



Fr. Donald Kos

September 18, 1936 - February 4, 2018

Fr. Donald (Thaddeus) Kos, OFM Conv. 81, passed away on February 4, 2018 at Our Lady of the Angels Care Center in Enfield, CT after a brief illness. Born in Webster, MA, on September 18, 1936, he was the son of the late Joseph and Sophie (Rybak) Kos. He was predeceased by his sister Stasia Krok, and his brother Chester Kos, and is survived by his brother Joseph Kos, his sister Jane Pokora, and their families. After attending St. Jerome High School in Holyoke, Fr. Donald entered the Franciscan Friars Conventual Novitiate in Becket, MA, in 1953. On August 15, 1954, he professed his Simple Vows and on September 23, 1957 he professed his Solemn Vows. He received a B.A in Philosophy from St Bonaventure University in 1958. Arriving in Rome in 1958, during the final days of the pontificate of Pope Pius XII, Fr. Donald's Roman formation took place at our Collegio Seraphico. He was ordained to the Holy Priesthood in the Basilica of the Twelve Apostles in 1961, during the pontificate of Pope Saint John XXIII. He earned a Doctorate in Sacred Theology from the Seraphicum in 1964, and a Doctorate in Canon Law from the Lateran University in 1966, during the pontificate of Pope Blessed Paul VI. In 1966, at the request of the Most Rev. Basil Heiser, 114th Minister General after St. Francis, Fr. Donald began to work for the Order and the Vatican in the office for the Postulation of Saints' Causes. Under the same Minister General, he was elected to the General Definitory of the Order in 1970 as Assistant General serving the Conference of North America and England, an office which he held until 1978, when he was elected Procurator General of the

Order, a position which he held for the next 17 years until 1995. During that time, he also held the higher position as Vicar General of the Order from 1989 through 1995. Later, he re-assumed his former position of Procurator General from 2007 until 2013. In the eight-century history of the Franciscan Order, he had the unique distinction of being the only American to serve as Procurator General, and the related distinction of being the first of Polish nationality to hold that position. While serving in these general ministries of the Order, Fr. Donald's talents did not go unrecognized by the Vatican. Pope Saint John Paul II appointed him a "votante" on the Signatura Apostolica, where he efficiently acquitted his duties for many years. In 1997, he was named Promoter of Justice in the Vatican dicastery of the Apostolic Penitenzieria, a job which he fulfilled through 2016. Upon reaching the age of 80 in 2016, Fr. Donald received the surprise of being appointed by Pope Francis to the post of "Judicial Vicar" for Vatican Tribunal Court of First Instance. Just as St. Francis of Assisi heeded Jesus's admonition "Go repair my house," so too this little Polish-American friar from Massachusetts never stopped trying his best to upbuild Christ's Church. Fr. Donald returned to Massachusetts in December 2018 and was diagnosed with metastatic cancer. Fr. Donald was called by Sister Death on February 4, 2018 while in hospice care at Our Lady of the Angels Care Center in Enfield, CT. Fr. Donald will lie in state at Our Lady of the Cross Church, Holyoke, on Friday, February 9 from 4 – 7 PM. A Franciscan Wake Service will be held at 7 PM. On Saturday, February 10, there will be visitation from 9:30 to 10:45 and a Mass of Christian Burial will be held at 11 AM presided by, the Most Rev. Marco Tasca, the 119th Minister General of the Franciscan Order. Fr. Donald will be buried in the Friars Plot at Mater Dolorosa Cemetery in South Hadley, MA. Donations in his memory can be made to the Franciscan Education Burse, 12290 Folly Quarter Rd., Ellicott City, MD, 21042.

Cemetery Details

Mater Dolorosa Cemetery

Pittroff Avenue
South Hadley, MA

Previous Events

Visitation

FEB **9**. 4:00 PM - 7:00 PM (ET)

Our Lady of the Cross Church
Holy Cross Avenue
Holyoke, MA 01040

Visitation

FEB **10**. 9:30 AM - 10:45 AM (ET)

Our Lady of the Cross Church
Holy Cross Avenue
Holyoke, MA 01040

Service

FEB **10**. 11:00 AM (ET)

Our Lady of the Cross Church
Holy Cross Avenue
Holyoke, MA 01040