

Father Michael McKenna dies at age 79

Rev. Michael Gerard McKenna, age 79, completed his earthly pilgrimage and entered eternal life on Oct. 26, 2023.

He was preceded in death by his parents, James Patrick McKenna and Marion Ruth [Pennell] McKenna, and his beloved sister and best friend Kathleen McKenna-White. He is survived by his nephew, Ryan (Carissa) McKenna-White of Statham, GA, and many friends and cousins in the U.S. and Ireland.

Father McKenna was born in Grand Rapids, on May 7, 1946. He attended St. Francis Elementary School and then entered St. Joseph Seminary in Grand Rapids as a high school freshman in 1960. He attended Aquinas College and was awarded a Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy from St. Mary's Seminary and University in Baltimore, Maryland in 1968. In 1972, he received a Masters of Divinity Degree from St. John's Provincial Seminary in Plymouth, Michigan.

Father McKenna was ordained on St. Patrick's Day in 1973. For many years Father Michael served the people of the Diocese of Grand Rapids at the parishes of St. John Vianney, Wyoming; Sacred Heart, Muskegon; St. Dominic, Wyoming; St. Francis Xavier, Conklin; Our Lady of Consolation, Rockford; St. Charles Borromeo, Greenville; St. Mary Magdalen, Kentwood and St. Mary, Big Rapids.

In 2006, Father McKenna was removed from active ministry and, since that time, has been leading a life of prayer and penance in accordance with the Essential Norms of the Dallas Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People

Father McKenna's personal interests included genealogy, photography and Notre Dame football. His love of travel took him to Ireland, England, Scotland, Germany and Italy. In Rome, a special honor was a small group audience with Blessed Pope Paul VI in the Vatican Clementine Chapel.

[Read the full obituary](#) on the Heritage Life Story Funeral Homes website

Funeral Mass and visitation:

The Mass of Christian burial will be celebrated Thursday, Nov. 2, at 11 a.m. at [SS. Peter and Paul Church in Grand Rapids](#) with Bishop David Walkowiak presiding and Father Dick Host as homilist. Visitation will be that same day at the church from 10 a.m. until the start of the Mass.

Individuals with knowledge of sexual abuse by clergy or another representative of the Church are urged to contact local law enforcement and the Michigan Attorney General's office which can be reached at 844-324-3374. Individuals may also contact the diocese's victim assistance coordinator 616-840-2079 or by email at vac@grdiocese.org. For additional information, click [here](#).