



Rafael Antonio Santamaria

July 25, 1954 - March 8, 2025

Rafael A. Santamaria was born July 25, 1954 in Santa Tecla, El Salvador to Alberto Santamaria and Blanca Elba Reyes. Rafael married Cecilia Isabel Mejia. They were married in Santa Tecla, El Salvador on December 19, 1980. Rafael, 70, passed away courageously battling cancer on Saturday, March 8, 2025, in Salt Lake City.

During a tumultuous time in his country, Rafael fought to earn an education. Even under threat of life loss he persevered to make it to his classes. He graduated college, earned a degree and became a member of the National Institute for Automotive Service Excellence. He served an LDS mission in his home country spreading the gospel of Christ. He met, fell in love with, and married his beautiful wife Cecilia. Searching for a safer place to raise a family, Rafael immigrated to the United States in 1984, due to the civil war in El Salvador at the time. He bravely left his home country without being able to speak English. He had no money, all he had was ambition, hope, and his faith in the Lord. He settled in Los Angeles, California. Against all odds he flourished. He tirelessly worked to support his family as a mechanic during the day and took English classes at night. Following his instinct, he relocated to Salt Lake City, Utah for better opportunities. There he worked for a few companies until his ambition took over. He ventured to become an entrepreneur, he built a successful business in 1997 that spanned a little short of three decades. He served his community honestly until he could no longer

fulfill his duty due to his illness.

Rafael was an avid sports fan, he played soccer well into his fifties. He loved the Utah Jazz. He also devoted the majority of his life to his faith in the Lord. He had several callings in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, but none more impactful as his time serving as a bishop for his community. He was steadfast in serving others, performing his duties with grace and enthusiasm. His greatest passion was the work he did in the temple for his ancestors. Rafael was in short, a leader in all he did. A fantastic father that instilled values in the lives of his children. He taught with compassion and understanding. A devoted husband who always showed his love for his wife. Many looked up to him, many looked to him in times of need and he was always ready to serve.

Rafael will be survived by his loving wife of 44 years, Cecilia Santamaria; his children, Eric, David and his wife Nicole, and Nelson Santamaria; his caring sisters Nelly, Delmy, and Dinorah Santamaria and their children.

Rafael was preceded in death by his parents Alberto and Blanca; his brothers Carlos Reyes Santamaria and Luis Santamaria.

Funeral Services will be held at the Westbrook Chapel in Taylorsville Utah March 15, 2025 at 11a.m. Followed by his burial at Memorial Redwood Cemetery at 2 p.m.

Family Santamaria is eternally grateful to all who supported us in this hard time. A special thanks to President David E. Gonzalez, Cristy Evans, and Nicole Payne Santamaria who all were angels placed in Rafael's path during his final moments.

Previous Events

Viewing

MAR 15. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (MT)

Westbrook Chapel
6364 South 3200 West
Taylorsville , UT 84129

Funeral Service

MAR 15. 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM (MT)

Westbrook Chapel
6364 South 3200 West
Taylorsville , UT 84129

Graveside Service

MAR 15. 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM (MT)

Memorial Redwood Cemetery
6500 South Redwood Rd.
West Jordan, UT 84123