



Reverend Robert Joseph Wilhelm

February 19, 1933 - March 11, 2021

Reverend Robert J. Wilhelm, age 88, passed away peacefully on March 11, 2021. He was a lifelong Toledo resident, attending St. Agnes grade school and entering St. Meinrad Seminary from the eighth grade at the age of 13. He was ordained a priest of the Diocese of Toledo in 1959. He obtained a Master's degree in Philosophy from Mt. St. Mary's Seminary in Cincinnati and participated in post-graduate studies at the University of Notre Dame and Fordham University, ultimately receiving a Doctorate in Sacred Theology from the Pontifical University of St. Thomas in Rome where he immersed himself in Italian culture, art, and cuisine. Countless students will remember him as a gifted professor at Mary Manse College, Lourdes University, and Siena Heights College.

Father Wilhelm ministered at various parishes in Toledo. He served as co-administrator at St. Michael's in 1970, was the founding pastor of the Community of the Risen Christ in Toledo in 1972, and served as the pastor of St. Patrick of Heatherdowns in 1975; St. John the Baptist in 1985; and Our Lady of Perpetual Help in 1997. Since 2005, he served as chaplain for the Sylvania Franciscan Sisters, celebrating daily Mass in Our Lady Queen of Peace Chapel on the motherhouse grounds and conducting funerals and various congregational celebrations. He cherished his time with his many loyal ongoing study groups, and his years'-long priest support group with best friends Fathers Arch Thomas, Fr. Bob Holden, Fr. Bob Reinhart, Fr. Dick

Wurzel, Fr. Bob Kirtland, and Fr. Joe Vamos. His many parishoners will remember him as Father Wilhelm, a warm and caring priest. But to those in his inner circle (of which there are hundreds), he'll be remembered as Father Bob -- leader, intellectual, teacher, counselor, comforter, cook, host, friend, son, brother, brother-in-law, uncle, and great-uncle.

Father Wilhelm was preceded in death by his parents, Clayton and Lyda (Parlo) Wilhelm; sisters Rita Neeb and Marilyn Anderson; brothers-in-law Carl Wm Neeb and Roy Anderson. He is survived by his niece Kathleen (David) Wernert; nephews Thomas (Sue) Neeb, Michael (Vanessa) Neeb; and David, Mark, Greg (Jennifer), Chris (Susan) and Tim (Natalie) Anderson; as well as 12 great nieces and nephews, and dear friends Susie Stapleton and Diane Wamsley.

Visitation will be held on Thursday, March 18, 2021, at Our Lady Queen of Peace Chapel on the north end of the motherhouse grounds of the Sisters of St. Francis, with Reception of the Body and Vespers at 4:00 p.m. and continuing until 8:00 p.m. A Funeral Mass will be held on Friday, March 19, 2021 at 11:00 a.m., with the Most Reverend Daniel E. Thomas, Bishop of Toledo, as the principal celebrant at Our Lady Queen of Peace Chapel again on the grounds of the Sisters of St. Francis of Sylvania. Interment will be private. The Funeral Mass will be available to watch via Live Stream. Go to www.sistersosf.org/Covid19 <<http://www.sistersosf.org/Covid19>>, scroll down and click on the Live Stream link, when prompted, enter the password: Sisters!! The family thanks the continuous compassionate care given by Home Hospice of Northwest Ohio.

Siccome una giornata bene spesa da lieto dormire, cosi una vita bene usata da lieto morire.

A day well spent brings happy sleep, so a life well lived brings happy death.

Memorials may take the form of contributions to the Sylvania Franciscan Sisters, or a charity of the donor's choice. Please view and sign our online "guest registry" at CoyleFuneralHome.com.

Cemetery Details

Private

Previous Events

Visitation

MAR 18. 4:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Our Lady Queen of Peace Chapel

Mass

MAR 19. 11:00 AM.

Our Lady Queen of Peace Chapel

Tribute Wall

SE

“ *To The Family Of Fr. Wilhelm,*

Fr. Wilhelm married me (and my husband) 39 years ago. I am not Catholic but my husband's family is very very very Catholic. He had absolutely no issue at all with marring a Lutheran and a Catholic! We were married at Holy Spirt Seminary in Toledo. Five years later we returned to St. Patrick's of Heatherdowns and he baptized our 4 month old son. He was thee happiest person I have EVER interacted with in the clergy!

How excited his family must be to be reunited now!

With fondest memories!

*Sarah Sakel Ehret
Sammamish, WA*

Sarah Ehret - March 29, 2021 at 08:26 AM

PS

“ *He is the teacher who taught me to question and not just to accept everything as fact. This came in handy when I taught and hopefully I passed that on. When I came to England I had to be observed by instructors from the university in order to get accreditation over here. They told me that they would love to have me to come to their classes to teach their future teachers how to question.*

My condolences to his family and friends from across the pond.

*Phyllis Seimet
Wisbech, England*

Phyllis Seimet - March 19, 2021 at 12:53 PM

KC

“ We joined St Pat's as singles and met at St. Pat's when Fr. Wilhelm was pastor. We were always amazed with his knowledge, his homilies, his vocabulary and his kindness. We coincidentally saw him years later when we were both at a self-serve gas station. He wanted to recall our names and we enjoyed a short visit. He also visited St. Pat's a couple times after being reassigned to other parishes. It was always a joy to see or hear him speak again. He was a special person and will always hold a fond place in our hearts.

Kathy and Don Collier

Kathy Collier - March 19, 2021 at 08:48 AM

DH

“ Fr. Bob was not only a wonderful pastor but a caring friend as well. He officiated at Baptisms for some of my grandchildren as well as so many sacraments for my children as they attended St. John the Baptist School. He also officiated at their weddings. The most powerful sacrament that he officiated was that of the funeral of my husband Jim. They were very good friends and a difficult day for all of us. I was fortunate enough to be a 1st. grade teacher at St. John the Baptist all of the years that he was our pastor. His loss is felt by so many and he will be forever missed. Dianne Hornyak-Adams

Dianne Hornyak-Adams - March 18, 2021 at 05:51 PM

DK

“ *Father Wilhelm was an outstanding person and Priest. During our years in Toledo, Father Wilhelm provided us Sunday after Sunday, a Homily that not only challenged you....but also motivated you. Since that time, Father Wilhelm has been included in my early morning prayers. Hearing of his passing is a joyful thing, as we all know he is in the presense of his Heavenly Lord. Rest in Peace. Thank you for being an intregal part of our lives. You made a difference.*

*Dan & Diane Kane
Canton, Ohio*

Dan Kane - March 18, 2021 at 04:28 PM

JM

“ *Sending deepest sympathy and prayers to Fr. Wilhelm's family and friends from the Mary Manse College Alumni who were so blessed to know and love him.
We are grateful that he was an important part of our PBS production "Remembering Mary Manse College."
Fr. Wilhelm will live in our hearts forever!*

Judy Biehler Miller - March 17, 2021 at 04:26 PM

MM

May you Rest In Peace dear Fr. Wilhelm. How blessed we all were to know you and continue our friendships long after our graduation from Mary Manse. Thank you for always being there and supporting us. You will be dearly missed. We love you 🙏🙏🙏

Maggie Kennedy Maziarz - March 18, 2021 at 04:18 PM

JH

I remember Fr. Wilhelm as one of my greatest teachers in life. In his effort to makes us critical thinkers, he helped me deepen my faith. I especially loved his Christology course my senior year at Mary Manse College. Although it has been many years since crossing his path, I have never forgotten his joy in sharing his knowledge about God. Heaven must be rejoicing with his presence now!

Jane Creger Hubbard - March 23

Jane E Hubbard - March 23, 2021 at 06:28 PM

NR

“ *Father Bob,
Thank you for all you did for our OLPH community. We were blest to have had you touch our lives.
You will live forever in our hearts.
May the Lord bless you and keep you.
And until we meet again, may you be held in the hollow of God's hand.*

*Love,
Don and Nanci Riddle*

Nancy Riddle - March 17, 2021 at 03:05 PM

SM

“ *I had the honor and privilege of serving as Sacristan for our Motherhouse Chapel during Fr. Wilhelm's time as Chaplain. What a great person he was, someone filled with compassion and care, interested in our lives and ministries, prayerful and spiritually insightful, funny, and just very down-to-earth. Although his health ended his time as our Chaplain, he always remained a part of our lives! I so appreciated you, Bob--thank you, thank you! May you rest in the loving arms of your God!*

Sister Julie Myers - March 16, 2021 at 02:46 PM

JL

“ I didnt have the honor of meeting Fr. Wilhelm until after his retirement while saying Mass at the Convent chapel. He was suffering early respiratory stress but continued to be present for us and the Sisters. He touched my life and saved me from a traumatic time in 2017, advising me in the most difficult decision of my life. I am eternally grateful for this wonderful man. His family has much to be proud of yet we will all miss him!

Julie Meier Lee - March 16, 2021 at 10:53 AM

SM

“ I met Fr. Bob when I was a student at Mary Manse. His love of God and theology inspired me, at his encouragement, to pursue a master's degree in theology. Many years later I was honored to team up with him to lead two parish missions. He opened amazing doors for a fuller understanding of God for me and I will forever be grateful for his influence in my life and for his great care, great humor and great energy!

Sr. Edna Michel - March 16, 2021 at 07:21 AM

SM

Edna Michel

Sr. Edna Michel - March 16, 2021 at 07:23 AM

BB

“ Bill & Becky lit a candle in memory of Reverend Robert Joseph Wilhelm



Bill & Becky - March 15, 2021 at 12:45 PM

MH

“ God bless Father Wilhelm and His entire family. He was one of a kind and I greatly appreciated the chance to know and be able to go visit Him, be it when my Dad past away or just to talk from time to time. He will be greatly missed.

*Thank you for everything Father Wilhelm,
Michael Hernandez*

Michael Hernandez - March 14, 2021 at 09:59 PM

SS

“ Father Bob was my first Christology professor at Mary Manse which lead me to pursue Theology. I will always be grateful for his compassion and his delightful wit. The years he served as our Chaplain were a gift to us. He spoke from the heart and was the consummate teacher and pastor. He was a blessing. Thanks, Bob. With Great affection and admiration, Sister Shannon Schrein, OSF

Sister Shannon Schrein - March 14, 2021 at 05:17 PM

JP

“Why do you worry so much about what's going to happen or what could happen? The words are give us this day our DAILY bread. We are given what we can handle each day, good or bad, and we have to have faith in tomorrow and only worry if we've done enough today. If the answer to have I done enough TODAY is yes, or if the answer to did I do the best I could is yes, then you have been given what you need for Today. Your faith will carry you through tomorrow. So just stop. Stop and pray. You'll be ok. You just blocking your own view with worry.”

I haven't forgotten those words for 30+ years. Thanks Padre. You mattered.

Jean Poplawski - March 14, 2021 at 09:10 AM

MM

“ We remember Fr Bob well from St Patrick's. We moved to Fort Pierce, Florida in 1977. He was a very special priest! One of his best friends, Fr Bob Kirkland was a most dear friend and confidant for many years. Our memory and feelings run very deep about Toledo.
Our love and prayers follow that. Mike & Ronda Morse

Mike & Ronda Morse - March 14, 2021 at 03:27 AM

MR

“ We are keeping Fr. Bob's family in our thoughts and prayers. Brent and I were very lucky to have Fr. Wilhelm (That is how we addressed him) when we were at St. Pats as students and in later years as members at OLPH. At OLPH our children were fortune to have Fr. Bob. He was a true servant of God and we wish him everlasting peace in God's peaceful garden.

Maggie and Brent Reed

Maggie Reed - March 13, 2021 at 09:39 PM

MD

“ Fr. Bob was my "boss" when I worked at St. Patrick of Heatherdowns; a mentor to me as a parishioner at St. Pat's. I was fortunate to be a member of one of his study groups. A most compassionate priest; an intellectual, a fine cook, and an upstanding member of our human family. I will miss him very much. My condolences to his family on their loss.
Marilyn Dubielak

Marilyn Dubielak - March 13, 2021 at 09:06 PM

CD

“ Fr Bob was a close friend to hundreds, I’m sure, but his true beauty was he made you feel special regardless. He was a significant friend to my parents and an enthusiastic debater with my mother in particular. I experienced the Bible in a new and meaningful way through his teaching. I am eternally grateful that I got to cook for him Wednesday nights when I was still in high school. I learned a lot about the humanity of the priesthood, being on time and prepared, and to love cooking! Thank you for everything Padre. Such a splendid human!

cindy Dubielak - March 13, 2021 at 08:39 PM

MP

“ We are surprised and saddened to hear of Father's death. He was like a personal counselor to my mother, Margaret McCarty Fanaff Whitlock, while at St. Patrick's of Heatherdowns and we thought of him as a personal friend during his years at OLPH. He was always ready to help with reunion Masses for the alumni of Central Catholic High School. A true servant of God and a caring shepherd to His people. God rest his soul, he will be sorely missed.
Joe and Mary (McCarty) Pierce

Mary G Pierce - March 13, 2021 at 06:01 PM

AM

“ Dear Wernert, Neeb, and Anderson Families,

Your loss of Father Bob is felt by the many whose lives he has touched.

Our connection goes back through the years to the younger days of our grandparents.

Father Bob was a part of so many of the major Schira family events. He prayed with us, he taught us, he inspired us, and he blessed us.

With deepest sympathy,

Ann Schira Mackley

Ann Schira Mackley - March 13, 2021 at 05:06 PM



“ Florist Choice Bouquet was purchased for the family of Reverend Robert Joseph Wilhelm.



March 13, 2021 at 02:06 PM



“ Strength & Solace Spray was purchased for the family of Reverend Robert Joseph Wilhelm.



March 13, 2021 at 08:48 AM

JA

“ *Many fond memories at St. Pats many years ago...Fr. Wilhelm was a big part of those memories. Great guy who did a great job! Enjoy your new journey.*

The Arman Family

Jeff Arman - March 13, 2021 at 08:43 AM

RM

“ *Thank you, good and great man. You deeply loved and faithfully served the Church and all God's people. You taught us, welcomed us, walked with us, fed us, entertained us, laughed and cried with us, and loved us. I, for one, am forever grateful for your guidance and friendship. Un giorno ci rivedremo nell'aldilà, caro amico mio.*

Bob Mickens, Rome (Italy)

ROBERT MICKENS - March 13, 2021 at 08:16 AM

AJ

“ *Our sincere condolences. We are very sorry to hear of this great loss to your family. It was our pleasure to get to know Father Bob over the years. He lived a full life and left this world under his terms. You can't ask for more from life than that!*

Alyce and Jeff Juby

Alyce Juby - March 12, 2021 at 04:27 PM