



John I. Leahy Sr.

August 15, 1930 - February 15, 2026

John Ignatius Leahy, Sr. was born on August 15, 1930 just 2 minutes after his twin brother, Joseph. In those days it was a total surprise to both doctors and mothers – “oops, wait, here comes another one!” He was the second son of Mr. and Mrs. Vincent Leahy of Collingdale, PA. Believe it or not, his mother went on to have two more sets of twins!

Johnny grew up playing sports and was quite adept at them. However, he had to take responsibility at an early age to care for his family, especially his younger brothers and sisters. He worked small jobs painting, paving, and delivering large kegs of ice. On many occasions his mother would wake him up before dawn on cold winter days to buy a "bag a day" of coal to start the furnace before his younger siblings awoke. The few dollars he did earn were given to his parents to satisfy the "book," which was the running tab at the local grocery store for food.

The family eventually moved to Baltimore, MD so his father could take a new job at Baugh Chemical Company. With limited means and no way to pay for college, his father went to Loyola College to plead his case for tuition assistance for the twin boys. The President worked out a deal: “Pay for one and the other one will go for free, but I won’t ever tell you which one”. While his older brother excelled at academics, John managed to get by as a solid “C” student. He would later always say that "the world can be ruled by C

students!" Over the years, he would give countless hours of his time, and significant amounts of money, to the Jesuits – in particular to Loyola College – in appreciation for their accommodation.

Upon graduation from Loyola College, he enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps Officer Candidates School. After graduating and receiving his commission as an officer, he was eventually promoted to First Lieutenant and would later go on to assume the role of Company Commander. This role was typically one for a Major (2 grades higher). But, given the recent wars in Europe and Asia, there was a shortage of officers, thus thrusting him into command. At the age of 23 he was one of, if not the youngest, Company Commander in Marine Corps history at the time. Fortunately, the war in Korea ended before he was ever deployed. He was fiercely proud of the Corps, and was encouraged to consider a career in the military, but he ultimately decided to pursue a career in the business world.

Now, find a career. One day as he was returning home from an interview, he saw a "help wanted" sign at Black & Decker in Towson, MD, the world headquarters for B&D. He pulled in and applied. He got a job as a warehouse expeditor, a role he later would refer to as his "castor oil" – that is, it tastes awful but was good for you. He earned more responsibility and eventually achieved his goal as a salesman. His first territory was in the upper Midwest, based in Minneapolis, MN. After a short stint, he was promoted to a sales manager in Chicago, and thus moved there with his young family in tow. John climbed the ranks in the company to become President and CEO of Black and Decker, USA, then President of the Americas International. He was in top management at B&D during the introduction of such products as: The B&D Apollo Lunar Surface Drill, the Workmate portable work bench, and the famous Dustbuster hand-held battery-powered vacuum, one of the original prototypes of which resides in the Smithsonian Institution. After he retired from Black & Decker, he started another 30-year career in consulting and executive

search. Throughout his 60-year career and the years that followed, Mr. Leahy served on many corporate and civic boards, including the Baltimore Bank Corporation, Master Power, Allied Capital, Union Memorial Hospital, The Saint Mary's Seminary, Calvert Hall College, and Loyola College.

Most of all, John Leahy was a devoted husband and family man. He was married to Nancy Ruth Buseman for 56 years, and they together raised 6 children. He never exercised for a day in his life. His passion was golf, a sport that he would opine introduces a person to his or herself and to others. During his years playing golf, he recorded 4 holes-in-one. He was a member of Baltimore Country Club for well over 55 years, and was fortunate to play all over the world.

After his wife died in 2011, he met and fell in love with a beautiful woman named June Reiter. He managed to convince her to marry him, and they lived very happily together for over 14 years.

John often said: "I don't know what I would do without her!"

John is preceded in heaven by Mrs. Nancy B. Leahy and son Thomas K. Leahy. He is survived by his wife June, his 5 children (John, Jr. and his wife, Kim; Stephen and his wife, Sharon; Robert and his wife, Kathy; Brigid and her husband, Chuck Fischer; and Patrick and his wife, Amy), 16 amazing grandchildren, 5 great grandchildren and counting, and 3 wonderful stepchildren.

A Mass of Christian burial will be celebrated at Immaculate Conception Church in Towson, MD on Friday, March 13, 2026 at 10:30am. Visitation with the family members will be held that same morning at 10:00am. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Stella Maris Hospice, 2300 Dulaney Valley Road, Timonium, MD, 21093.

SEMPER FIDELIS – ALWAYS FAITHFUL

Cemetery Details

Dulaney Valley Memorial Gardens

200 E. Padonia Rd.
Timonium, MD 21093
<http://www.dulaneyvalley.com>

Previous Events

Visitation

MAR 13. 10:00 AM - 10:30 AM (ET)

Immaculate Conception Church
200 Ware Ave.
Towson, MD 21204

Mass of Christian Burial

MAR 13. 10:30 AM (ET)

Immaculate Conception Church
200 Ware Ave.
Towson, MD 21204