

# Services set Tuesday for Howard Lake, friend of poor

By Betty Brenner  
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Howard F. Lake was a Catholic deacon, not a priest, but the needy who asked for help at Holy Redeemer Catholic Church in



Lake  
Township.

He had suffered heart problems in recent years.

A funeral Mass will be celebrated at 10 a.m. Tuesday at the church by Lansing Catholic Bishop Carl F. Mengeling. Burial will be in Evergreen Cemetery.

Funeral arrangements are being handled by Swartz Funeral Home.

Memorial contributions are being made to the Holy Redeemer outreach program and the Holy Redeemer building fund.

"He was a great servant of the poor," said the Rev. Vincent DeLorenzo, Holy Redeemer pastor. In Burton, he was the Salvation Army and Catholic Outreach, because there were no other relief agencies.

In 1994, the Diocese of Lansing gave him its Respect Life Award for his work with the poor.

A deacon is specially trained and ordained to assist a priest.

Born on the east side of Flint, Lake graduated from Kearsley High School.

He owned and operated M&M Electronics until 1980, when he became a full-time employee of Holy Redeemer.

He was ordained a deacon in 1981.

In 1975, he led Holy Redeemer in bringing Vietnamese refugee families here. Members of those families kept contact with him, DeLorenzo said.

Maureen Otney, outreach worker for St. John Parish of Renton, recalls attending a funeral service Lake led for a Vietnam refugee.

"It was one of the finest funerals I have ever attended," she said.

DeLorenzo said Lake went to Haiti and Mexico to assist missionaries there and serve the poor.

He was chairman of the Catholic Committee of Concern, which organized the North End Soup Kitchen, and worked with Love Line and Burton Neighborhood Housing Services.

Despite his affection for the poor, Lake had the ability to determine quickly if someone was scamming us," said Jim Corder, Holy Redeemer youth minister.

He leaves his wife, Nancy; two daughters, Debra Newton and Pamela Johnson; five sons, Douglas, Michael, Mark, Richard and John; his mother, Pearl Lake of Flint; one sister, Margaret Ann Cherven of Mountain Home, Ark.; 14 grandchildren; and two great granddaughters.

Burton called him "Father of the Poor."

Lake, 62, full-time director of outreach at the parish, died Thursday night when his vehicle crashed into a tree on southbound I-75 in Vienna