Covid: Priest dies in Woolton monastery outbreak

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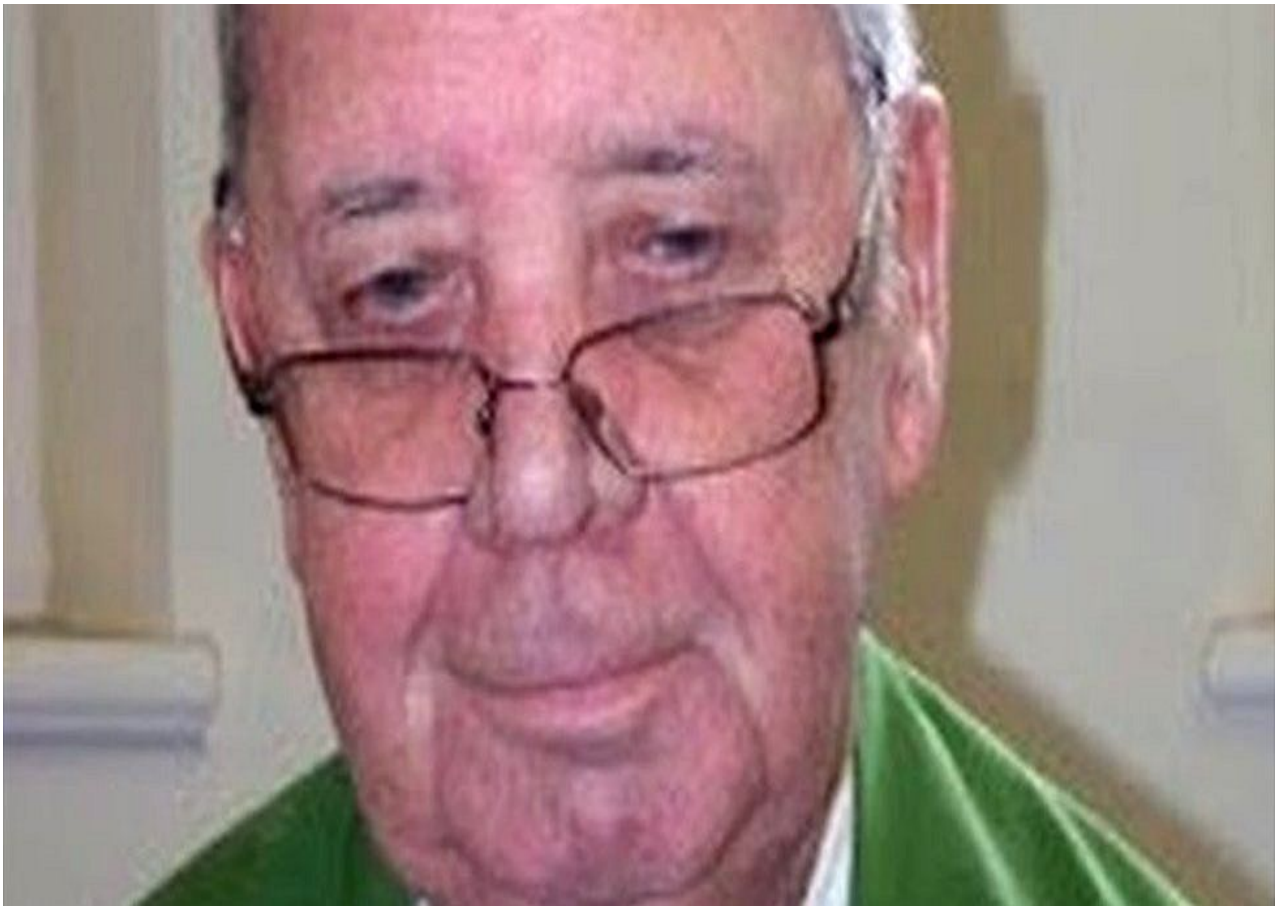

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image captionFr Brian Russell died on Wednesday

A priest has died after an outbreak of Covid-19 at a monastery in Liverpool.

Parish priest Father Tim Buckley said 81-year-old Father Brian Russell had died with coronavirus on Wednesday, and three other priests who lived in the Bishop Eton community were in hospital.

Two more priests at the Woolton monastery and three support staff are self-isolating after testing positive.

Fr Buckley said it was a situation he could not have imagined "in my worst nightmares".

The monastery, which is staffed by priests from the Roman Catholic Redemptorist religious order, serves two churches, the neighbouring Our Lady of the Annunciation, and St Mary's Woolton.

Both have been closed for public worship since 7 January.

image copyrightRedemptorist Bishop Eton
image captionFr Tim Buckley said he found it "hard to believe this has happened"

In a message to parishioners on YouTube, Fr Buckley said: "In my worst nightmares, I could not have thought up a scenario quite like the present one.

"I find it hard to believe this has happened.

"But nevertheless it has come and... we just have to try and cope."

He added that the priests self-isolating at the monastery were still "under the weather... but they're coming along".

"They may need a little more time before they are fully reintegrated," he said.

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