

Fr. John Joseph Walsh 78 USA

* July 30, 1913, Philadelphia

+ March 25, 1992 Lockhart, TX

John was still young boy when in the flu epidemic of 1918 he lost both his parents. He was then raised by his maternal relatives the McCarthys. At the age of 15 he entered the Cornwells junior seminary, where his nephew Patrick McCarthy and his cousin Thomas McCarthy had preceded him a decade earlier.

After his profession at Ridgefield, CT, July 31, 1934, he went to Ferndale, CT, for his senior studies. His conduct was excellent and he proved to be a very good student. So it was decided to send him to the university of Fribourg to complete his theological studies. It was there also that he was ordained a priest, July 23, 1939. Then the outbreak of World War Two forced him and the Frs. Tom Dooley, Paul Lippert and Joseph Moroney to return in October to the USA on the SS Iroquois.

After spending the war years serving African-Americans in St. Mark's, Harlem, NY, he could in 1945 resume his studies at Catholic University, Washington, DC, earning a doctorate in Canon Law.

Three years later he returned to Ferndale to teach Canon Law for ten years. He also became director there of the seminarians and in 1955 superior of the community. In 1958 he was transferred to Ann Arbor, MI, to serve as religious superior of the Spiritan junior seminary there.

Saying farewell to academic life in 1961, he began a 26 year period of devoted service to African-Americans that was interrupted only for one year of service at St. Catherine, Riverside, CA. We find him listed as pastor in Louisiana at Holy Ghost, Opelousas, Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament, Shreveport, and Our Lady of the Assumption, Carencro, (1961-1974); and then as associate pastor at St. Edward's,

New Iberia, and at Sacred Heart, Lake Charles, 1975-1988. He returned briefly to the last named parish to celebrate the golden jubilee of his ordination in 1989.

At the end of his pastorate in Carencro his Provincial wrote to him: "I feel it only proper to express again my own personal appreciation and the honest gratitude of all men of the Province for your devoted work in the South....Through the years you have been a true leader and exemplary in every respect - man, priest, confrere. You have borne many burdens and responsibilities and God has blessed all your efforts. As I write this, I mean every word."

His last active year was spent at the Spiritan provincialate, San Antonio, TX, after which he went into retirement at St. Joseph's, Conway, AR. He never fully recovered from heart surgery and died at the community hospital of Lockhart, TX. Interment took place at the Spiritan cemetery of Cornwells.