



Father Jerry Hartz

September 18, 1933 - March 6, 2022

Father Jerry Hartz

After serving 63 years as a priest, Father Gerald “Jerry” A. Hartz quietly passed on Sunday, March 6th, 2022. Jerry was born on September 18, 1933, to Frances and Fred Hartz in Sioux City, Iowa. He is preceded by his parents, Larry Hartz (Maria) and Sister Maryann Hartz OSF. Jerry is survived by Sister Dorothy Hartz OSF and Agnes Burke (Tom), Julie and Timothy Burke (niece/nephew), Kennedy and Michaela Burke (great nieces), and Jase Michael (great-great nephew).

After graduating from Heelan Catholic High School, Jerry earned his Bachelor of Arts from Loras College in Dubuque, Iowa. He then entered the seminary at Mount Saint Bernard also in Dubuque. His ordination into the priesthood was on May 16, 1959. Jerry was then assigned to Immaculate Conception Parish and School in Cherokee, Iowa and began working on his Administrative/Superintendent credential. Father Jerry then returned to Heelan High School as Dean of Students and Principal. Jerry served in various parishes, schools and roles throughout his 44 years of service to God and others including: Spalding and St. Edmund High Schools, St. Cecelia and St. Lawrence Parishes and St. Rose Parish and School. He also served as Superintendent of Catholic Schools in Fort Dodge, Iowa, Chaplain to the Carmelite Monastery, Holy Spirit Retirement Home and St. Luke Hospital. Additionally, Jerry held numerous positions such as Auxiliary Chaplain of Air National Guard 133rd TCS, Governor’s Private School’s Advisory Committee, Diocesan School Board, Knights of Columbus “State Chaplain of the Year,” Diocesan Personnel Board, to name a few.

After a long career of serving others, Father Jerry finally retired from the Sioux City Diocese in 2003 and moved to Bakersfield to be closer to his family. Jerry’s love for helping and serving God and others was evident as he quickly began assisting at numerous parishes in Bakersfield including St. Joseph, San Clemente, St. Francis, and Our Lady of Perpetual Help. His love for reaching out to students found him assisting at Garces Memorial High School. Jerry began assisting at Christ the King Parish in 2017. It was in 2019, that Jerry then finally retired for a second time.

Father Jerry had many loves including golf and traveling and would combine the two any chance he could. Among his travels, he visited Greece, Arizona, and Monterey to golf at Pebble Beach. He would do much of his traveling with his priest friends from Iowa. He was a member of a support group of priests in Iowa known as Jesu Caritas. One of his most cherished relationships was with his life-long friend Father Richard Remmes. Jerry also enjoyed sports and was a fan of the Miami Dolphins. He also made many dear friends here in Bakersfield and was a member of the Rosary, the Saturday Dinner and the Cambria Travel groups known collectively as “The God Squad”. He would also regularly play with the Don Border Poker Group who was convinced that Jerry’s wins had a divine connection. A connection that was never strong enough to help the Dolphins’ record.

Jerry was known for his insightful, personally significant, and semi-humorous homilies. His messages were told in a story that would speak to us on a deep and meaningful level. When talked to about how his homilies would touch us, he would simply respond, “Praise God.” Jerry’s charisma, sense of humor and unrelenting love immediately endeared him to everyone he met. His last words to his sister serve as beacon to us all on how to live our lives more like him: “Keep doing good things.” Jerry was a loving son to his parents, devoted brother to his siblings and known as “Uncle Father Jerry” to his niece, nephew, and great nieces.

A celebration of Jerry’s 63 years of priesthood and 88 years of life will begin with a Rosary at Christ the King parish on Tuesday, March 22, 2022, at 9:30 AM with a Mass of Christian Burial immediately following at 10:00 AM. In lieu of flowers, please make donations to local charities in his name.

The family would like to extend our deepest gratitude to Msgr. Stephen Frost for his loving guidance and support as well as Hoffman Hospice for the compassion and comfort they provided Jerry. We would also like to thank the Palms Assisted Living staff for all the care and love they extended to Jerry and your tolerance of his unique “humor.” Our deepest thank you to the Watts Choir for sharing their gifts of voice with us.

- Earned his Bachelors, Master’s and Administrative Credential from Loras College and Creighton University

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- Auxiliary Chaplain at Iowa Air National Guard, 1967-1971 (1973-1989)
- Governor's Private School's Advisory Committee
- State of Iowa "Educational Task Force" member
- Knights of Columbus "State Chaplain of the Year"
- Diocesan school board
- Superintendent of Catholic Schools, Fort Dodge, Iowa
- Diocesan Vicar of Religious
- Diocesan priests' senate
- Diocesan personnel board
- Dean of the Northeast Deanery
- Diocesan Director of Priests' Pastoral Outreach
- Director Fort Dodge Chamber of Commerce
- 2003 to 2006 served at:
 - St. Joseph Parish
 - Garces Memorial High School
 - San Clemente Parish
 - St. Francis Parish
- 2006 to 2016 assisted at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish
- 2017 to 2019 assisted at Christ the King Parish
- 2019 Jerry retired...again

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And finally, to all who knew, supported and loved Father Jerry, thank you.

As he would say... "Keep doing good things"

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