

# Rev. Rebokus Is Remembered

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Of the Regional Staff

UXBRIDGE — A thousand persons paid final respects this morning to the Rev. Donald J. Rebokus, pastor of St. Mary Parish, who died Monday. The church, in final stages of a renovation project directed by Father Rebokus, was filled far beyond to its 600 capacity.

Parishioners and friends began arriving at 8 a.m. — two hours before the mass was to begin.

Bishop Flanagan, Auxiliary Bishop Timothy J. Harrington and Bishop John Marshall of Burlington, Vt. headed the list of nine concelebrants of the Mass of Christian Burial.

Bishop Harrington, the homilist, borrowed from the text of one of Father Rebokus's own homilies before characterizing the late pastor in ways readily recognizable by the throng gathered in his memory.

## State Police Chaplain

State Police, whom Father Rebokus served 20 years as a chaplain, were much in evidence, standing honor guard during the past two days, and escorting the cortege to St. Joseph's Cemetery in Barre. Col. James T. Cauty, head of the State Police, was present not only at the funeral but at the calling hours and wake service.

An estimated 100 to 150 state police troopers attended the service, said Capt. Robert G. Dateo, commander of Troop C in Holden. Most were from Worcester County, he said, but troopers attended from all parts of the state.

Dateo said relatives of trooper George L. Hanna, shot and killed earlier in Auburn, were in Uxbridge earlier in the week but he did not know if they were in attendance today.

The captain said troopers were surprised at Fr. Rebokus' death, but not shocked, because it was known he was ill. Troopers have warm regard for

Fr. Rebokus, he said.

"He was a joker," said Dateo. "He always said the reason he hung around the police and not the firemen was because he didn't want to go to blazes."

## Concelebrants

Other concelebrants were the Rev. Gerard P. Walsh, associate pastor of St. Mary's; the Rev. John Hartigan of Boston, State Police chaplain; the Rev. George E. Denomme, pastor of St. Cecilia Church, Leominster; the Rev. Msgr. Leo J. Battista, director of Catholic Charities, who had preached the sermon at Father Rebokus's first Mass; the Rev. James B. Kelly, pastor of St. Columba Church, Paxton, and the Rev. Henry G. Bowen, pastor of St. Charles Borromeo Church, Worcester.

Master of ceremonies was the Rev. James A. Mongelluzzo, who has charge of the diocesan office of worship. Joseph R. Policelli, diocesan choir director, was organist and soloist for the responses. The congregation joined in hymns.

Holy Name High School of Worcester, the State Police, St. Mary's Circle of the Daughters of Isabella, Our Lady of the Valley Regional School and the Sisters of St. Joseph were among the delegations.

Among the six members of the State Police who were honor bearers were Sgt. Thomas J. Walsh, brother of the associate pastor, and Cpl. Thomas E. Creighton III, a member of the parish. The others were Lt. Wayne Harding, Sgt. Peter Rickheit, Sgt. Carl Stillings and Tpr. Peter Mazeikus.

Readings were given by Sister Kathleen Duffy, principal of Our Lady of the Valley School, and Michael Fahey, a parishioner.

Altar boys were Mark Forget, Morgan Creighton, Kevin Cox and Michael Ostroskey.

Joseph J. Roche of the parish council was head usher.

Bishop Harrington said it was a year ago that Father Rebokus telephoned to ask him to be the

homilist at his silver jubilee Mass, and asked that it be on the subject of the priesthood. When the date, June 6, came, Bishop Harrington was hospitalized, and Father Rebokus became his own homilist.

Bishop Harrington said the 25th anniversary message of Father Rebokus about the priesthood was worth reviewing. He quoted: "If the priest of 1982 is not the priest of 1957, it is because the priest of '82 is not the world of '57. Hopefully, each priest in our midst has moved into a new age with enthusiasm and joy, because here is our ministry as the church sees it now."

## Personal Tribute

In personal tribute, Bishop Harrington said, "He was proof that the priest of the altar and the sanctuary must also be aware of the harsh as well as pleasant realities of the world."

"Father Rebokus had great affection for the State Police. He reached out to them, knowing that so much of their work involves the sordid, the unsavory, the obscene," he said.

"He always had an eye out for persons who yearn for happiness, for peace of mind, and for a listening ear."

The auxiliary bishop said the departed pastor "helped people find meaning behind their crosses, and gave them the assurance their personal lives, and their heroic efforts for home and family were worthwhile."

"A priest brings the world to the Mass and brings the Mass to the world. The sacrifice and banquet of the Mass is more than bread and wine. It is pain and suffering, deceit and despair, anxiety and heartache, in justice and in gratitude. It is also glory, praise and thanks to God for the gift he gives us," the bishop said.

"Father Rebokus knew all that firsthand, because he saw them firsthand. Because he did see them, he was able to place them on the paten and in the chalice at Mass," he concluded.