

Fr. John Joseph SAKOVICH 36 USA P.R.

+ June 25, 1946 Shenandoah, PA

+ March 1, 1983 Dorado, P.R.

An only son, he attended Cornwells 1960-64 and made his profession at Ridgefield Aug. 22, 1965. After four years at DU he went in 1969 to St. Thomas Seminary in Denver, CO, for his theology. After his ordination at DU June 2, 1973, he received his appointment to Puerto Rico, where he had already served as a deacon. Stationed in Arecibo, he devoted most of his attention to slum dwellers.

In 1976 he became director of the new seminary program established by the budding Spiritan foundation in Puerto Rico, first at Ponce and then at Bayamon.

In 1979 we find him at DU's institute for formative spirituality to prepare himself for the function of novice master in P.R. He was serving in that capacity one day in 1983 and participating in the usual basketball game after lunch with the students when he suddenly collapsed and died of a cerebral hemorrhage.

His premature death at 36 stunned all and gave rise to an outpouring of grief over the loss of a life so full still of promise and yet so filled with accomplishments. In the words of a Capuchin priest stationed in P.R., "He radiated the kind of Christian charity and priestly sanctity that the rest of us can only hope to some day achieve."

A cardinal and two bishops presided over his funeral Mass--held outdoors to accommodate the crowds. Interment took place at the Cathedral cemetery of Arecibo.

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