

Provided by Bradshaw-Carter Memorial & Funeral Services

Father Robert James Klem, CSB

March 25, 1928 ~ January 22, 2021 (age 92)



Father Robert James Klem, CSB, died on the morning of January 22, 2021 at St. Dominic Village. He was 91 years old and had been a member of the Congregation of Priests of St. Basil for 70 years and a priest for 64 years.

Father Klem was born in Webster, New York on March 25, 1928, the son of Peter Klem and Madeline Smith. After graduating high school, he took his University studies at the University of St. Michael's College in Toronto, Canada. He entered the Basilian Novitiate and took his first vows in 1950. After theological studies at St. Basil's Seminary in Toronto, he was ordained a priest on June 29, 1956.

Father Klem spent many years teaching in high schools. He also spent several years as Treasurer at St. Basil's Seminary. His next appointment was to the Basilian Mission Center, in Sugar Land, Texas. He spent over 20 years traveling around the United States, preaching, telling people about the Basilian Missions and asking for funds. He was an excellent preacher and very successful in raising funds which support the Basilian Missions in Mexico and Colombia. About these years he later wrote:

“Here my priestly ministry comes more to the front than it did in teaching. I meet many wonderful priests every year, dedicated and holy, and this refreshes my priestly ministry very year.”

He spent his last years with his Basilian brothers at Dillon House in Houston where he was a vital part of the community, always enlivening discussions and conversations. His laughter was an essential part of life at Dillon House. Fr. Bob loved planning, decorating and enjoying parties. He lived for community and that made his time in a Covid-19 nursing home extremely difficult.

Father Klem was preceded in death by his parents and his brother Peter. He is survived by his sister Shirley Anselmo of Frederick, Maryland, numerous nieces and nephews. He is mourned by his Basilian brothers and the many people whom he served.

Visitation will be Tuesday evening, January 26, 2021, at Bradshaw-Carter Memorial & Funeral Services, 1734 West Alabama from half past six o'clock until eight o'clock in the evening with prayers at seven o'clock. Concelebrated Mass will be at St. Anne's Catholic Church, 2140 Westheimer Road, on Wednesday, January 27, 2021, at ten o'clock in the morning. A private burial will follow.

We lift our hearts in gratitude to the Father for sending us this man, brother, religious, priest of God.