

12-27-2015

Resting in the Peace of Christ

University of Dayton

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Recommended Citation

University of Dayton. "Resting in the Peace of Christ" (2015). http://wayback.archive-it.org/4727/20160114215956/https://www.udayton.edu/news/articles/2015/12/father_jack_mcgrath_dies.php

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Sunday December 27, 2015

Resting in the Peace of Christ

Father John “Jack” McGrath, S.M., a member of the University faculty in religious studies since 1987, and Marianist leader, suffered a stroke on Dec. 21 and died early Dec. 26 in Dayton.

Father Jack will be remembered with a wake from 4:30 to 8 p.m. Monday, Jan. 4, at the Marianist Novitiate, Mount Saint John, at 4435 E. Patterson Road. An evening prayer will be held at 7:30 p.m. A wake also will be held on the University of Dayton campus at 3:30 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 5, at the Immaculate Conception Chapel, followed by a Mass at the Chapel at 5 p.m. and dinner at Kennedy Union in the lower level concourse.

The body will be transferred to Long Island, New York where a mass of Christian burial and interment will take place on Saturday, Jan. 9.

[Read his obituary here.](#)

According to Father Jim Fitz, S.M., vice president for mission and rector, Father Jack served the University well for many years including as an assistant professor in religious studies and as University Professor for Faith and Culture.

McGrath was executive director of the Association of Marianist Universities from 2010 to 2012.

Before coming to the University, he also served the Marianists well in various leadership positions in the former New York Province of the Society of Mary, including eight years as Provincial.

During the past several years, he had served as assistant district superior in the Society of Mary's District of India and taught in the University program in Bangalore. He returned to United States in 2015.

"Let us pray that Fr. Jack may rest in the peace of Christ and that our faith in the resurrection may sustain all of us who mourn his sudden loss," Fitz said. "Let us pray for his Marianist brothers, especially the members of the Marianist Novitiate Community, where Fr. Jack has been residing. Let us also pray for his fellow religious, family, friends, and colleagues who mourn his loss."

McGrath loved his work at UD. As he wrote: "Working at UD gives me a great sense of satisfaction and pleasure for several reasons. Working with students in the process of making life decisions and assisting them from the point of view of opening avenues to reality, truth, values and the human needs around us is a unique role in society.

"And to be doing such work with competent, human and energetic colleagues broadens the sense of a community in action. And my years at UD as a student and teacher convince me that this complex Catholic and Marianist institution is committed to the same goals. I like furthering those goals."

Dennis Doyle, professor of religious studies, said, "Fr. Jack had a deep mind and a big heart. He provided a gracious Marianist presence to the Religious Studies Department and to the University of

Dayton. We will miss him greatly.”

Fitz said McGrath’s love for the University was reciprocated by his colleagues; many expressed their deep affection for him as the news of his illness spread.

“Let us thank God for the gift of Fr. Jack’s life and the many ways he blessed our University community; let us thank Mary Our Mother for the gift of his perseverance as a Marianist religious,” he said. “Together, let us pray that he may rest in the peace of Christ.”