

Msgr. Leo F. McCarthy 1932-2023



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Msgr. Leo F. McCarthy, a highly decorated priest known for his work with youth athletics, died on May 21, 2023. He had served 64 years of priestly ministry.

Born Nov. 19, 1932, in Lackawanna, the son of Daniel and Verna (Schlatter) McCarthy attended St. Vincent School in Springbrook and St. John School in Alden. He also attended the Little Seminary of St. Joseph and the Little Flower in Buffalo. After, he earned a bachelor's degree from Christ the King Seminary at St. Bonaventure.

Bishop Joseph Burke ordained Msgr. McCarthy on Feb. 21, 1959, at St. Joseph Cathedral in Buffalo.



Msgr. Leo McCarthy

His assignments include serving at the mission of St. Mary, Little Valley; serving as assistant at St. Teresa, Buffalo; St. James, Depew; and St. Joseph Cathedral, Buffalo. In 1978, he was named pastor of St. Matthew Parish in Buffalo. That was followed by pastor roles at Immaculate Conception, Wellsville; St. Joseph, Batavia; and temporary administrator of St. Mary in Pavilion. He was named episcopal vicar of the Genesee County vicariate in 1996.

Msgr. McCarthy retired in 2008.

He also served as Buffalo Police chaplain, Buffalo port chaplain, Buffalo Postal employees chaplain, Buffalo Telephone Employees chaplain, Erie County Sheriff chaplain, and Boy Scout chaplain for the Greater Niagara Frontier Council.

Through the years he received the Boy Scout St. George Award, National Police Athletic Award, City of Buffalo Volunteer for Youth Award, Man of the Year Award for Buffalo, and Sierra Club Award for Vocations work. In 2017, he was honored at the Curé of Ars dinner for his work in promoting vocations to youth.

Msgr. McCarthy was a member of the Knights of Columbus, Knights of St. John, and Knights of Altar

Upon his retirement in 2008, Msgr. McCarthy told *The Daily News* of Batavia about growing up in a very Catholic home. "I always felt I had a call to the priesthood. To be honest from the time I can remember," he said.

Msgr. McCarthy will lie-in-repose at St. John the Baptist Church, 2021 Sandridge Road, Alden, on Sunday, May 28 from 3-7 p.m., and at Blessed Sacrament Church, 263 Claremont Ave., Tonawanda, on Monday, May 29 from 3-7 p.m.