Father Andrew J. Apostoli, C.F.R.

A FOUNDER OF FRANCISCANS OF THE RENEWAL WAS AUTHOR AND TV HOST

Rather Andrew J. Apostoli, C.F.R., a founding member of the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal, died Dec. 13 of cancer at St. Leopold Friary in Yonkers. He was 75.

"Father Andrew Apostoli embodied Franciscan spirituality, and was as dedicated a priest as any I have ever known. That sentiment was shared by my predecessors who loved him as well," Cardinal Dolan said in a statement.

"Although he was known worldwide, we in New York felt a special closeness to him, and to the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal which he helped found with Father Benedict Groeschel. All who came into contact with him soon knew of his love for Jesus, his humility and gentleness, and his deep love of Mary, especially Our Lady of Fatima."

A Funeral Mass was offered Dec. 20 by Father John Paul Ouellette, C.F.R., general servant of the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal, at St. Casimir Church in Yonkers.

"Father Andrew conformed his life to Christ's," said Father Ouellette in a statement. "As a priest, he was led by his relationship with the Holy Spirit, Our Lady and Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen, and continually worked toward the renewal of the priesthood.

"As a Franciscan, St. Francis was the clear inspiration for his humility, humor and his simplicity in word and deed. Father Andrew's faithfulness and joy urge us to live the joy found in the Gospel."

Father Glenn Sudano, C.F.R., one of the original

Franciscan Friars of the Renewal, delivered the homily.

"He was devout, devoted and hardworking. He loved being with the brothers," Father Sudano told CNY.

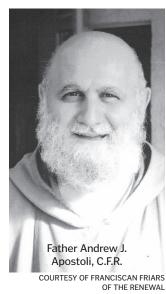
Born in Woodbury, N.J., Father Apostoli entered the Capuchin Franciscan Friars in 1959, professed final vows in 1963 and was ordained by Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen in 1967.

In 1987, Father Apostoli and the late Father Benedict J. Groeschel, C.F.R., were among the eight Capuchin friars to leave the order to found the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal, opening

their first friary in the South Bronx. There now are 128 friars and 15 friaries located around the world, with five in the Archdiocese of New York—two in the Bronx and one each in Manhattan, Yonkers and Newburgh.

Cardinal John J. O'Connor and the archdiocese recognized the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal as a diocesan institute in 1999, and the Vatican granted the community recognition as a religious institute of pontifical right last December.

"We wanted to re-embrace the Capuchin tradition. We wanted to go back to a missionary model of the Capuchins and care for the poor. We did work for the poor and lived in poor neighborhoods," Father Sudano said.



In 1988, Father Apostoli founded the Franciscan Sisters of the Renewal, which now has 35 members; its motherhouse is in the Bronx.

Father Apostoli had appeared regularly on EWTN since 1993, most recently as the host of "Sunday Night Prime." He's the author of numerous books including "Following Mary to Jesus," "When God Asks for an Undivided Heart" and "Fatima for Today."

Father Apostoli was an adjunct professor at St. Joseph's Seminary in Dunwoodie and served as the vice postulator of the cause for canonization of theen

Archbishop Sheen. "He kept busy, but his business was always balanced with his prayer, fulfilling his obligation for prayer," Father Sudano said. "He was able to fulfill all the obligations he was supposed to do with ease

and perfection." His brothers, Emidio and Michael, survive him.

Burial followed the Funeral Mass at Holy Cross Cemetery in North Arlington, N.J.

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