

Fr. Anthony Kelly, SCJ

1943-2007

Originally from Bangor, Maine, Fr. Anthony Kelly, SCJ, professed his first vows with the Priests of the Sacred Heart in 1966. He did his undergraduate studies at Marquette University in Milwaukee (bachelor's in sociology), and theology at Sacred Heart School of Theology in Hales Corners, Wis. He was ordained to the priesthood in 1973.

When Fr. Tony returned to Mississippi in 2006 to serve as pastor of Holy Spirit Parish in Hernando, he said that he felt like he was "coming home." Although away from the area for many years, it was Mississippi where Fr. Kelly first began ministry. His first assignment was at Christ the King Parish in Southaven (1976-78), followed by St. Gregory the Great in Senatobia (1978-81) and Sacred Heart in Walls (1982-86).

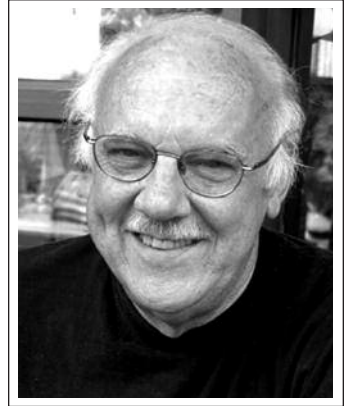
In 1987, he headed south to Houston to serve at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish (1987-93). From 1993 to 2001 he ministered in South Dakota, first at St. Mary Parish in Lower Brule and then at St. James Parish in Chamberlain.

From 2002-2005 he was a part of the ministerial team based in Raymondville, Texas.

And then, it was back to Mississippi. Returning, he said that he saw a lot of familiar faces from his first time in the area. "Some of them are people I baptized years ago and now THEY have children," he said soon after settling in. Of his last assignment at Holy Spirit, he said that he enjoyed his parishioners because they have "ministries that reach out to the broader community as well as tending to the needs of parishioners."

Among the many projects with which Fr. Tony was involved was the building of a new church for Holy Spirit. It was a project begun by the previous pastor, Fr. Jim Cunniffe, SCJ, who also died in 2007.

During the construction Fr. Tony was diagnosed with cancer. At the age of 64, Fr. Kelly died on December 2, 2007.



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