

Fr. Edmond J. LEONARD 92 EA USA
* March 4, 1910 Roseton, NY

+ February 19, 2003
Hemet, CA

Fr. Edmond J. Leonard, CSSp, was born on March 4, 1910, in Roseton, NY. As a child he attended St. Mary's School in New Britain, CT. He joined the Congregation of the Holy Ghost after completing his secondary and college studies at the Spiritan's Holy Ghost Apostolic College at Cornwells Heights, PA, with his profession of vows on July 25, 1932, at Ridgefield, CT. He completed his philosophy and theology studies at St. Mary's Seminary (Ferndale), Norwalk, CT, and was ordained to the priesthood there on September 8, 1937.

Fr. Leonard was appointed to serve in the missions of the Kilimanjaro Vicariate in East Africa (1938-1945) when he returned to the United States to serve as the Assistant Mission Procurator in Washington, DC. In 1947 he was assigned as an associate pastor of Sacred Heart Church in Detroit, MI and then in 1948 in the same capacity at Our Lady of Guadalupe Church in Bakersfield, CA. He remained there until he was given the appointment as administrator of St. Joseph Church at Plaisance, LA in 1953. In 1955, he was made pastor of Holy Ghost Church, Opelousas, LA. In 1958 he was assigned pastor of St. Edward Church in New Iberia, LA. He served there until 1966 when he was moved to Holy Ghost Church in New Orleans, LA. He returned to California in 1970 when he became pastor of Our Lady of the Valley Church in Hemet, CA. During this time he became very active in the Worldwide Marriage Encounter Movement. Six years later Fr. Reardon, the Provincial, asked Fr. Leonard to serve as Provincial Bursar and Director of Promotion overseeing the transfer of the Provincialate from Denver, CO to San Antonio, TX. During this time he also served as First Assistant to the Provincial. When Fr. Reardon died in 1981, Fr. Leonard became Administrator of the Province until the election of Fr. Silvio D'Ostilio. After a brief time of transition, he returned to his beloved Hemet where he enjoyed a very active retirement, serving in parish ministry, visiting the sick and directing the San Carlos Mission Circle as their Chaplain. He also kept his hand in Province communications by editing the Western Province Newsletter. In 1987 he was appointed as the first Superior of the Holy Ghost Fathers Retirement Community in Hemet, which later became the Spiritan Community at Casa Laval. He remained in that position until 1993. In nearly all of his assignments Fr. Ed was known for building grottos which fostered a devotion to the Blessed Mother, especially under the title of Our Lady of Guadalupe. On Tuesday, February 25, 2003

there was a recitation of the Rosary followed by a concelebrated Mass with the confreres in attendance at Our Lady of the Valley Church in Hemet, CA. He was buried in the Holy Ghost Fathers and Brothers Cemetery adjacent to Casa Laval in Hemet.

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