

Fr. Joseph Krastel, C.Ss.R., Obituary

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Joseph Francis Krastel of the St. Mary's, Annapolis community died on November 22, 2020, eight days prior to his 82nd birthday. Born December 1, 1938, in Baltimore, Maryland, he was the son of Alfred P. and Cecilia (Spahn).

Baptized December 4, 1938 in Mercy Hospital, Baltimore, he was later confirmed May 26, 1949 at Blessed Sacrament in that city. He professed vows as a Redemptorist on August 2, 1959, in Ilchester, Maryland and made final vows on September 2, 1962, at Mt. St. Alphonsus, Esopus, New York, where he was ordained on June 21, 1964.

At the Mount he earned the baccalaureate in 1961 and a Master's in Religious Education in 1965. He continued his graduate studies, first obtaining a Master's in Library Science at the Catholic University of America in 1966 and a Master's in Education from Iona College in 1970.

After studies in Washington, DC, he was a professor at St. Alphonsus College in Suffield, Connecticut from 1966 to 1975. He then was made rector of the juvenate at St. Mary's Seminary, North East from June 1975 to 1981, whereupon he returned to Suffield to serve as the province vocation director between 1981 to 1984. During this period, he was also routinely engaged in apostolic work, preaching missions throughout New England.

He continued as vocation director while stationed at Holy Redeemer College in Washington between 1984 and 1985. In June of 1985 he moved to St. Wenceslaus, Baltimore, and joined the mission band until 1987 when he was made rector of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Mission Church, Boston, a post he held from July 1987 to June 1993. During this period Mission Hill underwent radical social change and Fr. Krastel undertook a calm program of renewal and preservation—from the blessing of a new AIDS hospice and election of the first parish council to upgrades to the Basilica's cupola and organ.

From June 1993 to 1999 Father Krastel was part of the Holy Redeemer retreat house community in Eggleston, Dominica. From 1993 to 1999, while stationed in Eggleston, he began an international preaching ministry, traveling to Poland, Columbia, Russia, Guyana, and Jamaica. From 1999-2005 he was rector of St. Patrick's in Grand Bay, Dominica. By 2006, he was rector of Seelos House in Palmiste, with care of Our Lady of the Assumption, Vieux Fort, St. Lucia, in the West Indies.



Fr. Krastel returned to the United States and served the people of St. Mary's parish from 2010 until his death (2010-2020).

Rarely did Fr. Krastel miss an opportunity to watch an Orioles' game or comment on their pitching staff or hitting percentages.

In 2019, Father Krastel celebrated his 60th anniversary of profession—a long and fruitful life in service to the Redeemer.

We thank Fr. Krastel, (better know as Fr. Joe) for his love of God and the Redemptorists. His witness to his vocation was a promise and challenge to all of us.

Eternal Rest Grant unto him, O Lord. May Perpetual light shine upon him.

Mary, our Mother of Perpetual Help, receive Fr. Joe into the Kingdom of Heaven!