



Jacob Israel Gifford

February 25, 2007 - January 1, 2026

Jacob Israel Gifford, 18 of Leesburg passed away on January 1, 2026.

Born on February 25, 2007, Jacob was a cherished son whose presence brought light, laughter, and warmth to everyone who knew him. His strong faith guided his life and was evident in the way he treated others—with kindness, respect, and an open heart. Jacob's exuberant personality and welcoming spirit made people feel instantly at ease in his presence.

Jacob had a deep love for the outdoors and could often be found fishing, swimming, or enjoying any adventure that allowed him to be outside. His youth group was especially close to his heart, and his faith community played an important role in shaping the young man he became.

Above all else, Jacob adored his mother. The bond they shared was truly special—one built on love, trust, and unwavering devotion. He was a wonderful cousin to the younger members of his family, always patient, playful, and protective. Jacob was a respectful and loving grandson and nephew, and his family will forever treasure the memories they shared.

Jacob graduated from Trinity Catholic High School and proudly joined the United States Navy, stepping into his future with courage, purpose, and faith. He will be remembered for his joyful spirit, his ability to make everyone feel

welcome, and the genuine happiness he carried with him wherever he went.

Jacob is survived by his loving mother, Katherine Gifford; his grandparents, Nathan and Susan Gifford, and Annette Pizzitola; his aunts Kelly Luper (Christian), Sarah Zimmermann, and Rachel Bishop (William); his cousins Alec Luper, Jake Luke and Harper Zimmermann, Harrison and Kellan Bishop; and many extended family members and friends from Louisiana and Florida and all points in between who loved him dearly.

A Mass of Christian Burial to celebrate Jacob's life will be held on Wednesday, January 7 at 6:00 PM at St. Paul Catholic Church 1330 Sunshine Ave. Leesburg.

Interment, with full military honors, will be scheduled in St. Benedict, Louisiana.

Jacob, you are deeply loved and will be profoundly missed, but your faith, joy, and light will live on in the hearts of all who knew you.

Previous Events

Funeral Mass

JAN 7. 6:00 PM (ET)

St. Paul Catholic Church
1330 Sunshine Avenue
Leesburg, FL 34748

Tribute Wall

CG

“ Dear Katy,

I know there are no words that can ease your pain right now. Please know that God is surrounding you with His love and care, and that you are in our prayers.

I want you to know I'm here for you—whether you need to talk, vent, scream, or even go break something. I'm so sorry I can't be there in person. Terry has been ill, but he's improving daily, so please don't hesitate to reach out when you need me. I'm just a phone call away at 352-552-2244.

Sending you so many hugs.

Peace,

CK



CindyKay W. Graham - January 07 at 07:32 PM

ES

“ Elizabeth S. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Jacob Israel Gifford.

Elizabeth S. - January 05 at 06:20 AM

ES

“Katie and family, I am so sorry for your loss and can't even begin to imagine the depth of the loss knowing just how big of an impact he has had on everyone he has met! Jacob always made me smile and laugh as his light shine so far and wide. I'll never forget him climbing in my trunk and drawing all over my dirty windows, calling me "Ms Liz" in his voice, or making fun of me for always being injured. His love for God and the inspiration to bring others to God's love was definitely a legacy of courage and strength!



Elizabeth Stephanz - January 05 at 06:18 AM



“Dreams From the Heart Bouquet was purchased for the family of Jacob Israel Gifford.



January 04 at 09:59 PM

FB

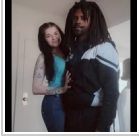
“Florence Bonaccorso-Saenz planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Jacob Israel Gifford.

Florence Bonaccorso-Saenz - January 04 at 09:59 PM

MC

“Nathan-I am so sorry to hear about the loss of your precious grandson, Jacob. I wish I had the pleasure to have known him. You and your family are in my thoughts and prayers!
Your cousin Mary Marshall Cobb

Mary Cobb - January 04 at 09:39 PM



“ Jacob you were like a little brother to me, you were so freaking loved in our family... one of my favorite memories is when we went to Salt springs one year and I asked you to throw me goggles and you threw them so fast I couldn't even see them next thing you know I get hit in the face and fall underwater haha we all laughed but you were so worried if you hurt me I was like nah bruh im fine, while secretly my face hurt haha. Ugh I am going to miss you sir.. love you forever

Mc-Kenzie Kanczurzewski-Allen - January 04 at 06:26 PM

DC



Donna Comis - January 06 at 09:48 AM

DC

“ I have this wonderful young man in my heart forever. His light was genuine and warm, his eyes always a glow.. when he was in high school we would save his dinner '@ Youth Ministry, his exuberance energized everyone.
I called him my new Jeff because not only would he do anything for us, he could yell almost as loud as Jeff . (that's Very loud.)
I have an only child, a son , my heart breaks for all who love him, especially Katie. But.....
He's rockin it I. Heaven !!❤️
Zip lining or something

Donna Comis - January 04 at 06:22 PM