

Diocese continues to pray for the safe return of Father Marvin Reif

The Catholic Diocese of Dodge City continues to pray for the safe return of Father Marvin Reif, who walked away from his residence at Valley Manor Nursing Home in Protection, Kansas, on April 3.

The 53-year-old priest was receiving treatment for mental illness, from which he has suffered for several years.

An initial search that was conducted when he went missing bore no fruit. A second major search, April 13, which included more than 70 volunteers, as well as the Most Rev. John Brungardt, also failed to locate Father Reif.

Father Reif was ordained by Bishop Stanley G. Schlarman on June 3, 1989 at Holy Family Parish in Odin.

He served at numerous parishes throughout the Catholic Diocese of Dodge City before being removed from active duty, and later given an extended leave of absence for health reasons.

While serving in the diocese, he was recognized and admired for his zeal for spreading the Gospel message. In his years of active service, Father Reif built a large contingent of friends and admirers, all of whom join in prayer for his safe return.

In a KWCH-12 report, Steve Hazen, who helped search for the priest through a wooded area near

Protection, Kans., commented, "We think the world of him. He's a nice guy, we really miss him. He needs us, and we need him. Maybe we'll find him. I hope so."

In March, Father Reif shared this Lenten message on a Facebook post. It reads, in part:

As we know, God's wisdom is so different than our wisdom. His ways are far above our ways. His thoughts above our thoughts.

... What does this teach us? It teaches us lots of patience. And it teaches us surrender, trust and hope. If we want to pray hard and pray well, we need to pray correctly. And it is a very easy way to pray. St. Paul makes it sound difficult by saying that we are to pray always. It's the simple prayer of Mary when the angel came to her in the annunciation, and that is the prayer: "Thy will be done!" Many times it is hard at first, but it becomes easy when we understand and believe that God always has the perfect plan for our lives, and yes, even in the struggles and situations in which we find ourselves.

... He has a perfect plan for your life, and that plan is sometimes oh, so different than your plan. Surrender to Him and let His holy will guide you in all things.



Father Marvin Reif

Father Reif is 5'8", weighs 265 pounds, has blond hair and blue eyes. If you see Father Reif, please contact the Comanche County Sheriff's Office at (620) 582-2511, or call 911.

The diocese thanks all those who have taken part in the searches, and to those who have offered their prayers.