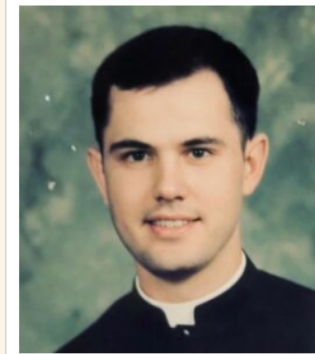


Reverend Michael Duesterhaus

August 23, 2026



Father Michael Duesterhaus, a devoted priest in the Diocese of Arlington, died on August 23, 2026 at age 61.

Born on June 29, 1965 in Tuscola, Illinois to Richard and Judith "Judie" (Krapausky) Duesterhaus, Fr. Duesterhaus was the third of eight children. During his childhood, he and his family lived in several states, including Illinois, Massachusetts, New York, Maine and Virginia.

He graduated from Bishop O'Connell High School (Arlington, Virginia). He responded to a call to the priesthood and entered Saint Charles Borromeo Seminary (near Philadelphia, Pennsylvania) in 1983. He was ordained on May 18, 1991 as a diocesan priest for the Diocese of Arlington (Virginia). He completed several advanced degrees including a doctoral degree.

During 35 years of priestly ministry, Fr. Duesterhaus served multiple parishes within the Arlington Diocese, including St. Anthony Church (Falls Church) as a transitional deacon, Holy Spirit (Annandale), St. Theresa (Ashburn), St. Michael (Annandale), St. William of York (Stafford), St. Patrick (Fredericksburg), St. Elizabeth Ann Seton (Lake Ridge), Corpus Christi (South Riding), St. Timothy (Chantilly), Sacred Heart of Jesus (Winchester), St. John the Baptist (Front Royal) and over a year as the chaplain for Fairfax Hospital.

In addition to serving in his diocesan assignments, Fr. Duesterhaus was a U.S. Navy Chaplain who served extensively with the U.S. Marine Corps. He was commissioned as an Ensign in 1988 and served tours at many sites: Okinawa, Japan; Guam; Fallujah, Iraq; Ramadi, Iraq (twice); Camp Lemonnier, Djibouti; and Diego Garcia. He retired honorably from the U.S. Navy Reserve Chaplain Corps in 2015 as a Lieutenant Commander.

He had a particular gift for connecting with people. He will be remembered by parishioners, friends, and family for his warm, welcoming personality and his stalwart commitment to faithfully serving his parishioners and Marines, helping to bring them closer to God.

Beyond his formal ministry, Fr. Duesterhaus was a true friend and an engaging story teller with a wonderful sense of humor. Those closest to him knew him as a man whose greatest joy was serving others.

He is survived by his father, Rich Duesterhaus; his sisters, Kathy Murphy (Dan) and Lynn Deboeck (Pascal); and his brothers, Steve Duesterhaus, Dan Duesterhaus (Margo), Alan Duesterhaus (Molly), Tom Duesterhaus, and Greg Duesterhaus (Megan). He is survived by 21 nephews and nieces and their families as well as nine great-nephews and nieces. He is also survived by seven aunts and uncles and their families.

He was preceded in death by his mother, Judie Duesterhaus; and his stepmother, Jude (Mollenhauer) Duesterhaus.

Vespers for the Dead will be held on Sunday, August 30 at 7:00 pm at St. John the Baptist Catholic Church, 120 South Main Street, Front Royal, VA. A funeral Mass will be held on Monday, August 31 at 10:30 am at Holy Trinity Catholic Church, 8213 Linton Hall Road, Gainesville, Virginia. A private burial will follow at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to St. John the Baptist Catholic Church.

Fr. Michael Duesterhaus' life was a faithful response to God's call, expressed through his service to the Church and his care for all who were entrusted to him. May he rest in peace.

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