



Let us pray in thanksgiving for the life of our brother, **Fr. James E. Von Tobel, S.J. (CDT)**, who died at 11:45 a.m. (EDT) on Friday, September 23, 2016 at Munson Medical Center in Traverse City, Michigan. He was 80 years old. May he rest in peace.

Jim was born on March 31, 1936 in Detroit, Michigan. Before entering the Society, Jim graduated from the University of Detroit Jesuit High School in 1954. He entered the Society of Jesus on September 1, 1954 at the Milford Novitiate in Milford, Ohio. He was ordained on June 14, 1967 at Colombiere Center in Clarkston, Michigan. He took final vows on August 15, 1973 at the Loyola House Novitiate in Berkeley, Michigan.

Jim -- known by many as "VT" -- was a wonderful Jesuit: available and easily missionable. He was always willing to go where the need was greatest. Jim spent much of his life caring for both Jesuits and for parishioners. His care and concern for others was omnipresent, and done with great wisdom, humility, and humor. This is why he was so often missioned to internal governance in the Society and to pastoral ministry in parishes. He was a great listener who made people feel comfortable and at ease through his good humor and infectious (not to mention LOUD) laughter. He loved engaging people around the table -- whether going to a good restaurant or cooking up a not-so-small feast. He brought people to God through his homilies and at the altar in the many parishes in which he ministered. He was present to the people of God at the major events in their lives: marriages, births, anniversaries, and deaths. Jim will be missed by many, especially a close group of Jesuit brothers whose friendship spans decades!

As a Jesuit, he earned a Bachelor's (1959) and a Master's (1965) degree in Philosophy from Loyola University Chicago. He also earned a Master's degree in Theology from Loyola University (1968). He spent his regency teaching Latin at St. Ignatius High School in Cleveland (1961-1964). After ordination, he taught Latin and religion at St. John's Jesuit High School in Toledo for a year before called into service for his brother Jesuits at Colombiere Center.

At Colombiere, VT was minister (1969-1970) and socius to the novice master (1970-1971). In 1971, Jim helped move the novitiate to Berkeley, Michigan. He remained the socius to the novice master until 1974. In addition to this job, he was the prefect of studies for the Detroit Province (1970-1973) and the Detroit Province's Vocation Director (1971-1975). Since he had a bit of extra time, VT taught theology to the novices during the 1972-1973 academic year. Jim moved to Cleveland in 1974 where he was the Director of Religious Formation (1974-1975) and then principal of St. Ignatius High School (1975-1977).

After a well-deserved sabbatical, VT was the associate pastor at Gesu Parish in Detroit and the Detroit Provincial Assistant for Pastoral Ministry (1978-1981). In 1981 Jim moved to Marquette in the upper peninsula of Michigan, and was pastor of St. John's Church and superior of the Jesuit community there. In 1984 he became the Provincial Assistant for Pastoral Ministry (1984-1993). Jim took on the added duties of socius in 1993. He was socius to Howard Gray (1986-1989) and then Joe Daoust (1989-1993). VT was also the Provincial Assistant for Formation from 1990-1993. After a few months sabbatical, Jim moved to Colombiere and was the superior and director of Colombiere Center (1994-1999).

In 2000 Jim returned to parish life and, except for a couple of years, stayed in that ministry until he died. He was pastor of Gesu Parish in University Heights from 2000-2006 (and was also superior of the Jesuit community from 2000-2002). VT then was asked to return to the Detroit Province Office where he was the Provincial Assistant for Advancement (2007-2009). Jim then spent many years "subbing" for pastors while they took a vacation, a sabbatical, or the parish was in transition. He provided this wonderful service in the Gaylord, MI (2006-2007 and 2013-2015) and Winona, MN (2009-2013) dioceses. In 2015, Jim was asked to be the acting pastor of Gesu Parish in University Heights. He intended to end his term and have a second hip replacement in November 2016.

Earlier in his life, VT was an excellent racquetball player. Throughout his life he also was an avid golfer. Jim was getting ready to go golfing when he collapsed suddenly at Villa Marquette in Omena, Michigan, one of his favorite places on earth. He died in Munson Medical Center.

A paragraph from the worship aid for Jim's farewell Mass as pastor at Gesu Parish in 2006 sums up his life:

Fr. Von Tobel suggests that his experience is similar to that of a utility player in sports: not a superstar (though we might disagree), but one who can handle many responsibilities adequately, thus extending his career and enhancing his service to his community. Fr. Von Tobel has provided many years of service to the Church community and the Jesuit community.

Suffrages: As we remember with gratitude all that God has done through his life of service to God and God's people, we are reminded of our privilege and obligation to offer Masses and prayers for his eternal repose. All members of the Chicago-Detroit Province and those applied to it are to offer one Mass intention for Jim. Members of the John Carroll University Jesuit Community will offer one additional Mass intention. All will wish to remember Jim in their prayers and Masses.

Wake:

Wednesday, September 28, 2016
2:00 - 5:00 p.m.
Gesu Church - Marian Chapel
2470 Miramar Blvd
University Heights, OH 44118-3821

Funeral Mass:

Wednesday, September 28, 2016
7:00 p.m.
Gesu Church
2470 Miramar Blvd
University Heights, OH 44118-3821

Note: While the Funeral Mass is occurring at Gesu, a wake service will take place at Colombiere Center

Memorial Mass:

Thursday, September 29, 2016
11:15 a.m.
Colombiere Center
9075 Big Lake Road
Clarkston, MI 48346-1015

Burial Service:

Immediately following the Memorial Mass at Colombiere Center

Condolences:

There are no immediate relatives.

Schell House Jesuit Community
2520 Miramar Blvd
University Heights, OH 44118-3821

David Loewen (cousin)
40238 Kristen
Sterling Heights, MI 48078

Bernadette Schmidt (cousin)
27418 Grant
St. Clair Shores, MI 48081

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