

Fr. Stopponi was a personable priest

Detroit - Fr. John Stopponi, OSB, was personable, well-loved by his parishioners and ready to help wherever he was needed, his friends said.

Fr. Stopponi died Nov. 27 at age 91. He was born in Fabriano, Italy, Jan. 16, 1914, and began to study under the Benedictine Fathers in 1933. He professed final vows Sept. 25, 1936, and was ordained a priest in Rome July 10, 1938. He came to America about a decade later.

Among the parishes he served were Our Lady of Perpetual Help, St. Scholastica and Holy Family Parish, all in Detroit. He had been administrator at Holy Family since 1997.

Fr. Dan Homan, OSB, provincial of St. Benedict Monastery in Oxford, knew Fr. Stopponi as being well-loved by the people he served in his parishes. Stopponi was willing to take on a pastorship at age 72, Fr. Homan said.

“He was always willing to help wherever he was needed,” he said.

Fr. Livius Paoli, OSB, of St. Scholastica, had known Fr. Stopponi for the past 70 years or so, first in Italy and later in America. Not only was he a good church administrator, but Fr. Stopponi was “very personable” as well.

“He was easy to make friends with,” Fr. Paoli said of his friend. “He was liked by the people he served and contacted.”

Above all, he kept his duties as a priest and was a good minister of the Word of God, Fr. Paoli said. “It is a loss to our order and to the church in general,” he said. “We miss him very much and we pray for him.”

Fr. Stopponi was to be waked at Holy Family Parish last Tuesday, with visitation and a scripture service. A Mass of Christian Burial was scheduled for last Wednesday at St. Benedict Monastery. Condolences may be sent to St. Benedict Monastery, 2711 E. Drahn Road, Oxford, 48370-2815.

- Kristin Lukowski