

In Memoriam

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Father Francis O'Rourke dies at 80

Rev. Francis O'Rourke, C.Ss.R., was born June 15, 1935, in Brooklyn, N.Y. He professed his first vows on August 2, 1957, and was ordained to the priesthood on June 17, 1962, at Mount St. Alphonsus Seminary, Esopus, N.Y. He died December 31, 2015, at Lutheran Medical Center. He was 80 years old.

Visitation will be held on Wednesday, January 6, in the lower church of the Basilica of Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Brooklyn from 6 to 9 p.m., with a wake service at 7:30. Visitation will continue Thursday from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m., followed by a concelebrated Mass at 10:30. Interment will be at the Cemetery of the Resurrection on Staten Island.

Father Francis began his priestly ministry at St. Mary Parish in Buffalo, N.Y., in 1964. The Redemptorists didn't keep him there long. They needed his talents in another country, Brazil.

He served in Brazil from 1965 until 1970, ministering in the towns of Tibagi, **São** José in Ponta Grossa, Ponta **Porã**, Guaratuba, and Antonina.

Returning to the United States, he worked at OLPB Brooklyn from 1970-1977; St. Philomena Parish in Pittsburgh from 1977-1981; St. Peter the Apostle Parish in Philadelphia from 1981-1983; St. Mary Parish in Annapolis, Md., from 1983-1984; Chester, Md., from 1984-1990; and Our Lady of Lourdes, Seaford, Del., from 1990-1993.

He was elected to Redemptorist government in 1990 by the eighth provincial chapter and served as a member of the extraordinary provincial council. Following this service, he was chosen as provincial consultor from 1993-1999.

From 1999 to 2015 he served at Our Lady of Perpetual Help at 61st Street in New York City.

He lived his life serving the wider church and the Redemptorist Congregation that meant so much to him.

Whenever you met him, he had a hearty hello to share with you and frequently a joke to bring you a smile. He cared deeply about people.

While he was in Pittsburgh he helped a couple through a difficult time. They felt compelled to write the following: "We had some personal problems and asked Father O'Rourke for his help. I have never known a priest with as much compassion and understanding as this man. . . . Not everyone has the God-given talent of making one's life a little easier by taking the time to care."

Those who lived with him remember him as a confrere who brought joy to the community.

Even when he was sick he was not one to dwell on it.

May he keep an eye on the Redemptorist family he loved from his new home.

