

Reverend Fr. Alistair McKay, C.Ss.R. Obituary - Salem, Virginia

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Reverend Fr. Alistair McKay, C.Ss.R., 70, of Salem, Va., died on Saturday, April 16, 2016.

Born in Perth, Scotland on Monday, February 28, 1946, he was educated at St John's and Lawside Academy. He professed vows as a Redemptorist in 1970 and studied in Canterbury. He was ordained a priest in 1975 and began work on the overseas missions in Zimbabwe. He was fluent in Shona and was a support to many during a time of political turmoil. He moved to South Africa, where he worked in Cape Town and then spent many years on a remote mission in Vleschfontein. He learned the Tsawana language and became integrated into the community. He worked tirelessly for the poorest of the poor.

He came to the USA for a sabbatical in 1996 and was transferred to the Redemptorist Vice-Province of Richmond. He served at St. Jude's and St. Anne's (Sumter, S.C.), St. Joseph's (Hampton, Va.), St. Vincent de Paul (Newport News, Va.), Sacred Heart (New Smyrna Beach, Fla.), and St. John's (Highland Springs, Va.). Most recently, he was appointed to Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Salem, where he served as pastor for nearly two years. His work of service to the Catholic and wider community helped build up the parish. He was a man of deep faith, whose love and kindness towards families, children, the elderly, and the frail made him such a well-loved priest.

He was treated for cancer at Lewis-Gale Medical Center starting in November 2015. During this period, he remained active in his ministry. Towards the end of his life, he accepted the care and support of parishioners, and he died peacefully in the care of those who had ministered to him during his last days.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Charles and Mary Frances McKay; and by his brother, Charles McKay.

He is survived by brother, Ian McKay and wife, Josephine; along with their children, Ruari and Mairi Frances.

A vigil service will be held at 7 p.m. on Friday, April 22, 2016 at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic Church in Salem. Visitation will take place from 9 to 10 a.m. on Saturday, April 23, 2016 at the church. The funeral Mass will be at 11 a.m., with Most Rev. Francis DiLorenzo, Bishop of the Diocese of Richmond, presiding. A reception will immediately follow.

There will also be a vigil at 7 p.m. on Monday, April 25, 2016 at Sacred Heart Catholic Church in New Smyrna Beach, Fla. Following a Mass at 11 a.m. on Tuesday, April 26, 2016, Father McKay will be laid to rest at Edgewater-New Smyrna Cemetery in Edgewater, Fla.

Online condolences may be expressed at www.johnmoakey.com.

Father Alistair McKay will be missed by his fellow clergy, family, and friends. He was a proud Scotsman, the "Braveheart" of Salem. Na Alba gu brath. We trust his soul to the mercy of a loving God.