

Tad Richards Callister

December 17, 1945 ~ October 9, 2025

Our beloved husband, father, and grandfather, Tad Richards Callister, returned home to his Heavenly Father on October 9, 2025, after a courageous, eighteen-month battle with ALS. He passed peacefully at home in Bountiful, Utah, at the age of 79, surrounded by his devoted wife and family. This devastating disease gradually robbed him of his ability to run, walk, eat, speak, and ultimately breathe, yet it could never diminish his unwavering faith in Jesus Christ, his profound love for his family, or his lifelong commitment to serving others.

Tad was born on December 17, 1945, in Glendale, California, to Reed Eddington Callister and Effie Norinne Richards. As one of six children raised by “goodly parents,” he grew up in a home filled with faith, love, and service. From an early age, Tad stood apart from the crowd—blessed with a rare combination of keen intellect, athletic prowess, spiritual depth, a sense of humor, and genuine kindness. He had a way of making everyone who interacted with him feel special, inspiring them to live up to their full potential.

A heartbreaking, yet pivotal moment in Tad’s life came at the tender age of fourteen, when he faced the tragic loss of his beloved sister Paula, who passed away unexpectedly. Rather than allowing this tragedy to become a stumbling block, Tad transformed it into a stepping stone—deepening his faith and turning to the Savior with renewed devotion.

Ever the missionary, Tad served a full-time mission in the Eastern Atlantic States Mission, where his love for the gospel and the Savior took deep root. Upon returning home, he earned degrees from Brigham Young University (Accounting), UCLA School of Law (J.D.), and New York University (LL.M. in Taxation). As a distinguished attorney, he practiced tax law for more than thirty-four years, finding joy in working alongside his father and two brothers at their family firm. His legal expertise led to frequent speaking engagements, where he was admired for his clarity, insight, and ability to make complex topics understandable.

On December 20, 1968, Tad was sealed to his sweetheart, Kathryn Louise Saporiti, in the Los Angeles California Temple. Tad and Kathryn’s children can attest that their marriage was a model of devotion, faith, and joy. Together, they raised six children, making every effort to fill their home with uplifting music, inspiring media, and the light of Christ. To Tad, the roles of husband and father were sacred—roles he honored, relished, and fulfilled completely. His family never witnessed a cross word or even a raised voice. He was always there for them, somehow never missing a recital or sporting event.

Tad’s lifelong service to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints reflected his conviction that “true religion is to visit the widows and the fatherless.” He served faithfully as bishop, stake president, regional representative, and Area Seventy; as president of the Canada Toronto East Mission (2005–2008); as a General Authority Seventy and a member of the Presidency of the Seventy; and as General President of the Sunday School (2014–2019), where

he helped guide the *Come, Follow Me* curriculum centered on gospel learning in the home. In addition to these better-known callings and assignments, Tad relished the opportunity to teach the youth, both as a seminary teacher in the Glendale California Stake and as a mission preparation teacher in the North Salt Lake Utah Stake. His ministry was anchored in the example of Christ. He bore testimony, ministered to the sick, supported widows and single mothers, and quietly assisted those in need. His love for the Savior shone through his ardent testimony, daily scripture study, his habit of memorizing scriptures on flashcards, and his Christlike pattern of “going about doing good.”

As a lifelong learner and devoted student of the scriptures, Tad transformed a seventeen-year personal study project about the Savior’s Atonement into his beloved book, *The Infinite Atonement*. He taught that “there is a certain spiritual buoyancy that attends a study of, and reflection upon, the Atonement of Jesus Christ.” A gifted writer who deeply loved the Savior, Tad went on to author six additional books that drew, and will continue to draw, people unto Christ. Known to many through his inspiring talks, books, and articles, he lived the principles he taught with authenticity and humility.

Even as ALS gradually took its toll on his mortal frame, Tad faced the disease with strength, faith, and his characteristic humor, never once complaining. This resilience echoed the "never-give-up" attitude that defined his life and that he engrained in all his children. As a father, he playfully wrestled with his young children, pinning them down and asking if they gave up—coaching them to respond, "Never! I'll never give up!" This simple lesson mirrored how he approached every challenge, from his demanding career and church callings to his final battle with ALS.

When first diagnosed with ALS, Tad vowed to “sprint to the finish line”—to serve God, his family, and the community until the very end. And that is exactly what he did.

Tad took great comfort in knowing that his beloved wife and children are sealed to him for all eternity. He is survived by his faithful wife, Kathryn; their six children, Angela (Kenneth Dalebout), Richard (Heather Baird), Nathan (Bethany Anderson), Rebecca (Robert Thompson), Jeremy (Mandy Thornton), and Jared (Yanni Lund); twenty-nine grandchildren and four great-grandchildren; as well as his brother, Douglas (Jeannette McKibben), and his sister, Susan (Dean Becker).

Without a doubt, Tad has crossed the veil and is now reunited with his loving parents and his three predeceased siblings—Richard, David, and Paula.

Funeral services will be held Saturday, October 18, 2025, at 11:00 a.m. at the Bountiful Regional Center, located at 835 N. 400 E. North Salt Lake, Utah. Viewings will be held Friday, October 17, 6:00–8:00 p.m. at the North Salt Lake Stake Center, 900 Eaglepointe Drive, North Salt Lake, Utah and then Saturday, 9:00–10:30 a.m., prior to the service at the Bountiful Regional Center.

For those who wish to join the services virtually, you may do so by clicking the blue “Watch Services” button at the top of the obituary.