

IN LOVING MEMORY OF J. M. "JOE" TOLBERT

Walking tall but humbly, Joseph Marion Tolbert slipped the bonds of this earth January 28, 2015 to walk heaven's streets of gold with his precious Lord and Savior. Sharing wonderful memories, songs of worship, and prayer, his loving family and friends were at his side as he began his journey. Funeral services will be held at 10:00 Saturday, January 31, 2015 at the Vivian United Pentecostal Church officiated by Rev. Ricky Jeane and assisted by Bro. Jay Wolfe. Interment will follow in the Lakeview Memorial Gardens in Oil City, Louisiana. Visitation with the family will be from 6:00 p.m. until 9:00 p.m. Friday, January 30, 2015 at the Vivian United Pentecostal Church. He was born in Shreveport, Louisiana, on January 9, 1926 to Doty Earl Tolbert and Julia Marie Plaisance. He grew up in a large family of eleven adventuresome children during very difficult times. Despite the hardships the large family faced, all the brothers and sisters became successful and caring adults. In addition to his parents, he is preceded in death by his brothers Louis Tolbert, Jim Tolbert, Percy Tolbert and Huey (Toby) Tolbert. He is also preceded in death by his sisters Nellie Batts, Sister Dorothy Tolbert, O.S.B, Sister Innocentia Tolbert, O.S.B., Sister Mary Grace Tolbert, O.S.B.. He is survived by his devoted wife of sixty-nine years, Shirley Ard Tolbert, four children, Patricia Hartzo (Gil), Billy Harold Tolbert (Renea), Christine Webb (Bill), and Joseph Stephen Tolbert (Ange), ten grandchildren, James Tolbert, Emily Parker, Greg Tolbert, David Hartzo, Phillip Hartzo, Rebecca Caliste, Christopher Webb, Kevin Tolbert, Stephen Tolbert, and Brian Tolbert, great grandchildren Roman Tolbert and Chase Tolbert, Abigail and Avery Tolbert, Luke and Alayna May Parker, Laura Elizabeth Caliste, Miley Tolbert, Gracie and Blake Hartzo, and Conner and Nash Hartzo. He is also survived by his twin sisters, Lucille Gates and Chloe Gates, numerous nephews, nieces, and a world of friends. As a young man he proudly served in the United States Navy during World War II on the U.S.S Pocomoke. He often spoke with fondness of these formative years in service to his country. Shortly after leaving service, he met the love of his life, Shirley Ard. She was wearing a white dress and singing in the church choir the night he met her while visiting the Oil City Pentecostal Church with his sister Nellie. Their children often teased them that after their first kiss, Shirley asked Joe, "Now what did you say your name was?" It was a kiss that lasted a life time. They married a short six weeks later in a simple ceremony. Through good times and bad, their love for each other remained steadfast. Their marriage was a beautiful testimony of commitment, unselfishness, dedication, and true love. He was a wonderful father, grandfather, and great grandfather who was greatly admired and respected by all his children. Mr. Joe was greatly respected, admired, and loved by all who knew him. He never let life's trials keep him down, but rather looked for how he could make it better. He was a selfmade man who loved life and hard work. While many people may enjoy taking vacations and hobbies, he would rather have been working. A leader and pioneer in the local oil industry, Joe acquired knowledge not from school and books, but through years of hard work. When family members would comment on his expertise, despite only having a sixth grade education, Joe would reply, "Imagine what I could have done if I had completed the seventh grade." His grade education, Joe would reply, "Imagine what I could have done if I had completed the seventh grade." His experience in the oil field began as a roustabout for Hargraves Oil Company. He and his brother-in-law later went into business as Ard & Tolbert Well Service. Throughout the years he continued in numerous oil business endeavors – Tolbert Well Service, Tolbert Drilling, and owner/operator of the Monday Oil Lease. With Whittington Oil Company he drilled sixty-four Fredricksburg Wells on Caddo Lake. He was fondly known by many names by the men who worked with him – "Captain, Pharoah, Chief, Big Joe, and Mr. Joe." Even those not related would call him "Uncle Joe". He was often consulted by local oil men for advice on troubleshooting wells. Next to the oil industry, he loved all aspects of the cattle business and farming. He enjoyed nothing better than to

doctor a horse or cow, or drive his tractor. Up until his last few days, Papaw Joe was checking his Monday Oil Lease, taking care of his cows, and providing guidance to his family and friends. There was "no quit" in Joe Tolbert. Above all else on earth our father loved his Shirley Margaret and family. Daddy was our strength and inspiration – "he could take care of anything". He will always be remembered for his quick wit – "Momma put the coffee pot on. I'm coming home." Brother Joe greatly loved the Lord, his pastor, and church family. He was a member of the Vivian United Pentecostal Church and was honored to serve on the church board. Brother Joe was faithful to the end. Despite being in great pain, he rarely missed a service. Pallbearers honoring their beloved grandfather will be his grandsons and grandsons-in-law, James (Jamie Tolbert), Greg Tolbert, Preston Parker, Jon Caliste, Christopher Webb, Kevin Tolbert, Stephen Tolbert, Brian Tolbert, David Hartzo, and Phillip Hartzo. Honorary Pallbearers will be Johnny Barnes, John Batts, Hammer Nottingham, Tommy Poindexter, Alan Sugar and Dick Whittington. Joe's determination, persistence, sense of humor, and love for life is the great legacy he has left for his family. Though age and pain may have slowed his walk, Daddy always stood tall in our hearts. One of his last requests at the hospital was for his grandson to purchase white shoes..."I'm going to run home in those shoes". Daddy, walk slowly down that long, long path, for soon we'll follow you. The family would like to express their heartfelt thanks to family and friends. A special thanks to Joe's nephew, Rusty Batts for his love and care of our "Dear Ole' Dad."