



## **Rev. George Joseph Fekete**

**June 3, 1930 – December 24, 2022**

Rev. George Joseph Fekete, age 92, of Grand Rapids, was called home by his Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, on Christmas Eve, December 24, 2022.

He was born in Muskegon Heights, Michigan, on June 3, 1930, the son of the late George M. and Helen C. (Soltisz) Fekete. Fr. George attended Sacred Heart Elementary, Muskegon Heights High School, Muskegon Community College, and Michigan State University.

Having earned a baccalaureate degree in Science and Mathematics as well as a teaching certificate, he applied for the Naval Officer Candidate School. After the OSC training course, he was commissioned an Ensign in the U.S. Navy in December 1952. Lieutenant, j.g. Fekete served three years and four months on active duty, as a line officer on the heavy cruiser, the USS Newport News. Between three deployments in the Mediterranean and six deployments in the Caribbean, he sailed over 100,000 miles. He served two years in the Naval Reserves. After discharge in 1955, he returned to Michigan State University to earn a second bachelor's degree in Mechanical Engineering before deciding to enter the seminary. Fr. George began priestly formation at St. Jerome's College in Kitchener, Ontario, in 1958 and then continued at Mount St. Mary's in Cincinnati, Ohio. In 1965, he earned his Master of Divinity at St. John's Provincial Seminary in Plymouth, Michigan.

He was ordained to the priesthood on June 5, 1965, at the Cathedral of St. Andrew by Bishop Allen J. Babcock. Fr. George served as an associate pastor at St. Mary in Spring Lake; St. Patrick in Portland; St. Isidore in Grand Rapids. His assignments as pastor included: St. Philip Neri, Reed City and St. Ann Mission, Paris; St. Stephen, East Grand Rapids; St. Mary, Big Rapids; and St. Mary, Lowell.

He was granted senior priest status in June 2008. During his "senior" years, he lived at St. Isidore for 11 years ministering to the parishioners. He continued to engage in the sacramental life of many parishes throughout the Diocese, whenever needed. He often served at the Grand Rapids Home for Veterans as well. Fr. George served many years as the Director of the Propagation of the Faith in the Diocese. On October 28, 2022, Fr. George was made a Fourth Degree Knight of Columbus with the support from his brother Knights at St. Robert of Newminster Parish.

He was an accomplished downhill skier in his younger years. He also enjoyed bicycling and tennis. He was a generous and kind soul to everyone. Fr. George is survived by his brother, John (Marilyn) Fekete of Elk Rapids, Michigan; ten nieces and nephews; and several grandnieces and

grandnephews. Fr. George was preceded in death by his sisters Veronica (John) Telgarsky, Gloria (Royal) Cline, and Joyce (Robert) Cashman, and his niece, Cheryl Cline.

His family is thankful for the excellent assisted living care Fr. George received at the Village of Heather Hills for over eight months. Making many new friends there, he flourished sharing his priestly ministry. Fr. George's family is grateful to Therese Cotter, his dear friend, who advocated for him in his later years. Visitation will be on Monday, January 9, from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. at St. Isidore Church, 628 Diamond Avenue, NE. A Vigil service will be held at 7:30 p.m.

A Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated Tuesday, January 10, at 10 a.m. at St. Isidore Church. Bishop David J. Walkowiak will be the principal celebrant. Fr. George will lie in repose beginning at 8 a.m. until the Mass time. Burial will follow at St. Mary Cemetery in Muskegon.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations are suggested to Holy Family Radio (2504 Ardmore Street, SE, GR, MI 49506) Help Pregnancy Aid (705 Bridge Street, NW, GR, MI 49504), and St. Isidore Church. Please remember Fr. George Joseph Fekete in your prayers.