

FR. MICHAEL JAMES KEENAN, C.Ss.R.

1931- 2014

Fr. Michael James “Mick” Keenan was the longest serving Australian confrere in the Philippines. Born in famous town of Griffith in New South Wales, Australia on the 23rd day of August, 1931. The second eldest son of Daniel Keenan and Elizabeth Smith. He was professed on February 2, 1951 and ordained priest on March 10, 1957 by Bishop J. O’Collins of the Diocese of Ballarat, Australia.



Fr. Mick took a nine-month pastoral year at Mayfield in the city of New Castle north of Sydney. At the end of the pastoral year 1958, he was appointed to the Philippine Mission. Someone recalls that the director of seminary remarked: "that boy is a rock of common sense". He brought that with him to the Philippine Island. He sailed from Sydney on March 19, 1959 on the Eastern Argosy and arrived in Manila Bay on April 05, 1959, and was posted at once to the Bicol region. There, Michael made his mark for 14 years conducting parish missions in town and barrio. Even today, we are told that he is well remembered by the older people.

After his long stint in Bicol, Fr. Mick was transferred to Baclaran in 1973. From 1975 to 1978 he served as Vicar to the Vice-Province and as VP Bursar and Baclaran House Bursar until 1982. He became Assistant Novice Master from 1984 to 1987. He was the Superior of Lipa Community from 1987 to 1990 and House Bursar from 1990 to 1994. He became Novice Master from 1994 to 1996. He was appointed to Baclaran community in 1996 and became House Bursar until 2001. From 2001 to 2008 he served as assistant to House Bursar of Baclaran community and again became the House Bursar from 2008 to 2014.

On March 10, 2014 Fr. Mick returned to Australia and was immediately admitted to St. Vincent's hospital. He was later moved to the hospice where he died peacefully this morning.

Special thanks to all those here who assisted Fr. Michael in his illness, and made it possible for him to travel to Australia and be with his family during his last days. We thank Dr. Nida Pica who did all that could be done for one who, as it turned out, was suffering from an incurable disease. It was so good that Fr. Michael's niece, Bernadette, was able to come up here, first of all to see him in the hospital, and then, again, to come back to assist in preparing him for the flight to Sydney. Bernadette, in an e-mail four days ago, said that she felt that he was failing fast, and added that she believed that his death would be a 'happy relief' for 'Uncle Mick'.

We have lost a treasured member of our Vice-Province, and of the Province of Canberra. But after his faithful life as a Redemptorist, and his long period of illness, he was surely prepared for the call of the Lord, and through the prayers of Our Mother of Perpetual Help, now enjoys what is promised to those who live and die in the Congregation.

Fr. Ariel Lubi, C.Ss.R.

Vice-Provincial