



## Fr. John McCormick

June 25, 1945 - September 19, 2016

Please pray for the repose of the soul of Father John McCormick.

Father John McCormick, beloved rector of St. James Cathedral in Orlando, died in the early morning hours of September 19, 2016, six days after he announced his retirement because of acute leukemia.

He was born June 25, 1945 in Dublin Ireland to Thomas and Nora McCormick. He had three brothers and a sister; Robert and Maria Burden (sister) Children: John, Karl, Alex, Hugh and Miriam; Brother Anthony (deceased) Sister in law Mary McCormick, Children: Ivan and Gérard and Goda; Niall (brother) and Nicole McCormick, Children: Sabrina and Danielle and Brother: Fergal McCormick.

He served in the Diocese of Orlando since 1983. His love for his faith and the people he served was evident throughout his ministry these 33 years.

He received a Licentiate in Theology from the Angelicum University in Rome and was ordained as a Legionnaire of Christ on December 24, 1975. He had a talent for languages and communication. Shortly after his Ordination, he served in Mexico City as principal of a school. He spoke Spanish fluently as well as Italian, Latin and Gaelic.

His profound ability to communicate the Gospel with humor and clarity challenged parishioners to stay alert and be engaged in their faith. His words from 1994 still ring true today, "This is an era of confusion- about our faith, about our families, about ourselves and it is necessary to preach and live the faith with conviction."

His love of sports and humor shined through each interaction. When World Cup Soccer was played in Orlando in 1994 he predicted the Irish team would win because "God is Irish." He was an avid football fan and had no trouble taking sides in the big state college rivalry – he was a Gator. In 1984, he played on a priest soccer team to raise funds to purchase a wheelchair accessible van for a disabled parishioner.

Father McCormick's first assignment in the Diocese of Orlando was associate pastor of St. James Cathedral beginning July 12, 1983. He was incardinated into the Diocese on February 5, 1987.

He served at St. James until Bishop Norbert Dorsey appointed him pastor of Holy Redeemer Catholic Church on Oct. 29, 1992. He oversaw the establishment of its school which opened in 1994. He also ministered to the growing Hispanic community in Osceola County. He felt strongly that the Church should reach out to Hispanics and all ethnic groups and provide a safe and welcoming home.

In September of 2001, Bishop Norbert Dorsey appointed him rector of St. James Cathedral. That same year he was appointed Diocesan Director of Ethnic Ministries to reach a wider group of cultural communities and to foster dialogue and mutual respect among the area's diverse population.

He also served as Diocesan Director for the Society for the Propagation of the Faith helping to raise awareness and funds for the needs of disadvantaged

children around the world. He pointed each person to the love of Jesus Christ through the Scriptures and the Sacraments. During the Year of St. Paul in 2008, Fr. McCormick said “St. Paul didn’t always do the right thing, but when he met Jesus, his whole life changed, and so can ours.”

He was rector during the \$10 million dollar renovation of St. James Cathedral which restored the church to its original glory in 2010.

He served in numerous leadership positions for the diocese, such as Dean of the South Central Deanery, and member of the Presbyteral Council and the Priests’ Incardination Committee. He served as Spiritual Director for the first Orlando chapter of Legatus formed in 1997, a Catholic organization for business and corporate leaders. He also served on the board of Una Fides, an apostolate of St. James Cathedral. In 2012, the ministry sponsored an exhibit of Eucharistic miracles at St. James and Fr. McCormick said the exhibit was an opportunity to strengthen the faith of Catholics.

Father McCormick was sensitive to the value and dignity of those with special needs. One of his brothers, Fergal McCormick, has Down’s syndrome and has lived in a group home outside of Dublin, Ireland for most of his life. He was an early supporter of Bishop Grady Villas, a residential community for adults with disabilities located in St. Cloud, and continued to be involved since it opened in 2004. In 2014, he received the Bishop Grady Villas’ Lifetime Legacy Award for his advocacy on behalf of children and adults with disabilities.

Father McCormick’s ministry to the sick and dying was known to many. He would often be found sitting bedside with someone, bringing comfort to family members. When he announced his retirement, he said, “I won’t be able to go visit the sick.”

Father Miguel Gonzalez, pastor of St. John Vianney Catholic Church, served with Father McCormick for many years. He described the life and legacy of this priest by saying he was, "a humble and caring shepherd who had a genuine heart that loved, and cared for God's holy people."

Funeral Arrangements are as follows and will be held at St. James Cathedral, 215 N. Orange Avenue, downtown Orlando, unless otherwise noted.

Reception of the Body and Vigil, Monday, September 26, 7:00 p.m.

Public Viewing, Tuesday, September 27, 10 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Funeral Mass, Tuesday, September 27, 6:30 p.m.

Burial, September 28, 10:00 a.m. San Pedro Priests' Cemetery, 2400 Dike Road, Winter Park

In lieu of flowers, please pray the Rosary, make a Novena to the Miraculous Medal or consider a donation to Bishop Grady Villas, 401 Bishop Grady Court, St. Cloud, FL 34769 [www.bishopgradyvillas.org](http://www.bishopgradyvillas.org) or JMJ Life Center, 1401 W. Colonial Drive, Orlando, FL 32804 <http://jmjlifecenter.org/>.

# Tribute Wall

SK

“ My heartfelt sympathy goes out to Father John's family and the parishioners of St. James. Although we were not members, he graciously presided over the funeral of my late husband in June. Having an Irish priest for my Irish husband was so very special to me. His smile was so appealing and he did not pass judgment. At the service and the gravesite he moved slowly which was of concern, but you could see that service to the catholic religion was his calling. Sorry that I did not know him longer. I have friends that are members of St. James and they spoke highly of him.

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**Susan Kirby** - September 24, 2016 at 01:10 PM

JO

“ I am sorry to hear about the loss of your dear loved one. Please accept my condolences at this painful time. Losing a loved one is distressing and as comfort is needed from family and friends, it is my hope your family will find comforting the promise at Isaiah 25:8 where we are assured that "death will be swallowed up forever." It is my hope your family will find strength to endure during the days ahead.

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**Jori** - September 22, 2016 at 12:49 PM

JS

“ *Father John was a good friend to both my parents and myself, visiting frequently and sharing memories and conversation with us. My mother died when he was on vacation in Ireland and as soon as he came back, he came to visit with my father and me. My Dad always enjoyed his visits with Father John and when Dad died several years later and Father John was at Holy Redeemer, I called and left him the message. Father John was the first priest to call back! I asked if it would be possible for him to celebrate Dad's funeral Mass and he made all the necessary arrangements to come to St. James for the service. I cannot express how much that meant to me and my family. He is at rest now with God!* Jane Smith

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**jane smith** - September 20, 2016 at 11:29 PM

TD

“ *I had the privilege of listening to many of his Homily's at Holy a Redeemer Catholic Church. I, always appreciated his words of wisdom, as well as his sense of humor. Rest in peace my friend. In the words of another Priest friend of mine, Lord for your people life has changed not ended.*  
Tom Dorsey

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**Tom Dorsey** - September 20, 2016 at 08:07 PM