Toledo of Chapel Hill, North Carolina, and Suzanne (Zachariah) Zimmerer of Denver, Colorado; and his six beloved grandchildren: Remington, Alexandra, Elia, Charlotte, Sylvie, and Wolfgang. He is also survived by family in Mexico. Salud y bien hecho. Besos y Abrazos.**

A private service is planned for the family.

**For those wishing to make a charitable donation in Luis' memory, his favorite charity is a Latin American orphanage and school, El Sitio. Contributions can be made to St Catherine of Siena in Portage Michigan with memo El Sitio.**

## REST IN PEACE

