

Fr. Ken Mitchell, SCJ

1920-2008

When Fr. Ken Mitchell died at 88 he was in his 65th year of vows.

Originally from St. Louis, Mo., Fr. Ken was a convert to Catholicism when he was 19. During his religious instruction, he began to feel a call to the priesthood. He contacted the Priests of the Sacred Heart soon after his confirmation and professed his first vows with the community in 1943, four years after his baptism. He was ordained to the priesthood in 1948.

Fr. Ken's first assignment was at Our Lady of Guadalupe parish in Indiana Harbor (now East Chicago), Ind. He was there from 1948-56. He then spent two years teaching at Divine Heart Seminary in Donaldson, Ind., before joining the U.S. Army as a military chaplain. He served from 1959-62.

After his discharge, he was superior of Sacred Heart Monastery in Hales Corners, Wis., Missing his ministry as a military chaplain he joined the U.S. Navy in 1965 and served three more years as a Naval chaplain.

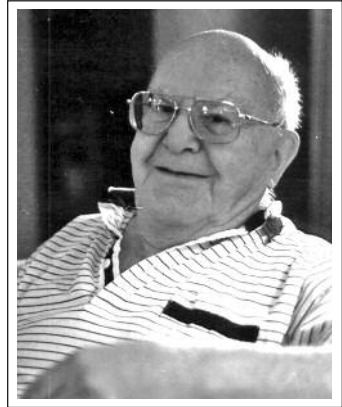
His assignments with the military took him to Germany and Vietnam. He also ministered at William Beaumont Army Hospital in El Paso, Texas.

Following the Navy, Fr. Ken served as a vocation director for the province, working primarily with "second career" vocations.

One of his favorite pastimes was writing poetry.

Fr. Ken retired in 1986. Initially in his retirement he served as a hospital chaplain in San Antonio as well as an "unofficial" chaplain to the fire department. He was well-known and appreciated by firefighters in San Antonio, often dropping in at firehouses to say hello and lend an ear to those who wanted to talk.

In 1996, he joined the Sacred Heart Community in Pinellas Park, Fl. He remained a member until his death, with residence at a nearby nursing facility in his last years.



Fr. Dermot Twomey, SCJ