

## The Rev. Monsignor Dennis A. Rigney

March 7, 2024

The Rev. Monsignor Dennis A. Rigney passed away peacefully in the morning of Thursday, March 7, 2024, at Geisinger St. Luke's Hospital near Orwigsburg, surrounded by family and friends.

Monsignor was born April 15, 1940, in New Philadelphia, Schuylkill County, a son of the late John and Mary T. (Baumann) Rigney.

He was preceded in death by younger sister, Mary Ann Barrett, and older brother, Jackie.

He is survived by niece, Nancy J. McNelis, of Couderport, and nephew, Robert J. Barrett, of Pottsville.

He was ordained a priest on May 21, 1966, in the Cathedral of St. Catharine of Siena by Bishop Joseph McShea. Monsignor Rigney has served the Diocese of Allentown as assistant pastor, Church of St. Peter, Reading; secretary of the Diocesan Tribunal; and as the diocesan director of the following agencies and Apostolates: Spanish Apostolate, Social Action Bureau, Catholic Charities, Catholic Social Agency, Family Life Bureau, Indo-Chinese Resettlement, Marriage Encounter, St. Vincent DePaul Society, Holy Family Home Health Care Agency, St. Francis Center, Orwigsburg, Holy Family Villa and diocesan coordinator of Health Affairs.

Monsignor Rigney received a B.A. in 1962, an M. Div. in 1967 from St. Charles Borromeo Seminary and an M.S.W. in 1977 from Marywood College, Scranton. Since 1973, he was a member of the Academy of Certified Social Workers (ACSW) and has been a Licensed Nursing Home Administrator (NHA) from 1983 to retirement.

Monsignor Rigney was the founder of Kennedy House in Reading and the founder of the Catholic Housing Corporations of Pottsville, Queen of Peace Apartments; Saint Clair; Neumann Apartments; Northern Berks, Queen of Angels; New Philadelphia, Holy Family Apartments; and Bethlehem, Holy Family Apartments. Until September of 1998, he was also president of these boards, plus of Antonian Towers, Easton. He was president of the Catholic Housing Corp. of both Bethlehem and New Philadelphia. In 1998, he developed a 120-bed Catholic Nursing Home in Schuylkill County, Seton



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Manor Inc. and was vice chairperson of the board of directors.

Monsignor Rigney, from 1983 until retirement, was CEO of Holy Family Manor Inc., a 208-bed nursing home in Bethlehem, Holy Family Residential Services/Assisted Living Inc. and Catholic Senior Housing Development and Management Inc. He was the diocesan director of Project HEAD, Senior Citizen Clubs; diocesan director of Services and Housing for the Elderly; and since June 16, 1987, pastor of St. Francis of Assisi Parish, Allentown. He was a third degree member of the Knights of Columbus.

Monsignor has resided at St. Peter's Reading (1966-1975); Our Lady Help of Christians in Allentown (1975-1977); St. Paul's in Allentown (1977-1983); and Holy Family Manor (1983-1987).

On March 14, 1977, Pope Paul VI named him Chaplain of His Holiness with the title Reverend Monsignor, and on Oct. 11, 1987, Pope John Paul II named him a Prelate of Honor (Domestic Prelate). He added a new 60-bed wing at Holy Family Apartments in Bethlehem named the McShea Pavilion, three personal care/assisted living facilities and an adult day care center. No eligible applicant has been turned away from Holy Family Manor due to lack of funds during Monsignor Rigney's tenure as director.

Monsignor Rigney has served on many boards, including the boards of Sacred Heart Hospital and Visiting Nurse Association of Lehigh County.

Burial was in Holy Family Cemetery, New Philadelphia. Thomas J. Bartashus Funeral Home, New Philadelphia, was in care of arrangements.