STACHEWICZ -- The Right Rev. Fr. Chester "Chet" Stachewicz, age 70, passed away on April 8, 2010 at New Mexico University Memorial Hospital after a courageous battle.

Chet was born in New York and was raised in the Polish community of Buffalo, NY. He continued to speak, read and write in Polish, Russian, and other European languages throughout his life. Chet attended St. John Vianney Seminary in East Aurora, NY and was ordained as a Roman Catholic priest on May 29, 1972. Fr. Chet later had an epiphany which led him to develop deeply-held theological beliefs and join the Orthodox-Catholic Church of America (OCCA) in 1989. He was called to join the Holy Synod as a consecrated Bishop in September of 1998. Bishop Chet served his adopted state of New Mexico as chaplain to several organizations and also ministered to the homeless, the mentally ill, the disenfranchised, and many veterans through his work at New Mexico Veterans Integration Center. Chet worked at the University of New Mexico and in several hospice and addiction recovery institutions throughout the greater Albuquerque area. Even after he retired he remained active in the community, enjoying opera, flamenco, the symphony and politics. He also was ecumenically active and was a founding member and the Abbott of Holy Trinity Orthodox Community. As per his wishes, cremation has taken place and private disposition of cremains will follow the funeral service. Funeral info 505-697-9309. Memorials may be made in his name to New Mexico Veterans Integration Center (NMVIC), 13001 Central Ave. NE, Albuquerque, NM 87123. Arrangements are being handled by the caring professionals at Riverside Funeral Home of Belen, 418 W Reinken Ave., where an online guest register is available at www.riversideofbelen.com

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