



Biographies



Father Walter E. Johnson, MM

Born: December 19, 1925

Ordained: June 13, 1953

Died: April 14, 2018

Father Walter E. Johnson, M.M. died on April 14, 2018 at Mission St. Teresa's. He was 92 years old and a Maryknoll priest for 64 years.

Walter Emmett Johnson was born on December 19, 1925 in Berwyn IL, the only son of Walter S. and Emily Sopcak Johnson. He attended St. Odilo Parochial School in Berwyn and graduated from Quigley Preparatory Seminary in Chicago. He entered First Philosophy class at Maryknoll Seminary NY on September 4, 1946. He obtained his Bachelor of Arts degree in Philosophy in 1948 and was ordained a priest at Maryknoll Seminary on June 13, 1953.

After ordination Fr. Johnson was assigned to Maryknoll's Mission in the Diocese of Honolulu. He served for three years as an Assistant Pastor in Sacred Heart Parish, Punaho, Oahu. In 1956, he was appointed Assistant Pastor of St. Teresa's Chinese Mission in Chicago.

On January 4, 1963 he was assigned to the Maryknoll Mission Region in Bolivia. His first assignment was San Pedro, La Paz. After a few years, he was asked by the Regional Superior to begin a new Parish on Calle "Tres De Mayo". The new parish was named San Jose Obrero. Some years later, the new parish was turned over to the priests of the Diocese of Rochester, New York. From La Paz, Father Johnson was assigned to the Parish of Cristo Rey, Cochabamba. After a few years he was sent to Colony #1 Okinawa in Santa Cruz. There he reopened the parish school, and three Salesian Sisters came to teach in the school. A dormitory was built to house the poor girls from the villages in the parish. Fr. Johnson served in Bolivian parishes for 14 years.

In October 1977, Fr. Johnson returned to the United States and filled in at Sts. Peter and Paul Parish in Cary IL. There he formed a group of senior citizens called "The Young of Heart Club." On May 7, 1982 he was granted special leave to serve as the Director of the Centro San Jose in Harvard IL. Soon three religious

Sisters from Mexico came to work with him. In 1988 he returned to parochial ministry at Sts. Peter and Paul Church in Cary. Fr. Johnson continued his work with the Hispanic Apostolate in McHenry County, Diocese of Rockford IL.

In 1992, Fr. Johnson was assigned to the Senior Missioner Community and moved to the Maryknoll residence in Los Altos CA. While at Los Altos, he served as Chaplain of St. Louise Hospital in Morgan Hill CA for five years and Chaplain for the Sister Disciples of the Divine Master in San Jose CA for six years. In July 2004, Fr. Johnson moved to Mission St. Teresa's, Maryknoll NY.

A Rosary and wake service was held at 4:00 p.m. on April 19, 2018 at Mission St. Teresa's. The Rite of Reception took place at the Maryknoll Society Center at 9:30 a.m. on April 20, 2018. Prayers were offered in the Lady Chapel until 10:45 a.m. and the biography was read. Mass of Christian Burial followed at 11:00 a.m. and was concelebrated in Queen of Apostles Chapel. Fr. Richard A. Aylward was Principal Celebrant and Homilist. Burial followed in Maryknoll Society Cemetery.

Maryknoll Mission Archives

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