

Murray, Msgr. Fr. Francis J.

Monsignor Fr. Francis J. Murray, 84, passed away Tuesday afternoon, Oct. 30, 2007 at Covenant HealthCare in Saginaw.

Monsignor Murray was born on Sept. 2, 1923 in Tawas City, son of Grace M. (Laidlaw) and Robert B. Murray. He attended St. Joseph Parish and St. Joseph School in East Tawas before studying for the priesthood at St. Joseph Seminary in Grand Rapids and the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C. He was ordained on June 11, 1949 by then Detroit Auxiliary Bishop Allen J. Babcock at St. Mary Cathedral in Saginaw.

Father Murray was made a monsignor by Pope John Paul II in November 1980. At that time, Saginaw Bishop Francis F. Reh acknowledged Murray as a dedicated diocesan priest willing to accept "difficult and challenging assignments" whenever he was called upon to do so.

During his priesthood, Monsignor Murray served as an associate pastor at Ss. Peter & Paul Parish and St. Mary Cathedral in Saginaw and pastor at St. Elizabeth Parish in Marlette; Sacred Heart Parish in Birch Run; St. Mary Parish in Hemlock; St. Mary Parish in Port Sanilac; St. Agnes Parish in Freeland; Ss. Peter & Paul Parish in Ruth and St. Patrick Parish in Palms; St. Mary/St. Edward Parishes in Kinde; Sacred Heart Parish in Mt. Pleasant; St. Michael Parish in Pinconning; and St. Joseph Parish in Argyle and St. Ignatius Parish in Freiburg. He also served as an instructor at the former St. Paul Seminary in Saginaw, a diocesan Boy Scouts chaplain, executive secretary to the Clergy Personnel Board, diocesan Rural Life director, was a regional vicar and a member of the Ecumenism Commission, Diocesan Pastoral Council and Senate of Priests and served as the Diocesan Archivist. He was granted senior priest (retired) status in 1996.

Monsignor Murray is survived by a brother-in-law, Frank C. Schreck of Bay City; a sister-in-law, Dorothy P. Murray of Phoenix, Ariz.; and many nieces, nephews, great-nieces and great-nephews.

Besides his parents, he was also preceded in death by two brothers, Robert G. Murray and William and Ann Murray; and a sister, Annette M. Schreck.

The Funeral Liturgy will take place at 10 a.m. Saturday, Nov. 3, 2007 at St. Mary Cathedral in Saginaw. The Most Rev. Robert J. Carlson will officiate. The Rite of Committal will be in St. Joseph Catholic Cemetery in East Tawas.

Friends may call at the Gephart Funeral Home, Inc., 201 W. Midland St., Bay City, MI 48706 (989) 686-2291, on Thursday from 6 to 9 p.m. Monsignor Murray will lie in-state at St. Mary Cathedral on Friday from 2 to 9 p.m. with the Vigil for the Deceased at 7 p.m., and on Saturday from 9 a.m. until the time of services.

Memorial contributions may be made to the Catholic Diocese of Saginaw Priests Retirement Association.

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