



DIOCESE OF VENICE IN FLORIDA



Obituary

Father Simon Kenny, O.Carm.

Father Simon Kenny, of the Order of Carmelites of The Most Pure Heart of Mary Province, died Monday, Oct. 31, in Venice. Father Kenny served for several years at St. Raphael Parish, Englewood, and was known by many of the Venice Diocese's homebound for his regular appearances on the diocese's Sunday Mass on Television. He was 67.



Father Kenny was born Dec. 6, 1937, in Chicago to the late William and late Elizabeth (Mount) Kenny. He attended St. Nicholas of Tolentine School, Chicago, before enrolling at Mount Carmel Preparatory Seminary, Niagara Falls, Ontario, and graduating from the Carmelite Junior Seminary in Hamilton, Mass.

He professed his simple vows as a Carmelite at St. John's Novitiate in New Baltimore, Penn., on Aug. 22, 1957. He received his bachelor's degree in philosophy from Mount Carmel College, Niagara Falls, and then went on to Whitefriars Hall in Washington, D.C., to study theology. Father Kenny was ordained to the priesthood in Niagara Falls, Ontario, Feb. 8, 1964.

Following ordination, Father Kenny continued his education, receiving a master's degree in history from St. Bonaventure University in Olean, N.Y., and a master's degree in religious education from Washington Theological Union. He also studied at Loyola University and University of Houston.

Father Kenny served much of his vocation as a teacher, starting at DeSales High School in Louisville, Ky., and then Carmel High School in Mundelein, Ill., where he served first as teacher and later as assistant principal. While there, Father Kenny received the Outstanding Educator of America award in

1973 and an award for his outstanding service to the high school's athletic department in 1976. He also served as prior of the Carmelite community there.

Father Kenny next served as principal of Mount Carmel High School in Houston, Texas, as well as president/secretary of the Houston Catholic High School Principal's Association. He did so much for the school's athletic department, "Football Jersey Number 1" was retired in his honor.

In 1990, Father Kenny began parish ministry, first at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish, Newport News, Va.; then at St. Mary Parish in Closter, N.J. He then ministered at Our Lady of Peace Parish, Niagara Falls, before transferring to Salpointe Catholic High School, Tucson, Ariz. He served as the director of Extended Ministries and, later, as principal until 1997, when he took a leave of absence due to a heart attack. Upon his return, Father

Kenny served as president of Salpointe until November 1999, when he resigned for health reasons.

He resided at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Priory in Tucson but, as his health allowed and wanting to remain active in ministry, Father Kenny moved to Florida where he served at St. Raphael Parish, Englewood, as chaplain to the Knights of Columbus and taught a Bible class until his retirement in 2003.

During his retirement, Father Kenney continued to minister, sometimes volunteering to celebrate Mass for the Venice Diocese's Sunday Mass on Television or in the chapel at The Catholic Center in Venice.

Naomi Zoeller, TV Mass producer, worked with Father Kenny many times, and was always thrilled to have him celebrate the Mass as part of her ministry to the homebound.

"He spoke to the people of today. He made the Gospel come alive," Zoeller said. "He was always available for the TV Mass. We loved it when he came. Even the viewers wrote in about him. He really connected to the homebound. His words were inspiring and hope filled."

Father Kenny resided in retirement at Carmel in Venice until his death. He is survived by his brother, Philip, and his Carmelite brothers.

Visitation for Father Kenny was Thursday, Nov. 3, at the St. Raphael Parish. Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated there Friday, Nov. 4. Burial followed.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to St. Raphael Parish's Church Building Fund, 770 Kilbourne Road, Englewood, FL 34223; Carmel High School Scholarship Fund, One Carmel Parkway, Mundelein, IL 60060; or the Simon J. Kenny, OCarm, Scholarship Fund, Salpointe Catholic High School, 1545 East Copper Street, Tucson, AZ 85719.