



"I SAW A NEW HEAVEN AND A NEW EARTH

I SAW THE HOLY CITY AND THE NEW JERUSALEM" (Rev. 21)

September 11, 2017 – Please post

FATHER WILLIAM FRANCIS RYAN, S.J.

Father Bill Ryan died peacefully on 8 September at René Goupil House in Pickering, Ontario. He was in his 92nd year of life and in religious life for 73 years.

Bill was born in Renfrew, Ontario on 2 April 1925, the second son of William Ryan and Helena Donig. After high school, he entered the Society at Guelph on 14 August 1944. Following first vows on 15 August 1946, then juniorate and philosophy, Bill journeyed to the United States in 1951 to study economics with a focus on labour relations at St. Louis University, Missouri. Two years later he began regency for one year at St. Paul's High School, Winnipeg. In 1954 Bill was sent to Europe for theology; first to Heythrop College near Oxford, and in 1955 to the Jesuit theologate in Louvain, Belgium. Ordination took place at St. Michael's College church in Brussels on 15 August 1957. Tertianship followed at Paray-le-Monial, France.

In 1959 Bill was back in the United States, this time at Harvard University to pursue a doctorate in economics. It was in 1964 that Fr. Ryan, PhD, began his long ministry in the service of faith and justice. He was appointed co-director of the Social Action Department of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCB) and a visiting lecturer at Carleton University, Ottawa. In those years, he also served as special advisor to the International Development Research Centre. In 1970 he moved to Washington, D.C. to begin a long tenure as the first director at the Center of Concern. During this time, he served as the executive secretary for the Interfaith Coalition (Muslims, Christian and Jews.) He was named Provincial of the Upper Canada Province in 1978. Bill was elected delegate to GC 32 in 1974 and took part as Provincial in GC 33 in 1983.

After his provincialate, Bill was appointed in 1984 as General Secretary to the CCCB. Then in 1991 he was director of the Jesuit Project on Ethics & Politics and Chair of Catholic Social Teaching at St. Paul University, Ottawa. He was also involved in the Jesuit Centre for Social Faith and Justice. Later he gave the same energy to the Jesuit Forum for Social Faith and Justice, both in Ottawa and Toronto. His move in 2010 to Toronto captivated all his energy completely for the Jesuit Forum. A return of cancer, which he had successfully

combated for several decades, appeared early in 2017 and he was assigned to the Jesuit Infirmary at Pickering just after Easter.

Every community and apostolate has the book on Bill's life, *Faith and Freedom*, published in 2002. The scope of his involvement in justice issues makes for staggering reading. Bill had a great love for the outdoors and was regular hiker and walker, right up to his recent posting to Pickering. As a result, it was natural for Bill in 2014 in response to Pope Francis' call for us to be "protectors" of the world, to write with Janet Somerville, Anne-Marie Jackson and Anne O'Brien gsic, *Living With Limits, Living Well !* At the request of the CCCB, with the same team Bill then collaborated on *The Joy of the Gospel*: a resource for discussion and reflection on Pope Francis' Apostolic Exhortation, *Evangelii Gaudium*. Bill was grateful and delighted when Pope Francis gave to the world in 2015 his ecological and environmental encyclical *Laudato Si'*, and so he and his team produced *On Care for Our Common Home*: a dialogue guide for *Laudato Si'*.

During the last weeks of his life Bill, sitting up in an easy chair or from his bed, welcomed a steady flow of visitors, mainly from Canada and the United States. He also loved to receive the constant visits of his Jesuit brothers, young and old. Quite lucid, he was buoyed by these visits and was not eager to terminate them. And of course, as long as his eyes permitted, he kept on reading and commenting on the news of the day.

Would the members of the La Storta Jesuit Community and the 2 Dale Avenue Community celebrate two Masses for him, and other members of the English Canadian Province one Mass:

SERVICES

WAKE

Thursday, September 14

7:00 – 9:00 pm

Manresa-Jesuit Spiritual
Renewal Centre, Pickering

Prayers at 8:00 pm

Friday, September 15

2:00 – 4:00 pm & 7:00 – 9:00 pm

Rosar-Morisson Funeral Home
Toronto

FUNERAL

Saturday, September 16

9:00 am

Our Lady of Lourdes Church
Toronto

Followed by reception

BURIAL

Saturday, September 16

2:00 pm

Jesuit Cemetery
Guelph

REST IN PEACE

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