

Bishop DePalma, SCJ

1913-2005

Born in Walton, New York (raised in Rome, NY), Bishop Joseph DePalma, SCJ, spent several years working in a factory before giving the priesthood serious consideration at the age of 24.

He made his first profession in 1939 and was ordained to the priesthood in 1944. Bishop DePalma entered religious life hoping to serve as a parish pastor, but the needs of the U.S. Province, and later, the worldwide church, sent him in different directions.

“I would have loved to have worked in a parish, dealing with souls,” he said. “But as it turned out, I was told after my ordination (to the priesthood) to go to the novitiate where I would be assistant novice master and superior.”

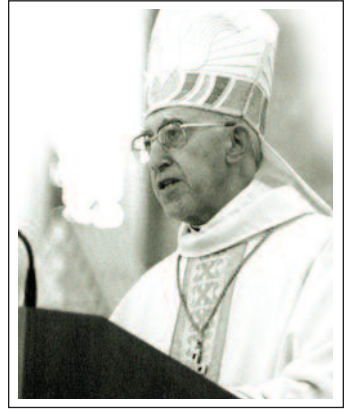
After seven years, he returned to Hales Corners as rector of the monastery he once studied in. During this time, he attended the General Chapter in Rome.

In 1955, Bishop DePalma was named provincial superior of what was then the North American Province. As provincial superior, he moved the province headquarters from Pennsylvania to Wisconsin and approved the construction of the new monastery (Sacred Heart Seminary and School of Theology) in Hales Corners.

Again, he attended a General Chapter in Rome. By the end of it, he was the new general superior. Bishop DePalma assumed office in 1959, and as general superior, attended the Second Vatican Council.

He headed the congregation until 1967, when he was consecrated as bishop for the newly created diocese of De Aar. He continued to minister there until his retirement in 1988.

The bishop returned to the U.S. Province and joined the retirement community in Pinellas Park, Fl. He often helped the local diocese with confirmations and other events.



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