



Father James McSharry, Aged 69 Years,
St. Mary of the Assumption Parish & Missions,
Owen Sound, Ontario, Canada
Died Saturday 8th January 2022

Died peacefully at Mount Carmel Home, St Catharines, Ontario, Canada

Fr. James, was born 25th June 1952, in Birmingham, England.
He is predeceased by, his father John McSharry died 1989, his mother Eileen McSharry (nee McCoy) died in 2015 and his older sister Mary Kathleen Mullins died 2015
He is survived by his brother Gerrard McSharry, and sister Ann O'Callaghan

It is with the deepest sadness that we announce the death of our dear brother James, Fr. James McSharry, who died on Saturday the 8th of January in the Mount Carmel Home, St Catharines, Ontario. Father James died peacefully after a short illness, and in the great care of the staff of Mount Carmel. It is truly with God's blessing that Fr. Wojciech Kuzma was at his bedside in the last hours of his life.

Father James lived a life of commitment to God and the Church, his abiding passion, we his family being proud to honour and support him in this selfless pursuit of his vocation.

From early childhood, performing his duties as an altar boy, he was never to be found far from the church. It was in fact when returning from serving Mass one Saturday morning that he encountered the first major challenge in his life, he was struck by a car as he crossed the road, causing him very serious injury. James sustained a severely broken arm, leaving him with a lifelong disability of the limb, and a major head trauma which left him literally at death's door for several weeks. Only our mother's constant prayer, care and devotion nursed him back to health, with all of the ongoing implications that such an accident can produce. By the grace of God he recovered, finished his secondary education and joined the workforce in Birmingham in the late 1960's.

Indeed he cut quite a dash in his elegant tailored suit as he learned the retail clothing trade working with one of Birmingham's leading menswear clothiers. And yet he, and we, knew it

wasn't really for him, even though his professional ability was unquestioned, with many of his customers returning again and again to be guaranteed his advice with their suits, his heart it seemed, was never fully committed to his job. His calling was to the priesthood, and it would not be satisfied until he enrolled to fulfil his vocation. This proved difficult, as his accident seemed determined to continue to haunt him.

His application to St. Mary's College, Oscott, Sutton Coldfield, the Roman Catholic seminary of the Archdiocese of Birmingham, was declined, with his incomplete third level education, and indeed his injuries being cited for the refusal. One might think that this would deter an applicant, sending them off to pursue a different path in life, but nothing could have been further from the truth. James through his still close association with the Church met and befriended Father Robert Lee, who could clearly see the vocation that James nurtured, and he subsequently introduced him to Father Mike Downey, then a Vocations Director for the Diocese of Hamilton in Ontario.

James went on to complete studies in; The University of Western Ontario, University of McMaster, Hamilton, Ontario and Washington Theological Forum. He graduated B.A. Sociology and Master of Divinity, Theology/Theological Studies.

James was ordained, Father James McSharry in his home parish of St. Edwards, Selly Park, Birmingham, England in 1992. The irony being that the Archbishop who ordained Father James, asked our mother whether he would consider coming back to the Birmingham Diocese, as his study results were consistently high, but his loyalty to the Diocese of Hamilton, Ontario was established by then, and he returned to Canada shortly thereafter.

A modest man, Father James was devoted also to his family, spending most of his holidays and breaks on the west coast of Ireland for many years. He officiated at numerous family weddings and baptisms in both Ireland and England, and was co-celebrant at the funeral Masses of our beloved mother and sister in 2015.

It is with the greatest regret that neither I, nor my sister Ann can be with you today as you lay our dear brother James to rest. The abominable conditions that the world finds itself in due to Covid 19, the severe travel restrictions, and not to mention our own brush with the very threatening virus, make it impossible and unsafe to be with you in Owen Sound today. We are so grateful to Father Kuzma for his inestimable help through these difficult days, and to the parish for all the very great support given to Father James during these years of his life. We shall be watching the live feed of his Mass with our combined families, and joining you all on Friday 14th as he makes this final journey to the arms of our dear Lord Jesus and his Blessed Mother.

We thank God eternally for sparing James in his childhood ordeal, and we give thanks for the fulfilling life he went on to enjoy in his beloved second home, Canada.

Gerrard and Ann McSharry, Friday 14th January 2022