



Fr. Paschal Rys OFMC.

July 14, 1923 - March 5, 2013

Father Paschal Rys, OFM Conv., 89, died under home-hospice care at St. Hyacinth Residence in Chicopee, on Tuesday, March 5, 2013.

Born John Rys in Chicopee Falls, on July 14, 1923, son of Stanley and Mary (Kusmierz) Rys, he took the name Paschal upon entry into the Novitiate of the Franciscan Friars Conventual. He did his Novitiate at St. Joseph Cupertino Friary, in Ellicott City, MD, 1941-42. He professed his Simple Vows as a Franciscan Friar on August 15, 1942, and his Solemn Vows on August 15, 1946. He was Ordained to the Priesthood on June 16, 1951, by Bishop Christopher J. Weldon, in St. Michael Cathedral, Springfield.

The initial 31 years of Fr. Paschal's ministerial assignments were celebrated (in every sense of the word) at St. Francis Parish, Bessemer, Alabama where he was Associate Pastor from 1951-1970 and Pastor from 1970-1979. During the years of 1970-1973 he also served as Campus Minister of Livingston University and the University of Alabama where he became a friend of Coach "Bear" Bryant. During this time he also ministered to the Mission churches in Eutaw and Reform, AL. He also became the Catholic Campus Minister at Southern Baptist College in Birmingham, AL from 1977-1979. During the years he served in Bessemer, Fr. Paschal involved himself totally with the Civil Rights Movement and became friends with Dr. Martin Luther King. He accompanied Dr. King on the March to Selma and participated with Robert Kennedy in the effort to integrate the University of Alabama. Fr. Paschal was asked to change direction in his life entirely when in 1979 he was asked to

move to the north country of New York State where he became the beloved Pastor of St. Hedwig Parish, Houseville and St. Mary Parish in Constableville, NY. Although Fr. Paschal's talents were always in evidence, he shared with all his parishioners his love of music, and his love of decorating (he had been a window dresser at Macy's when he was a student at Boston College!). Always gifted with a dramatic flair he is remembered fondly by a great story-teller, the community at Constableville dressing up as a clown, a fireman, St. Francis, or Santa Claus just to add zip to their community parades. Fr. Paschal returned to his hometown in 2002 when he was assigned to the St. Hyacinth Senior Friars Residence in Chicopee. Fr. Paschal endured many health issues during these last years and always bore his illnesses well knowing that Jesus, his Redeemer, suffered much for him. Fr. Paschal was predeceased by his parents and 4 brothers, Walter, Albert, Stanley, and Stephen. He is survived by a two brothers, Henry and Edward Rys, and several devoted family members. Fr. Paschal will lie in state at St. Stanislaus Basilica on Friday, March 8, from 4-7 PM. A Franciscan Wake Service will take place in the Basilica at 7 PM. The Liturgy of Christian Burial will be on Saturday, March 9, at 11 AM. Burial will follow in St. Stanislaus Cemetery, Chicopee. Memorial contributions may be made to the Franciscan Education Burse, 12300 Folly Quarter Rd. Ellicott City, MD 21042.

Cemetery Details

St. Stanislaus Cemetery-

800 Montgomery St.
Chicopee, MA

Previous Events

Visitation

MAR 8. 4:00 PM - 7:00 PM (ET)

St. Stanislaus Basilica_
566 Front St.
Chicopee, MA

Service

MAR 9. 11:00 AM (ET)

St. Stanislaus Basilica_
566 Front St.
Chicopee, MA

Tribute Wall

GK

“ George Kozikowski lit a candle in memory of Fr. Paschal Rys OFMC.



George Kozikowski - December 10, 2013 at 03:00 PM