

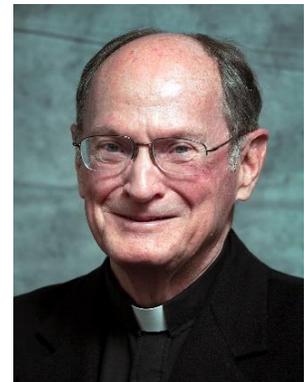
PLEASE POST

February 23, 2017

Dear Brothers:

Father Robert T. Costello, S.J. was called to eternal life on Tuesday, February 21, 2017, at the Fusz Pavilion in St. Louis, MO, after a brief illness. He was 87 years old, a Jesuit for 65 years and a priest for 53 years.

Born in St. Louis, MO, on June 20, 1929, he attended St. Roch's grade school and St. Louis University High School, graduating in 1947. After high school, he earned a B.S. in Psychology with a minor in Sociology from Saint Louis University (1951) He entered the Society at St. Stanislaus Seminary, Florissant, MO, on August 17, 1951. After First Vows and Juniorate studies at Florissant, he studied philosophy at Saint Louis University, earning the Ph. L. in 1957. His regency was at St. Louis University High School (1957-60). He studied theology at St. Mary's College in St. Marys, KS, earning the S.T.L. in 1964. He was ordained on June 11, 1963, at St. Mary's College. His Tertianship was at St. Bueno's College in Wales under the legendary Paul Kennedy, S.J. He pronounced his final vows on April 22, 1972, at Rockhurst University in Kansas City, MO. In 1971 he received the Ph.D. in Counseling from the University of Missouri at Kansas City.



Bob spent nearly twenty years teaching psychology at Rockhurst University (1965-83). During his time there, he spent a sabbatical year (1975-76) working as a staff psychologist in the U.S. Penitentiary at Leavenworth, KS, and another year (1981-82) doing research in the Sam Houston State University Center for Corrections at Huntsville, TX. He served as Rector of the philosophate at Fusz Memorial in St. Louis, MO, (1983-85) and then as Provincial of the Missouri Province (1985-91). Following a sabbatical, he was President of St. Louis University High (1992-97). He then spent three years in Canada as a staff member at Southdown Institute in Toronto and the Guelph Centre of Spirituality (1997-2000). Since 2000 he worked with the Christian Life Community (CLC) in various capacities in Birmingham, England, and then back in St. Louis as Regional Ecclesial Assistant (2005-2015); from 2009-2011 he was National Ecclesial Assistant. He also served as faculty chaplain at De Smet Jesuit High and was for a year the acting superior of the De Smet Jesuit Community.

As a psychologist, an early interest of his was how the dynamics of formation affected men, starting with the novitiate, and what kind of formation would best prepare them for life in the Society. For years, he assisted with psychological screening of candidates and served on the admissions board of the Missouri Province, making important contributions to the way that men were assessed. While at Rockhurst, he began working with the Federal prison system and developed a special interest in how the Christian Community could be part of the process of reconciling ex-offenders with society. From this sprang the "Seventy Times Seven" program focused on changing attitudes toward people who had been incarcerated.

After serving as a rector, a provincial, and a high school president, following a sabbatical, he returned to his roots in psychology as a counselor at Southdown in Canada. A transition from there to working at

Loyola House in Guelph drew him more deeply into the ministry of the Exercises, leading to an invitation to work at St. Bueno's in Wales; from there, an invitation from the British Provincial led to his involvement with the CLC, which became a major focus for the next several years. Another focus of his last years was being the faculty chaplain at De Smet Jesuit High, which, among the many jobs he loved, he counted as very special.

A tall man of sharp intelligence, deep sensitivity and empathy, Bob had a delightful sense of humor, often directed at his own foibles. On becoming provincial, he joked that it "has brought only a few heart attacks. The prevailing reaction was stark disbelief." But no matter what the contours of the job, his gifts as a counselor and spiritual director always seemed to come to the fore. His strengths enabled him to be of support and consolation particularly to those experiencing moments of suffering and personal crisis – students, parents, clients, prisoners and, of course, many, many Jesuits. He elicited respect and trust, and poured himself unselfishly into whatever the Society asked him to do.

He felt things deeply, which added to the challenges that his various positions brought, particularly that of Provincial. He responded with grace. When he observed fifty years as a Jesuit, Fr. General Kolvenbach wrote to him: "With humor, wisdom and faith, you led your fellow Jesuits through moments of untimely deaths, unsettling departures, and radical changes in living situations. You are a man of passion, vision and encouragement."

He is preceded in death by his parents, William J. Costello and Florence Murray Costello, brothers William and Lawrence, and sisters Rosemary Dittmeier and Anne Dependahl.

Letters of condolence can be sent to the family care of his niece as follows:

Suzie Kupsky
623 Alexandra Drive
Kirkwood, MO 63122

Arrangements are as follows:

Visitation and Funeral: Thursday, March 2, 2017
Visitation: 4-7 PM
Funeral Mass: 7:00 PM
St. Francis Xavier College Church
St. Louis, MO

Burial: Friday, March 3, 2017, 9:00 a.m.
Calvary Cemetery 8:30 AM departure from College Church

We remember with gratitude all that God has done through Bob's life of service to God and God's people. All members of the USA Central and Southern Province and those applied to it are to offer a Mass for him. Since Bob had been a provincial, special suffrages are indicated, normally an extra Mass. Members of the Jesuit Hall community are to offer an additional Mass as well.

Sincerely in Christ,



John F. Armstrong, S.J.
Socius