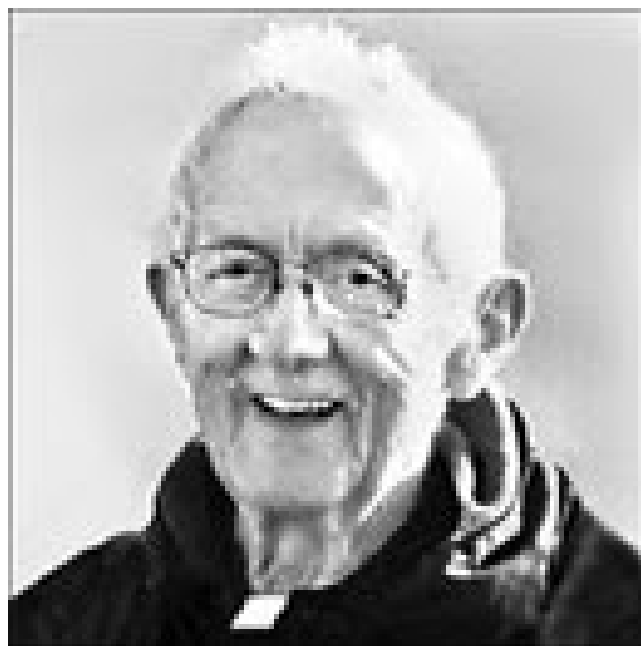


## Association Of Catholic Bloggers

### Columban Fr Francis J. Keaney RIP



By [Fr Seán Coyle](#) - May 24, 2018



**Fr FRANCIS J. KEANEY**

4 November 1934 – 13 May 2018

Fr Frank Keaney was one of six children born to John Keaney and Nora Theresa Curristan Keaney. They lived in Immaculate Conception Parish, Winchester,

MA, within the Archdiocese of Boston, USA. (The parish was suppressed in 2004).



*Winchester Town Hall* [Wikipedia]

The young Frank attended Noonan Public School, and later studied at Winchester Junior High School, Winchester High School, and Bentley College, Boston. As an adult, he worked in the accounting department of Revere Sugar Company, later renamed Domino Sugar.

When Frank decided that he wanted to become a priest he studied at the School of St Philip Neri for delayed vocations in order to familiarize himself with Latin. He then entered the Columban seminary in Milton, MA in 1957.

Health issues centering on his thyroid gland resulted in the postponement of his ordination to the priesthood by six months. He was ordained in June 1966 at St Columbans Major Seminary, Milton, MA, with Jeremiah F. Minihan, the auxiliary bishop of Boston, as the presiding prelate.

In July 1967 he was appointed to the Philippines. After language studies he became assistant pastor in Holy Rosary Parish in Oroquieta, Misamis Occidental, but had to undergo surgery on his thyroid gland at the end of that year. During the years that followed, up until 1988, Father Frank ministered in the churches of St Michael the Archangel in Iligan City, as well as St Francis Xavier, Lopez Jaena, and St Matthew, Aloran, both in Misamis Occidental.



### ***St Matthew's Catholic Church, Aloran*** [Facebook]

Despite his limitations with the local language, Father Frank found ways to communicate with the local people. Furthermore, he strove not only to remember the names of those who crossed his path, but also their relationship with one another. It was clear to the Filipino people that his heart was in the right place.

During those decades that he spent in the Philippines, and for many years after he returned home, Father Frank provided assistance to numerous children of poor families, which enabled them to obtain high school and college education. He understood that by helping an individual poor student to succeed, he was indirectly lifting an entire family out of poverty.



***St Michael's Cathedral, Iligan City*** [Wikipedia]

In 1980 Father Frank did Clinical Pastoral Education at Bon Secours Hospital (later renamed Holy Family Hospital) while on home vacation.

Though he continued to be assigned to the Columban District of Ozamiz in the Region of the Philippines, from January 1989 Father Frank was given compassionate leave in order to support his brother Terry, who had special needs. After his assignment to the US Region in 1997, he continued to support Terry, and later lived with him in the family home in Winchester.

During those years, Father Frank became known for his compassion for and patience with those who were suffering, whether his own brother, or his Columban confreres in the retirement home in Bristol, Rhode Island, or neighbours and relatives in nearby hospitals or nursing homes.



***Statue of St Columban, St Columban's, Bristol, RI***

At the time of his brother, Terry's death in May 2015, Father Frank's physical and mental health was already in decline. During these last three years, despite the challenges that resulted from a faltering memory, a broken hip, as well as various ailments, his family insisted on caring for him in the family home. He did, however, have spells in care facilities, and died at the Vibra Hospital in Rochdale, MA, where he had spent the last few months adjusting to a tracheotomy.

Fr Keaney's Funeral Mass was celebrated at nearby St Charles Borromeo Church. The principal celebrant was Fr Chuck Lintz with Fr Tim Mulroy delivering the homily. Several other Columbans and the two nurses from the Columban retirement home in Bristol were among those in attendance. Afterwards, Father Frank was laid to rest in the Keaney family plot in nearby Calvary Cemetery, Winchester. He is survived by one sibling, Joan Keaney Cole, and a large number of nieces and nephews.

May Father Frank rest now in the peace of Christ.

*Fr Tim Mulroy*