

Br. Joseph Belanger, SCJ

1893-1956

Br. Joseph Belanger, SCJ, was born in Sherbrooke, Canada, in 1893. He married and had six children before entering religious life. Two of his sons also went on to become religious.

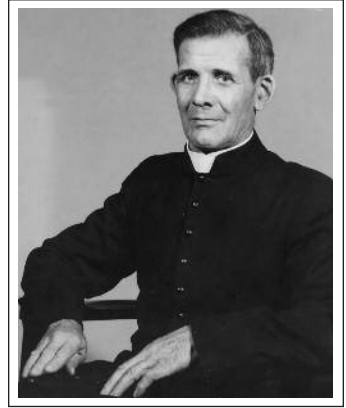
Throughout married life he was active in his parish and became a member of various Catholic organizations, including the League of the Sacred Heart. When his wife died, he began to consider a commitment to religious life and placed himself under the guidance of a Jesuit father. It was under his suggestion that Br.

Joseph approached the Priests of the Sacred Heart. At age 60, he came to the novitiate in Ste. Marie, IL. Although he was older than many of the priests, his age created few barriers. His enthusiasm, tireless energy and determination outweighed many of the novices half his age.

Br. Joseph was a skilled carpenter who quickly put his skills to work at the minor seminary in Canada. Daily he could be found repairing and building to fill various needs around the seminary. In 1955, Br. Joseph returned to the States to prepare for final vows. A month after his return, he learned he had cancer. He underwent two operations, hoping that they would speed his recovery and enable him to return to his work. Often he'd mention to members of his community his eagerness to return to Canada and the work he loved.

On March 19, 1956, he said his final vows at St. Anthony's Hospital in Effingham. He died a month later.

"Br. Joseph resembled St. Joseph in many ways," wrote a fellow SCJ. "St. Joseph was a carpenter, and so was he. St. Joseph raised a family and so did he. St. Joseph was humble and so was Br. Joseph. St. Joseph has a high and lasting place in heaven and so too, we hope and pray, has Br. Joseph."



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