

Fr. Gerhard GRAMS 68 USA POL D

* Dec. 12, 1914, Swiecie nad Wisla, Poland + Aug. 11, 1983 Fall River, MA

After studying at the Spiritan junior seminary of Bydgoszcz he made his novitiate at Orly, France, where he was professed Sept. 8, 1937. His philosophy years were spent in Mortain, but in Jan. 1939 he was recalled to Poland as a prefect in Bydgoszcz. Some months later Nazi troops invaded Poland. In October 1939 he was interned by the Gestapo on the ground of his membership in a religious congregation.

Later that year he was sent to Berlin to work first in an electrical plant and then as an interpreter. In 1943 the government forced him to serve as a soldier, first at the Russian front and later in Holland.

After the defeat of the Nazis we find him at Knechtsteden as duly discharged by the British military government from the German Army. He completed his theology there and was ordained in the same place on Oct. 12, 1947.

The Generalate assigned him to the USA, but it took till 1949 before all formalities could be cleared and it was only in mid-December that he arrived in New York aboard the New Amsterdam.

His first appointment sent him to Holy Ghost Opelousas, LA; then to Holy Ghost, Tiverton, RI, in late 1950. His transfer from there in 1953 to Ann Arbor junior seminary in Michigan caused a special committee's letter of protest, but it was in vain.

Two years later we find him at Immaculate Heart parish, Pittsburgh. In 1958 he became an instructor in classics at DU, but in 1960 he was back at Tiverton at St. Theresa's. He then served successively at Mother of Consolation parish, Mt. Carmel, PA, St. Emma Academy, Powhatan, VA, and St. Joseph's, Mt. Carmel, till the Congregation withdrew from this parish in 1973.

After an interim appointment to Holy Family, Inkster, MI, he began to serve as a convent chaplain in Asheville, NC, for four years, then a one year stint as assistant at Immaculate Heart of Pittsburgh and finally chaplain again of a convent in Danville, PA.

In ill health, he retired in 1980 to Tiverton, RI, where he died of a stroke three years later. Interment took place at the Cornwells community cemetery.

Many Rhode Island people attended the funeral service to honor the revered founder of St. Theresa and some testified to the profound impression he had made on their lives.

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