

Rev. Albert Grendler

December 15, 1932 - August 6, 2018

Father Albert O. Grendler, Jr., died peacefully on Monday, August 6, 2018, at Holy Spirit Retirement Home, Sioux City, Iowa.

Mass of Christian burial will be at 11 a.m., Friday, August 10 at St. Mary's Catholic Church, Spirit Lake, Iowa. Fathers Paul Kelly, Larry McCarty, and fellow priests of the Diocese of Sioux City will concelebrate the funeral. Burial will follow at 3:30 p.m. at Calvary Cemetery, Sioux City. Casket bearers are: Tim Cronin, Bill Elling, Joe Fitzgibbons, Dennis McCarthy, Brian Petersen, and Ken Todd.

Visitation will be Thursday, August 9, from 4 to 7 p.m. at St. Mary's Church, and a vigil prayer service at 7 p.m. Father Paul Kelly will preside.

Father Grendler was born December 15, 1932, in Yankton, SD to Albert O. Grendler, Sr. and Winifred Hansen Grendler. His childhood was spent in Jefferson, SD, and Sioux City. He attended St. Peter's Catholic School, Jefferson, Immaculate Conception and St. Joseph grade schools in Sioux City. High school years were at Trinity High and Heelan High School graduating in 1951. He received the Bishop Mueller Scholastic Excellence Award. Fr. Al was a 1955 graduate of St. Benedict's College, Atchison, Kansas and Mt. St. Bernard Seminary, Dubuque, in 1959. He was ordained to the priesthood on May 16, 1959, at the Cathedral of the Epiphany, Sioux City.

Through his years of active ministry, he served many communities of Northwest Iowa. Immediately after ordination he served as a temporary chaplain at St. Joseph Mercy Hospital, Sioux City. His parish work included: Sacred Heart, Spencer 1959-64; St. Joseph's, LeMars 1964-66; Sacred Heart, Sutherland and St. Anthony, Primghar, 1966-67; Our Lady of Good Counsel, Holstein, 1968-69; St. Francis, Sioux City, 1969-74; St. Patrick's, Estherville, 1975-86; Corpus Christi, Fort Dodge, 1986-93; St Mary's, Spirit Lake, 1993-04. He also served as the Dean of the Northeast Deanery of the Diocese.

As a life-long learner, Father completed graduate studies at the University of Iowa from 1966-1967, receiving a Masters of Arts from the School of Journalism. His research subject was the role of Catholic newspapers in Iowa. As a faculty member of Briar Cliff College from 1969-71, he taught journalism and delighted in teaching future journalists to research and write in a factual, concise manner. In 1986 he received a Doctorate of Ministry from United Theological Seminary, New Brighton, Minn. His doctoral work was concentrated on the Old Testament. He felt blessed to study in Rome and Israel.

Father traveled all over the world, but his favorite place was the Iowa Great Lakes. He enjoyed many days at the cottage he owned with his sister Mary on Big Spirit Lake. Father retired from parish leadership in 2004, but enjoyed assisting his fellow priests serving often at St. Joseph's, Milford. For retirement he settled in Okoboji, and enjoyed the seasons, people, and activities of the Lakes' area. He volunteered with Meals on Wheels, and was always ready to assist the sick and needy. An avid reader he was a frequent patron of the Spirit Lake Library. He was ruthless at cards (learned from his father); the competition of a game of bridge, hearts or shanghi was something he greatly enjoyed.

He moved to Holy Spirit Retirement Home in April 2016, after a hip fracture to be closer to his family. There he reconnected with high school and family friends, fellow priests, former parishioners, and made many lovely new friends. He attended daily Mass, and most afternoons you could find him in the chapel praying for all of his special intentions.

During his lifetime Father Al had many nicknames. To his many nieces and nephews, he was affectionately known as "Alex" and to his sisters and cousins as "Junior." His dedication to his parents and family was unending, as he was their "pastor."

Survivors include his sister Emilie (Sally) Grendler who resides at Holy Spirit Retirement Home. Other survivors include the McCarthy and Persinger nieces and nephews, his devoted band of priest brothers who formed his Caritas Group, and the parishioners of St. Mary's Church, his last parish.

He was preceded in death by his parents; his sisters Mary McCarthy, Joan Shaw, and Dorothy Persinger; niece Cathy Persinger and nephew Tom McCarthy.

The family thanks the many helping hands at Holy Spirit who assisted him during his final years.

Memorials may be directed to St. Mary's Church, Spirit Lake; Holy Spirit Retirement Home; or Spirit Lake Library. Also, doing a good and anonymous deed in his memory would be welcomed. As he often said, "Let us pray for one another."

Tribute Wall

MD

“ When Father Grendler lived in Estherville he had two dogs and I think they were "Huskies." One morning around 4:00AM I heard our farm dogs barking. I got up to see what the problem might be and sitting on our porch, crouched in a corner, was the most beautiful dog I had ever seen. I quickly fell in love with the dog! At 6:00AM the radio station came on the air. I called the station immediately and told the announcer about the dog. He said, Oh! I bet that is Father Grendler's dog, I will call him. Shortly, Father drove up in our driveway, got out of his car, went down on his knees and kissed and hugged the dog. He was so happy to see the dog. Of course, our dogs surrounded Father and his dog and he said to our farm dogs I will bring my dog back to see you and you can play with him. Just let me know when I can do that. I never heard that he found the other dog, but later I heard that he no longer had the dogs. He did explain to me that it was his custom to play cards at night and when the card games were over, he would always go out and tell the dogs goodnight. Unfortunately, one night the gate was opened. Father Grendler, I am sure your dogs were there to open the gate to heaven for you.

Marlene Donovan - August 12, 2018 at 04:05 PM

PT

“ I was deeply saddened upon hearing of the loss of Father. I will always remember him in my prayers. His humor lighten our days, his faith and service inspired us to be more compassionate. May the Lord welcome him into eternal peace.

Pat Tomscha - August 10, 2018 at 08:21 PM

MM

Dear Pat, Thank you for your thoughtful note. You were a great help to Father and our family. He trusted and respected you. He is having heavenly fun now. Best to you, Mary C. McCarthy

Mary C. McCarthy - August 12, 2018 at 02:04 PM

PM

“ *Father Grendler was so kind and a proud supporter for over 30 year to the Blanden Art Museum in Fort Dodge Iowa.*



Pamela Kay Blanden Art Museum - August 10, 2018 at 03:02 PM

RV

“ *ROGER AND CARMEN VIGDAL lit a candle in memory of Rev. Albert Grendler*



ROGER AND CARMEN VIGDAL - August 10, 2018 at 11:37 AM

LG

“ *Father Grendler was definitely the priest I respected and enjoyed most, and one of my most hilarious stories involves him and my confession at age 14!*

Laurie Greer - August 09, 2018 at 10:55 AM

RF

“ *Rest in Peace Father Al, we always loved going to church in Spirit Lake while you were the priest there. You baptized all our children, and we always loved how your sermons were quick and to the point:)*
May you continue on your journey for ever more in Gods Kingdom as you greet your friends and family. May you REJOICE in the heavens!

Rob and Jean Newman family - August 09, 2018 at 09:23 AM

PB

“ *Patti Bruhns sent a virtual gift in memory of Rev. Albert Grendler*



Patti Bruhns - August 09, 2018 at 09:18 AM

PB

“ *Patti Bruhns lit a candle in memory of Rev. Albert Grendler*



Patti Bruhns - August 09, 2018 at 09:04 AM

ON

“ *Orville & Mary Kay Nagel lit a candle in memory of Rev. Albert Grendler*



Orville & Mary Kay Nagel - August 09, 2018 at 05:11 AM

BE

“ BJ Ellis lit a candle in memory of Rev. Albert Grendler



BJ Ellis - August 09, 2018 at 04:36 AM

BR

“ Bill And Margie Ruml lit a candle in memory of Rev. Albert Grendler



Bill and Margie Ruml - August 08, 2018 at 11:20 PM

BD

“ Bonnie Duhn lit a candle in memory of Rev. Albert Grendler



Bonnie Duhn - August 08, 2018 at 10:20 PM

RN

“ Always enjoyed workout class when Father Al was present . Rest In Peace, Father. 🙏🙏



Rhonda Nelson - August 08, 2018 at 10:02 PM

AK

“ Arlene Krogman lit a candle in memory of Rev. Albert Grendler



Arlene Krogman - August 08, 2018 at 09:24 PM

AK

“ I always admired the way Father Am could remember everyone's name. He was an amazing person and I loved when he said, " I'm praying for you, Arlene"

Arlene Krogman - August 08, 2018 at 09:23 PM

PB

“ Fr. Grendler spoke at my Dad's rosary and also married my sister! Both of my parents adored him! I had heard of him long before I met him--he was a ton of fun! God rest his soul.

Patty Buzard

Patty Buzard - August 08, 2018 at 08:51 PM

BD

As a Funeral director, I had the privilege of helping families in Ft Dodge and also Spirit Lake. An awesome priest, someone I would call a great friend and a very spiritual priest. Rest well Fr. Al

Boeckman Dean - August 08, 2018 at 10:07 PM

MM

Thank you Dean. Father helped so many families prepare and conduct celebrations of life and send off services. His family has tried to follow his instructions for his funeral to the T. The instructions were for a simple, prayerful service. Yes, we are celebrating his life of service and now his eternal reward with God. Mary C. McCarthy, niece

Mary C McCarthy - August 10, 2018 at 02:57 AM

BR

“ *Bill And Marge Ruml lit a candle in memory of Rev. Albert Grendler*



Bill and Marge Ruml - August 08, 2018 at 08:44 PM

BR

“ *Bill and I always enjoyed him and that SMILE he had for everyone! Rest In Peace Father Grendler. Bill and Marge Ruml*

Bill and Marge Ruml - August 08, 2018 at 08:43 PM

MD

“ *Mark And Shari Dykema lit a candle in memory of Rev. Albert Grendler*



Mark and Shari Dykema - August 08, 2018 at 11:56 AM

SH

“ *Sally Haas lit a candle in memory of Rev. Albert Grendler*



Sally haas - August 08, 2018 at 11:20 AM

JJ

“ *John And Michelle Janasko lit a candle in memory of Rev. Albert Grendler*



John and Michelle Janasko - August 08, 2018 at 10:40 AM

JW

“ *Jerry & Kathy Welter lit a candle in memory of Rev. Albert Grendler*



Jerry & Kathy Welter - August 08, 2018 at 10:16 AM

EL

“ *Rest in Peace Father Grendler and God Bless you and prayers for you and your family. Fr Grendler married my husband Mike and I , First Communion and Reconcilliation for son Jordan, and was our Pastor all his school years , close friends with my parents Ed and Pat Welch and Co-officiated at dad's Funeral. Love and Prayers, Eileen and Mike Lamer*



Eileen Lamer - August 08, 2018 at 09:39 AM

SR

“ Fr. Grendler was a great bridge player, along with his partner Fr. Jim Bruch, that delighted in whipping us in a friendly game of bridge. I will always treasure the hours we spent with those two and the Holy Spirit that assisted them to victory.



Susan Reiser - August 08, 2018 at 12:01 AM

CD

“ Craig And Betty Jo Dorton lit a candle in memory of Rev. Albert Grendler



Craig and Betty Jo Dorton - August 07, 2018 at 10:40 PM

DG

“ While at Corpus Christi in Fort Dodge, Fr. Grendlers first baptism was my son Nathan and his last funeral was my dad, Ernie Albrecht. Our family always enjoyed his homily. Had a great message and a fun way of delivering it.
You have our sympathy.
Diane Grebner

Diane Grebner - August 07, 2018 at 10:23 PM

DK

“ I enjoyed lunchtime discussions with Father Grendler when he joined us teachers at Corpus Christi in Fort Dodge. He was so passionate about the environment and shared that passion with the students on Earth Day. He was a class act. I missed him when he was transferred. May he Rest In Peace.

Deb Kelleher - August 07, 2018 at 09:16 PM

SL

“ Sue Leners lit a candle in memory of Rev. Albert Grendler



Sue leners - August 07, 2018 at 03:17 PM

NH

“ Mary,
Thinking of you and your family. I know your uncle is at peace and hope that you are as well.

Nancy Harper

Nancy Harper - August 07, 2018 at 02:36 PM

DH

“ Fr. Grendler baptized my husband as an adult through the RCIA program many years ago. Peace be with his family. We always tried to send him a note at Holy Spirit Retirement Center and we know his friends there will miss him like we already do.



Dale and Laura Hanna - August 07, 2018 at 12:06 PM

MM

Thank you Dale and Laura for your monthly letters which were like a letter from home. Father spoke of you often and was grateful for your friendship. Mary and Karen McCarthy, nieces

Mary C. McCarthy - August 07, 2018 at 09:48 PM

AN

he will be missed my prayers go out to the family he was a good man

ann - August 08, 2018 at 08:50 PM

CP

“ *Fr. Grendler was a dear friend of the Powers family, having been pastor in Estherville and later in Spirit Lake. He married two of the Powers daughters in Estherville. We felt double blessed to have had him shepard our family through many years. We had great fondness for him and happy he was a part of our lives for so many years. May he rejoice in his heavenly home.*

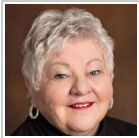
Cyndy Powers - August 07, 2018 at 09:47 AM

TD

“ *Terry & Allyson DenBeste purchased the Arrive in Style for the family of Rev. Albert Grendler.*



Terry & Allyson DenBeste - August 07, 2018 at 09:35 AM



“ *Dear Family of Father Grendler, Bill and I have lost a very dear friend. Father married us and helped us though the journey of life. Working with Father Al on the staff at St. Mary's In Spirit Lake, Iowa was a gift. I learned so much from Father about liturgy, Catholic Education and heading the RCIA Program. Father was a blessing. Bill and I will miss him dearly.*
Pat McGill & Bill Mullin



Pat McGill - August 06, 2018 at 07:56 PM

LH

“ *Leon And Teresa Hanson lit a candle in
memory of Rev. Albert Grendler*



leon and teresa hanson - August 06, 2018 at 07:49 PM