

# Brother Donald Butler, of Holy Family Church

By Karen Craven  
TRIBUNE STAFF WRITER

Brother Donald Butler, 83, who spent more than half of his religious career serving the Holy Family parish on the Near West Side, died Tuesday in Colombiere Jesuit Retirement Community in Clarkston, Mich.

"He was one of several people who can be called Mr. Chicago," said longtime friend Rev. Jim Gschwend.

Brother Butler had already become a fixture at Holy Family when Gschwend started as a student at St. Ignatius.

Between his activities at the church and school, all students and parishioners knew Brother Butler because he was always doing something. Whether it was working with the altar boys or playing the organ, he was a regular jack-of-all-trades, said Gschwend.

Outside the church and school, Brother Butler was also well known, Gschwend said.

"He loved Chicago and was a familiar site on Taylor Street where he knew all the neighbors and shopkeepers," said Gschwend.

A native Chicagoan, Brother Butler grew up on the West Side and was a graduate of St. Patrick's Elementary School, St. Ignatius High School and St. Patrick's Academy.

He entered the Society of Jesus as a religious brother in 1935 and professed his final vows in 1946.

After working in Indiana and Ohio with the order, he started working at Holy Family Church in 1946 and remained there through 1978.

He worked in the treasurer's office at St. Ignatius for a year before he began a decade of work



Brother Donald Butler

for the Little Brothers of the Poor and Friends of the Elderly on the South Side.

It was there that he participated in activities with the seniors, drove the elderly to doctor appointments and worked in the office.

"He was a man of deep faith and he gave his heart and soul to his altar boys years ago and to many others after that," said Kay Smolinski, who worked with Brother Butler in the Jesuit Development Office where he volunteered through 1997.

"He was a very dedicated and wonderful Jesuit, and I'm sure that he leaves so many people with warm and wonderful memories," said Smolinski.

Brother Butler had retired to the Colombiere Jesuit Community in Michigan two years ago.

Brother Butler is survived by his brothers in the Society of Jesus. A mass will be held at 10:45 a.m. Friday in the Colombiere Jesuit Community Chapel in Clarkston, Mich.