

Fr. Eugene G. TONER 77 IRL TZA USA
* January 1, 1920 Belfast

August 22, 1997 Belfast

After attending Blackrock College, he migrated to the U.S.A. and worked for a few years at the American Can Company in Syracuse NY. He then applied for admission to the Congregation and made his vows on August 22, 1950 at Ridgefield CT. On June 22, 1955 he was ordained at the age of thirty-five at the Ferndale seminary in Norwalk CT.

As he had no family of his own in the U.S.A., fellow student Joseph McDonough of Norwood MA invited him to accompany him to his home for their summer vacations. He felt very much at home there and from that time on the McDonoughs became his home away from home, where he also offered his first Mass as a newly ordained priest.

In 1956 he received his assignment to the Kilimanjaro district in Tanzania. He worked there as a missionary for ten years notably at Arusha and Naruma. Suffering from tuberculosis, he returned to the States in 1966.

After recovering, he served mostly in African-American parishes in Louisiana: St. Monica, New Orleans, and Sacred Heart, Lake Charles in 1968, followed by three years in the milder climate of Hemet CA. He then went on leave in 1973 with his parents in Ireland. On his return he became pastor of St. Catherine, Leonville in 1975, of St. Paul, Lafayette in 1977, and of Holy Ghost, New Orleans in 1978.

He took a sabbatical of a few months in 1982, during which he also underwent surgery and then returned to Our Lady of the Valley in Hemet CA. He still briefly served as local bursar there, but his increasing infirmities steadily diminished his active work. Officially he retired only in 1991, first in the U.S.A. and then in Ireland, where he died.

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