

March 28, 2017

Father Marvin Reif laid to rest in Great Bend

Father Marvin Reif, a priest of the Catholic Diocese of Dodge City, will be laid to rest April 1 in Great Bend. A funeral Mass will be celebrated at St. Patrick church. Full details have not yet been released.

Father Reif, son of the late Albert and Dorothy (Frenzl) Reif, was born August, 19, 1963, in Hoisington. He took his seminary studies at Conception Seminary, Conception, Mo., Holy Trinity College, Dallas, Tex., and Pontifical College Josephinum, Columbus, Ohio. He was ordained to the priesthood June 3, 1989, by the Most Rev. Stanley G. Schlarman, bishop of Dodge City, at Holy Family Church, Odin, Kansas.

He served as an associate pastor at Sacred Heart Cathedral, Dodge City, and St. Rose of Lima, Great Bend.

His pastorates included: Immaculate Conception, Claflin, with Holy Family, Odin, and St. Catherine, Dubuque, and St. Joseph, Beaver, from 1993 to 1995; Sacred Heart, Ness City, and St. Alphonsus, Ransom, (1995-1999); St. Joseph, Ashland, and Holy Spirit, Coldwater, (1999-2000); St. Rose, Great Bend, (2000-2001); and St. Nicholas, Kinsley, with St. Joseph, Offerle, (2001-2002).

Father Reif served the diocese in the positions of Director of the Office of Liturgy and Worship, Director of Vocations, and was a member of the Presbyteral Council and College of Consultors.

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.

“Father Marvin is remembered by so many people of our diocese: grateful for his love of the sacred liturgy; still able to hear his voice as he sang and preached; continuing to feel his compassionate and gentle pastoral care,” said the Most Rev. John B. Brungardt, Bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Dodge City.

“Father Marvin will continue to be remembered as one who sought to serve others in and out of the various changes of his life. He experienced such joy and suffering in his earthly life, and trusted in our Savior Jesus for his eternal life.

“May the Lord, who Father Marvin sought to praise and serve, continue to give him eternal rest and peace. May that same Lord grant comfort and consolation to his family and all of us who grieve for him.”

On April 3, 2017, Father Reif walked away from his residence at Valley Manor Nursing home in Protection, where he had been receiving treatment for mental illness from which he had suffered for several years.

An extensive search, which included 70 volunteers and Bishop Brungardt, failed to locate Father Reif.

His remains were discovered in a pasture near Protection on March 27, 2019.

In March of 2017, 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 to surrender, trust and hope. If we want to pray hard and pray well, we need to pray correctly.... It’s the simple prayer of Mary, when the angel came to her in the annunciation: ‘Thy will be done!’

“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.”