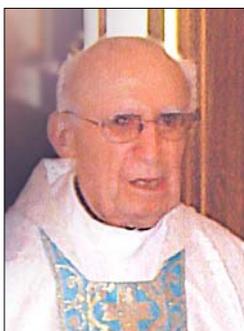


SOCIETY OF ST PAUL  
Secretary General



*“As we have been united in the profession of faith, so let us keep ourselves united in suffrage and intercession.”*

(Fr Alberione)

On Monday, November 9, 2009, 6:54 p.m., at Carmel Richmond Nursing Home in Staten Island, New York, has departed from this life and returned to the House of the Father

### **FR. JOSEPH FRANCIS PARELLA**

***93 years of age; 68 years in the congregation; 62 years of priesthood.***

Fr. Francis Parella, up until his death last Monday evening, never wavered from the difficult pioneer spirit that marked Paulines whose lives were to be about ‘beginnings’.

Born to Frank and Antonina Giordano Parella on December 2, 1915 in Bristol, Rhode Island, Fr. Francis entered the Society of St. Paul on August 15, 1941. Three years later he made his first profession of vows on April 12, 1945. It was followed by perpetual profession in April 1947. On May 31 that same year, he became part of the historic first group of six American Paulines ordained to the priesthood in North America at the Cathedral of Youngstown, Ohio.

After ordination Fr. Francis was assigned at the fledgling Pauline foundation in Derby, New York, as Director of Vocations. The assignment had a two-year interval in Staten Island, New York where he helped set up a Book Center. He returned to Derby in 1952 as part of the faculty of the Queen of Apostles Seminary. During this period, between teaching and being the community’s handyman, for which he had the lifelong reputation, he became instrumental in initiating the Pauline radio apostolate. He helped established a recording program production studio at the Seminary that launched related series of audio recorded conferences under the label of Thabor Records. Later in the 1950s, in collaboration with the Diocese of Buffalo, he lent himself with characteristic energy and courage to the inauguration of a full-fledged Catholic Movie Theatre in the heart of the city.

In 1988, after various years of teaching and various tasks in the Provincial Government, Fr. Francis was appointed Bursar of the United States Pauline Province. From 1992 to 1997, he assumed the additional responsibility of Provincial Secretary along with being Bursar. Over the years, he proved himself an invaluable guide and fraternal confidante to a succession of Pauline Major Superiors.

That Fr. Francis was called home to God’s house during this *Year of the Priests* is a distinction he would have appreciated - and deserved. He had a genuine felt love and pride for his sacerdotal identity. It was exemplified by a remarkable self availability for sacramental ministry inside and outside the Pauline Family. For many years his weekend assistance at the neighboring Immaculate Conception Parish Church in Eden, NY, was famous. In 1991, in recognition of Fr. Francis’ services, the Pastor of the parish wrote to the Superior General: “It has been my good fortune and that of the parishioners of Immaculate Conception to have the help, support and presence of Fr. Francis wherever these were needed”.

Worn by years of physical labor in God’s vineyard but nonetheless sustained by an undimmed spirit and determined as ever, Fr. Francis returned to Staten Island in 2004. Here, in spite of declining eyesight and hearing, he showed himself as a prayerful, steady, congenial and uncomplaining companion to everyone in the community. In 1945, he summed up what was his particular vocation in life of which he was convinced: «The modern means of spreading God’s Gospel and teachings employed by the Society of St. Paul have moved me to choose it as my earthly bark upon which to work for my own salvation and, with God’s help, to aid others to attain theirs.» Fr. Zanoni, on the occasion of his 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of ordination, wrote to him these words: «From the day of your entrance in the Congregation way back in 1941 and until today, your life was a continuous ascent toward religious life, the Priesthood, and the Pauline apostolic life. These are three conquests which signify a journey of fidelity, of generous giving, and of many sacrifices. I pray with you that God may bestow on the Province many priests like you.» To Fr. Francis, now in the light of God, we ask that he present the same prayer before the Father.

Rome, November 11, 2009

Br. Lorenzo Vezzani

*Viewing will be in the Society of St. Paul Chapel on Thursday, Nov. 12th from 2 - 9 PM. The funeral will take place in the Chapel of the Community of Staten Island on Friday, November 13, at 10 a.m. Burial will take place at St Mary's Cemetery at Bristol, Rhode Island.*

**The Superiors of Circumscriptions are to inform their communities of the suffrages prescribed (Cost 65, 65.1)**