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Fr Peter (Raymond Patrick) Schwartz

BIRTH 17 Mar 1925
Milwaukee, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin, USA

DEATH 23 Mar 2003 (aged 78)
Watertown, Codington County, South Dakota, USA

BURIAL [Blue Cloud Abbey Cemetery](#)
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One March 23, 2003, our confrere, Father Peter Schwartz, died at Prairie Lakes Hospital in Watertown, South Dakota. He had been hospitalized only a few days after having suffered a stroke in his infirmary room at the abbey. Fr Peter was born in Milwaukee, Wisconsin on St. Patrick's Day in 1925.

He was baptized Raymond Patrick. Although he didn't have a drop of Irish blood in him, he always made an effort to celebrate March 17th with exuberance. This year, however, he observed his 78th birthday and the feast of Ireland's patron with less enthusiasm. Fr Peter, by his own choice, had not been out of his room for the past few months. He'd been in failing health for several years, and had undergone numerous surgeries of one kind or another.

A veteran of World War II, Raymond Patrick took advantage of the G.I. Bill at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. He was working in advertising at the time when religious life attracted him. Entering St. Benedict's Abbey at Benet Lake, Wisconsin as a brother, he later felt drawn to the priesthood. This was in the days when one couldn't be a priest in the same monastery where he'd been a lay-brother. He entered the clerical novitiate at Blue Cloud in 1956. His solemn profession was made in 1960, and he was ordained to the priesthood in 1962.

Fr Peter's priestly life was spent mostly on the missions formerly staffed by our community. He was stationed at all four of the missions, and more than once at three of them. Often he became the pastor in a location where the rectory needed fixing up. Fr Peter gained a reputation for carpeting the houses in which he lived. Besides his assignments on the reservations, he was also the pastor or associate in three parishes of the Fargo Diocese. There were times when he was recalled to the abbey and worked here as our kitchen master, house prefect, and assistant guest master. When he was at the abbey in the late 1980s, he was the pastor of St. Mary's in nearby Wilmot. For a time prior to his being sent to the missions, he was the vocation recruiter and director of our Camp.

We ask the members of the Swiss-American Congregation and all other Benedictines to remember Fr Peter in their prayers for the deceased. His funeral and burial were on March 28, 2003. May he rest in peace, free from the many afflictions that came his way in this life.