

## **Rev. Joseph J. Kershner, Sch.P. (1927-2016)**

**Father Joseph Kershner was born in Philadelphia, PA on September 10, 1927. His father, Joseph, was a carpenter and a church sexton. His mother was Gertrude.**

**He studied at Roman Catholic High School in Philadelphia and at the Catholic University of America in Washington, DC. He graduated with a degree in philosophy in 1952.**

**He worked as a lab technician in Philadelphia and then as a teacher at St. Matthew's School and at Monsignor Bonner High School in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. After meeting some Piarists at Bonner, he decided to join their faculty at the relatively new Devon Prep.**

**After teaching at Devon for a while, he entered the Piarist novitiate on September 5, 1959 in Derby, NY. He made his first profession on September 6, 1960. He studied theology in Washington from 1960 until 1963 and at the Gregorian University in Rome from 1963 until 1964. He made his perpetual profession on March 17, 1963. He was ordained a priest on July 5, 1964.**

**When he returned from Rome, he was assigned to teach at Devon Prep. He taught there for just one year.**

**In 1965, he was assigned to Fort Lauderdale. He served as principal of the boys' division at Cardinal Gibbons High School from 1965 until 1974. He was supervising principal of the school from 1974 until his retirement in 2002.**

**In 1970, he earned a Master's Degree in Educational Leadership from Florida Atlantic University in Boca Raton, FL.**

**He was the Superior of the Piarist community in Fort Lauderdale from 1970 until 1982 and again from 1988 until 1995. He was Provincial Superior of the Piarist Fathers' United States Province from 1982 until 1988.**

**He opened doors with his life: he was the first American born Piarist to be appointed the principal of a diocesan school, and he was the first American born Provincial Superior.**

**In November 2008, Father Joe's health began to require special care, and he moved to Villa Maria Nursing Center in North Miami, FL.**

**Father Kershner peacefully passed away on Friday, February 5 at the nursing center. A Mass of the Resurrection was celebrated at Saint John the Baptist Church in Philadelphia (Manayunk), PA on Monday, February 15 at 11 A.M. He was buried at Saint Mary of the Assumption Cemetery also in Philadelphia.**

**The Piarist Fathers request that contributions in his memory be made to the Piarist Fathers Seminary or Retirement Funds, P.O. Box 11822, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33339.**

**May he rest in peace.**