

Redemptorist Archives 5 april 2021

Today the Baltimore Province recalls the life and ministry of a pioneering educator

Father William Jenks, C.Ss.R. (1903-1983)



A native of Roxbury, MA, he grew up to be a polyglot. After ordination in 1930 he gave parish missions and then began a varied teaching career that spanned American and European history, civics, and music in the minor seminary and homiletics, plain chant, choir and orchestra in the major seminary.

Soon, however, his interests turned to those with physical and mental challenges. In the 1950s he established the National Catholic Educational Association's Special Education Department and served as associate secretary.

He began publishing and lecturing on special needs children, consulting widely, before obtaining his doctorate in education from the Catholic University of America in 1961.

He taught there until 1975 before heading the Psychology Department at Ladycliffe College in Highland Falls, NY.

Late in life he became a certified mental health chaplain and devoted himself to psychiatric patients at Benedictine Hospital in Kingston, NY. He died on 5 april 1983.