



James Dougherty

June 5, 1955 - December 26, 2025

The Mass of Christian burial for James Dougherty of Big Fork, MT, will be celebrated at 11:00 a.m. on Wednesday, January 7, at St. Hubert's Catholic Church in Bluegrass.

Family and friends may gather at the church on Wednesday from 9:30 a.m. until the time of the Mass.

Burial will be in St. Hubert's Catholic Cemetery. Pallbearers will be Bruce Richter, Gerry Richter, Donnie Rentz, Gene Finck, Kory Stave and Shane Finck. Honorary pallbearers will be Doug Dougherty and Gregg Dougherty.

James passed away on December 26, 2025, in Kalispell, MT.

Jim was born June 5, 1955, in Wolf Point, MT, to a young couple starting out life's journey. He joined his brother Mike. After a couple of years Jim moved to Milbank, SD, with his family and new little sister, Vicky. A few years later, the family with five small children moved to a small farm in Wadena, MN. There, Jim learned the farm life, a good work ethic and a strong sense of perseverance.

Jim went to grade school at St. Ann's Catholic School in Wadena. He graduated in 1973 from Wadena Senior High School. He tried his hand at boxing, joining the Golden Glove Program with his older brother Mike. As a teen he became interested in motorcycles and muscle cars. His first car was

an orange 1970 Plymouth Roadrunner, which he loved. He also owned several Harley Davidson motorcycles throughout his life.

After high school, Jim worked many different jobs around Wadena. He tried to get into the Minnesota Highway Patrol Program but didn't pass the physical due to not being tall enough.

After working at the Phillips 66 gas station Jim spent a few years working for Merlin Martin Moving and Storage. While working for the moving company, he was able to travel and see many cities throughout the U.S. including New York City, Chicago, and Minneapolis. Jim took up photography to capture his many adventures. After a couple of years, Jim was looking for a change. In 1976, Jim and his younger siblings moved with their parents to Columbia Falls, MT, where he got a job at the Columbia Falls Aluminum Plant. He stayed there until an illness caused him to be unable to work.

Jim's interests and hobbies usually included the outdoors. Downhill skiing, waterskiing, boating, and his favorites fishing and hunting. You could always find Jim out and about on his days off with anyone who would go with him. Mort Hill, Dave Rose, Dan Behrens, and Mick and Jeff Chase were just a few of the lucky fellows who tagged along.

Jim's kindness was seen in all aspects of his life, a few of his proudest were buying his mother, Arvilla, her first color television. This was shortly followed with buying his father, Mike, a desperately needed new pickup truck. Growing up in a large family (ten children in total), they did not have a lot of extra goodies around the house. Jim would lend his siblings help or money whenever they needed, though he did expect to be paid back. He bailed his brothers out of trouble on many occasions.

Not long before turning 40, Jim moved into the Care Center in Bigfork, MT. There, Jim made numerous lifelong friends. Nurses, staff, owners, residents

and community members visited him regularly, often bringing him goodies and chatting about sports. This included generations of Bigfork High School football players. They even brought him a few winning game balls. Jim loved watching football, science fiction shows, and a good laugh. Colors of both the Minnesota Vikings and Bigfork Vikings/Valkyries decorated his room. Jim could often be found watching Star Trek, Star Wars, and Battlestar Galactica.

Jim grew to care for and love many of those who took care of him over the last 30-some years. Jim had made new friends in Montana as well as numerous friends and relatives from Minnesota who kept in touch. Many visited each time they came to Montana and a few like Karyl Richter who wrote to him each and every week. I am sure there are many more people whose impact on Jim's life was quietly loved and appreciated. Even after all the hardships Jim faced over the years, he never lost his faith. He could not attend mass, but he received the communion each time the priest would visit him. We will all miss you deeply, Jim. We love you.

Jim was preceded in death by his parents, Michael E. and Arvilla Dougherty; older brother Michael V. Dougherty; paternal grandparents Guy and Gertrude Dougherty; and maternal grandparents Ben and Nancy Chase.

He is survived by his brothers: Doug (Conni) Dougherty, Columbia Falls, MT, Gregg (Davina) Dougherty, St. Ignatius, MT; sisters: Vicky (Gene) Finck, Verndale, MN, Patti Beach, Kalispell, MT, Denise (Gary) Ohs, Whitefish, MT, Pam (Larry) Roesner, Columbia Falls, MT, Becky (Winfield) West, Columbia Falls, MT, Tracy Dougherty, Columbia Falls, MT, and numerous nieces, nephews, great nieces and great nephews.

Cemetery Details

St. Hubert's Catholic Cemetery

17343 220th Street
Sebeka, MN 56477

Previous Events

Visitation

JAN 7. 9:30 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

St. Hubert's Catholic Church
22008 Co Rd 23
(10 miles N. of Verndale on Co Rd 23)
Blue Grass, MN 56477

Mass

JAN 7. 11:00 AM (CT)

St. Hubert's Catholic Church
22008 Co Rd 23
(10 miles N. of Verndale on Co Rd 23)
Blue Grass, MN 56477

Burial

JAN 7. 12:00 PM (CT)

St. Hubert's Catholic Cemetery
17343 220th Street
Sebeka, MN 56477

Tribute Wall

MM

“ *Condolences to family and friends from Mary Ann (Schmitz) Mowatt*



Mary Ann Mowatt - March 19 at 09:19 AM

WS

“ *What a gift of love he gave to all he knew! Our sincere sympathy to all Jim's family. May it bring comfort to know he is totally free from pain n loving being right there w Jesus in heaven! So grateful by God's gift of Salvation we can be reunited in heaven..Hallelujah 🙌🙌❤️ All our love n prayers surround you each💕*



Wayne and Sheila Stave - January 15 at 11:35 AM

RW

“ *Roger L Wiese lit a candle in memory of James Dougherty*



Roger L Wiese - January 13 at 12:46 PM

VT

“ My deepest sympathy to Jim’s family. Jim was a classmate of mine and he was the kindest person one could ever know. The whole Dougherty family impacted our little town of Wadena so much. R.I.P Jim.



Vickie Thompson - January 09 at 09:59 PM

BB

“ I’m so sorry for your loss. I didn’t know Jim but went to St. Ann’s with a few of his siblings. Denise was my sister Kathy’s bestest buddy and Greg was in my grade through 6th grade 😊! So fun to reflect back on old times! Thoughts and prayers to each and every one of you. May he rest in peace.

Brenda Bushinger Bakken

Brenda Bushinger Bakken - January 09 at 12:26 AM

DS

“ Dave Schumacher lit a candle in memory of James Dougherty



Dave Schumacher - January 07 at 05:34 PM

BS

“ Bruce and Trish Steinkopf lit a candle in memory of James Dougherty



Bruce and Trish Steinkopf - January 06 at 02:46 PM

TJ

“ My prayers 🙏 are with you, Dougherty siblings. Sorry for your loss. An old neighbor from when we all lived in Wadena. Terri Schindeldecker

Terri J Johnson - January 06 at 12:52 PM

FC

“ From the Kern Cousins purchased the Emerald Garden Basket for the family of James Dougherty.



From the Kern Cousins - January 05 at 01:12 PM

GD

“ Gene & Mary Denny lit a candle in memory of James Dougherty



Gene & Mary Denny - January 04 at 10:37 AM

SO

“ Sharyl Olson lit a candle in memory of James Dougherty



Sharyl Olson - January 03 at 05:30 PM

BB

“ *Barb Brown sent a virtual gift in memory of James Dougherty*



Barb Brown - January 02 at 09:30 PM

DD

“ *Vicky and Gene, please know u and all of ur family are in my thoughts and prayers not only today but in the days ahead*

Debra Dague - January 02 at 06:50 PM

DR

“ *Dave & Barb Rousslang lit a candle in memory of James Dougherty*



dave & barb rousslang - January 02 at 02:07 PM

VC

“ *Vicki (Theisen) Chesney lit a candle in memory of James Dougherty*



Vicki (Theisen) Chesney - January 02 at 09:55 AM

VA

“ Vickie Andrie lit a candle in memory of James Dougherty



Vickie Andrie - January 01 at 12:37 PM

TC

“ The Keimig Cousins planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of James Dougherty.

The Keimig Cousins - January 01 at 11:48 AM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of James Dougherty.



January 01 at 11:48 AM

JJ

“ Jon Johnson lit a candle in memory of James Dougherty



Jon Johnson - January 01 at 07:31 AM