

Deacon Alfred Thompson, Served Two Staten Island Parishes

Deacon Alfred J. Thompson, who served at two Staten Island parishes, died Dec. 17 after a brief illness at Staten Island University Hospital South. He was 92.

Deacon Thompson was ordained by Cardinal John O'Connor in 1996 and was assigned to Our Lady of Good Counsel on Staten Island for two years before relocating to the Diocese of St. Petersburg, Fla. He returned to New York in 2000 and was assigned to Holy



Deacon Alfred Thompson

Child parish on Staten Island in 2005.

Deacon Thompson was active in the liturgical, spiritual and sacramental life of the parishes. He also was active in the pro-life movement and prayer life of the parishes, and in visiting the sick and homebound.

He taught English and science in New York City public schools and was an adjunct professor at the College of Staten Island.

Born in the Bronx, he served in the U.S. Army

during the Korean War. He was a graduate of City College of New York.

His children, Alfred Thompson Jr., Rosemary Gallagher, James Thompson and Jane Thompson; 15 grandchildren and 21 great-grandchildren survive him.

His wife of 50 years, Jane Thompson; children, Theresa Geoghegan and Elizabeth Walsh; and one grandchild predeceased him.

A Funeral Mass was celebrated Dec. 23 in Our Lady of Good Counsel Church. Burial was in Resurrection Cemetery, Staten Island.

Father Reginald Foster, Former Longtime Vatican Latinist

Discalced Carmelite Father Reginald Foster—a world-renowned teacher of Latin, former longtime Vatican Latinist and colorful character who intrigued students and journalists—died in Milwaukee Dec. 25. He was 81.

Father Michael Berry, the Wisconsin-based provincial of the Discalced Carmelites, told the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel that Father Foster had tested positive for Covid-19 in early December, and he expected the official cause of death to be complications from the coronavirus.

In a Latin-language message to the superior general of the Discalced Carmelites, Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Vatican secretary of state, conveyed Pope Francis' gratitude for Father Foster's contributions to the Church, as well as his condolences and prayers after Father Foster made his way "ad Patris domum" (to the house of the Father).

Father Foster's unusual method of throwing students straight into Latin texts, designed to help them love the language before memorizing grammatical rules, brought hundreds of students to his various classrooms, particularly at Rome's Pontifical Gregorian University.

Between classes, Father Foster was often seen on the university's front steps wearing his blue workman's uniform, purchased from JC Penney, and drinking a beer. Students and journalists would pass by for a chat.

The popularity of his classes, and Father Foster's disregard for whether the students were enrolled and paying the university, led to tensions with the Gregorian administration. He was ousted in 2006 but found benefactors to help him open a free Latin academy in the city.

Born in Milwaukee, he entered the minor seminary at age 13. He entered the Discalced Carmelite

novitiate in 1958 and professed his vows in 1959. Sent to Rome to study in the 1960s, he was ordained to the priesthood there in April 1966.

Father Foster was summoned to the Vatican in 1969 when word of his academic achievements in Latin spread.

Even as Latin declined as the

common language of the Church, the Latin section has continued to translate and publish virtually everything that comes from the pen of the pope. Father Foster retired from his Vatican post in 2009 when his poor health forced his move back to the United States.

—CNS

Sister Ana Maria Causa, Served in Port Chester

Sister Ana Maria "Maruja" Causa, S.A., who served in Port Chester for 12 years, died Dec. 6 at Greenwich Hospital in Greenwich, Conn. She was 68.

Sister Maruja was in Port Chester, 2010-2020 and 2005-2007, serving as pastoral associate at St. John Bosco parish at the time of her death. She was at Holy Rosary in Port Chester, 2010-2017 and 2005-2007, and became part of the St. John Bosco parish when Holy Rosary merged with other Port Chester parishes.

She also served in Washington,

D.C., and Massachusetts.

Born in Moquegua, Peru, she entered the Franciscan Sisters of the Atonement in 1999 and professed final vows in 2009.

Besides her sisters in community, Sister Maruja is survived by family in Peru, including her two brothers, Augusto and Alfonso, and many nieces and nephews.

A Funeral Mass was celebrated Dec. 16 in St. John Bosco parish. A final private service for the sisters was held in the motherhouse chapel, Graymoor. Burial was in St. Joseph's Cemetery, Graymoor.

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