

Fr. William Regis HURNEY 79 USA
* August 13, 1913 Pittsburgh

+ February 23, 1993 Alexandria, LA

He attended High School in Central Catholic in Pittsburgh and Christian Brothers, Eddington, PA, before he made his vows as a Christian Brother in 1932. He then studied at La Salle College in Philadelphia and taught at schools in the area, earning high grades as a teacher.

When in 1938 he desired to become a priest, he obtained a dispensation from his commitment to the Brothers in order to enter the Spiritan novitiate. Professed at Ridgefield, CT, on September 13, 1939, he continued his studies at the Ferndale seminary, developed his talent for music and earned two bachelor's degrees. He was ordained on June 16, 1944.

After serving as an assistant pastor at St. Mary's Sharpsburg and St. Ann's, Millvale, he spent three years at Duquesne as dean of its school of music.

In 1952 he began his dedicated ministry to African-Americans in the South at Sacred Heart, Lake Charles and then at St. James, Alexandria, both in Louisiana. It would occupy him for most of his remaining years. However, he was away from Louisiana from 1958 to 1963 when he served at Ferndale, St. Peter's, Charleston, SC, and at St. Ann's, Millvale.

Back in Louisiana he ministered at Holy Spirit, Opelousas; he became pastor there of what has been called the largest African-American parish in the USA until 1976. Next, we find him again at Sacred Heart, Lake Charles, and St. James, Alexandria.

A heart attack led to his retirement in 1986 in the Maison Brottier, Natchitoches, LA; from there he continued to serve as much as he could in the local churches.

A quiet and unobtrusive confrere, who never spoke a bad word about anyone, he was greatly loved wherever he ministered to the people and he exercised great influence on them.

He quietly slipped away in St. Frances Cabrini Hospital. Internment took place in the community plot at the Isle Brevelle cemetery.