



Rev. Don O'Brien

September 4, 1935 - June 4, 2022

Father Donald J. O'Brien, 86 of Kearney passed away Saturday, June 4, 2022 at his home surrounded by family. A Funeral Mass will be 10:30 a.m. Monday, June 13, 2022 at Prince of Peace Catholic Church in Kearney. The mass will also be lived streamed through the church's Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/princeofpeacecatholicchurch>. Interment will be held 2:00 p.m. Monday, June 13, 2022 at St. Mary's Catholic Cemetery near Wood River, NE. Visitation will be 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. Sunday, June 12, 2022 at the church followed by a 6:00 p.m. Vigil/Prayer Service.

Donald J. O'Brien was born September 4, 1935, in Minden, NE, to Donald M. and Lillian C. (Quinn) O'Brien. He attended St. Patrick's School in North Platte, graduating in 1953 and remained close to his classmates his entire life. He began his studies at St. Thomas Seminary in Denver, CO, the same year. Father O'Brien was ordained at St. Mary's Cathedral in Grand Island in 1961. His first assignment as a priest was at St. Mary's Hospital in North Platte. His following parish assignments were in Sidney, Amherst and Eddyville, St. Mary's Cathedral in Grand Island, Shelton, Ainsworth, Scottsbluff, Blessed Sacrament in Grand Island, and 26 years in Cozad and Gothenburg. He taught and administered at multiple Catholic schools during these assignments. He served as the Catholic chaplain of the Veterans Administration Medical Center in Grand Island, where he became involved in the alcohol treatment program, celebrating 45 years of sobriety at the time of

his death.

After his retirement in 2015, Father O'Brien moved to Kearney, NE, where he served at Prince of Peace and St. James Catholic churches, Good Samaritan Hospital and Mount Carmel Home. He celebrated 61 years as a priest on May 23, 2022. He touched many lives as a priest and was the patriarch of the O'Brien family.

He was preceded in death by his parents; brother Dr. John Kingsley O'Brien; sister-in-law, Mary Lou O'Brien; and his brother-in-law, Dr. Louis Corwin. He is survived by his sister, Shirley O'Brien Corwin of Columbia, MO, 13 nieces and nephews: Margaret "Peggy" (Brian) Connell, Columbia, MO; Donald (Sherry) Corwin, Columbia, MO; Maureen (Jim) Dippold, Stamford, CT; Nancy (Bill) Rath, St. Louis, MO; James (Deb) Corwin, Cincinnati, OH; Mary (Steve) White, Kansas City, KS; Thomas (Sandy) Corwin, Augusta, GA; Paul Corwin, Columbia, MO; Kathleen (Lou) Cipriano, Dallas, TX; Patrick (Rhonda "Ronnie") O'Brien, Shelton, NE; Tim O'Brien, Philippines; Dennis O'Brien, North Platte, NE; Mary Bridget O'Brien, Lincoln, NE, 18 great nieces and nephews and five great-great nieces and nephews.

Memorials are suggested to North Platte Catholic Schools, Grand Island Central Catholic Elementary School or to Kearney Catholic High School. Condolences may be shared online at www.osrfh.com. Services are entrusted to O'Brien Straatmann Redinger Funeral and Cremation Services.

Cemetery Details

St. Mary's Catholic Cemetery

Wood River, NE

Previous Events

Visitation

JUN 12. 4:00 PM - 6:00 PM (CT)

Prince of Peace Catholic Church
2407 W. 56th Street
Kearney, NE 68845

Vigil / Prayer Service

JUN 12. 6:00 PM (CT)

Prince of Peace Catholic Church
2407 W. 56th Street
Kearney, NE 68845

Funeral Mass

JUN 13. 10:30 AM (CT)

Prince of Peace Catholic Church
2407 W. 56th Street
Kearney, NE 68845

Graveside Service

JUN 13. 2:00 PM (CT)

St. Mary's Catholic Cemetery
Wood River, NE

Tribute Wall



“ *Rev. Don O'Brien*

January 28, 2023 at 08:01 AM



“ *What a blessing FOB was to our family and many more families. I have called him our family priest for over 60 years. FOB is how us kids called him, Father O'Brien. I can remember from a very young age as he played cards with my Dad and several other priests at our home very often. He married all three of us kids, and converted all three of our spouses, you could say he was always involved in our faith journey. My brother was an altar boy at Shelton Sacred Heart Parish. He had a nickname for everyone and always made you feel special. We will miss his dearly and cherish his memories for ever. May he rest in peace and share a good laugh with Shorty, Andy and Ron in heaven.*



Cyndi Franssen Walters - June 14, 2022 at 04:10 PM

BJ

“If every priest were like Father Don, the world would be Catholic,” is what my husband told me when we were taking marriage preparation classes with Father Don. I couldn't agree more. He led with such love and compassion. I was in 2nd grade when Father Don came to Gothenburg and he was such an important part of my family. He has given me the majority of my sacraments and I am so thankful for his guidance throughout my life. It was very important for me to be married by him and he even baptized my youngest child. We live in Wyoming, but it was a priority for me to have Father Don involved in some of the biggest moments of my life. He will be very missed because he was very loved.

-Brandi (Mitchell) Jensen
Glenrock, Wyoming



Brandi Jensen - June 13, 2022 at 01:00 PM

SK

“ Our Aunt Mary Kelly was Father's cousin..and every time we were near Lexington, we stopped in Cozad to attend his mass. He was very devout and also fun..and will be missed.
Joe and Susie Kelly and family---Lincoln

Susan Kelly - June 12, 2022 at 04:14 PM

JW

“ Oh wow. I always thought that he was a friend to anyone. It didn't matter what religion you were. He was kind to everyone. RIP father.

Janet Wood - June 11, 2022 at 11:17 PM

MR

“ *Father O'Brien was a great priest he is going to be missed dearly .in cozad he was the right one for here . Hugs to the family*

Merry Romero - June 10, 2022 at 11:47 AM

FF

“ *Going to FR Don's church in Gothenburg. Everyone talking and sharing in the church. Then Fr Don comes out & quiet. Don just needs to smile, and everyone feels it. They quiet down and listen to him. Not to the words - to him. Good hearted man. Frank & Anne Freeman, formerly of North Platte.*

Frank Freeman - June 09, 2022 at 01:45 PM

CB

“ *Father Don was a blessing. His aunt Florence, my mother, was so proud when he was ordained. We were there in 1961 for the ordination and his first Mass a few days after my high school graduation. Mother was so pleased when Father was assigned to Gering, a few miles from Scottsbluff, her parish. Every week, Father forwarded her donations to the Scottsbluff parish even though she only attended his Masses.*

in 1966, Father presided at my wedding in Scottsbluff. The pastor told our best man that he could not sign as a witness because he wasn't Catholic. Shortly after, Father Don handed the papers to our best man who signed.

Father Don was sitting with us late one night at my folk's home when he told Bruce, my husband, a Lutheran, that any time he felt like it, he could go to Communion. 5 years later in Texas, Bruce remembered that when we were attending a Mass in a new neighbor's home. Bruce went to Communion and from that day, he was Catholic, never missing a Sunday Mass until illness stopped him. His last food was the host.

We were there for Father's 50th anniversary. Father flew to Austin for our 50th anniversary. He celebrated Mass in our living room because Bruce had left the hospital that morning with what would be his last illness.

Father Don is in heaven now, celebrating with the Quinns and O'Briens and all of the deceased people he's ministered.

Carole Buckman

Carole Buckman - June 09, 2022 at 10:30 AM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Rev. Don O'Brien.*



June 07, 2022 at 11:57 PM



“ *We will miss Father Don tremendously having known him for almost 50 years. Father Don officiated our wedding in 1974 and baptized both of our children at St. Agnes Parish in Scottsbluff. After he left Scottsbluff, we visited Father Don in Grand Island, Cozad, and Kearney. We were living in Kearney when Father Don moved there after his retirement and saw him often until we moved to Omaha.*

James and Pamela Hendrickson - Omaha

James Hendrickson - June 07, 2022 at 09:57 PM



“ *Eternal rest grant unto Him, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon Him. May the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.*

Ralph Sierra

Ralph Sierra - June 07, 2022 at 07:38 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Rev. Don O'Brien.*



June 07, 2022 at 02:18 PM



“ *Sentiments of Serenity Spray was purchased for the family of Rev. Don O'Brien.*



June 07, 2022 at 11:35 AM



“ *Father Don's first mass at POP, was also my daughter Ashley's first altar girl mass, he always loved to reminisce with her about it. Truly a blessing for us all. 🙏*



Richard Keck - June 07, 2022 at 08:35 AM



“ *Father DJ was very important to my family and my wife's. I served many a mass for him. My priest in grade school and my wife's priest in High school, he was overjoyed when he found out two of his "kids" were getting married. We kept close contact with him all these years. He will be sorely missed by more people than he will ever know.*

Matthew Meister - June 06, 2022 at 06:42 PM



“ *1 file added to the album Memories Album*



Jane Ripp - June 06, 2022 at 04:04 PM



*Jane ad Bill Ripp , Fr. O'Briens first wedding after he was ordained 60 years ago.
Wedding in Amherst, NE. Dec. 27th .1961*

Jane Ripp - June 06, 2022 at 05:17 PM



This was the first wedding Father O'Brien did. Bill & Jane Ripp of Amherst, NE.

camille helgeson - June 06, 2022 at 06:15 PM

JR

“ Jane (Rumbleck) and William Ripp we were Fr. Don's first wedding after he was ordained.

We were married Dec. 27,1961 in Amherst Ne. We kept in contact with him all these years. We were at both of his celebrations. We were looking forward to 60 years in Kearney with him ,but the pandemic hit.

He will be missed. Sorry for your loss.

As we were standing at the alter he said do not be nervous this is my first wedding also.

Jane Ripp

2418 Northwestern Avenue

Ames Iowa 50010

Jane Ripp - June 06, 2022 at 03:49 PM

MN

“ Our sympathy to Fr. O'Brien's family at this time of loss. Fr. will always have a special place in our hearts. While he was at St. Agnes he married us and also returned to baptize our first son. We will miss exchanging greetings with him at Christmas. Such a kind and genuine man. He will be missed indeed. Rest In Peace Fr. .

Mark and Marsha Neifert. - Scottsbluff

Mark Neifert - June 06, 2022 at 11:06 AM

MR

“ Father O'Brien you are going to be missed dearly . We had so many memories wi5h you . So sorry for 5he family hen was a great priest . Hugs to you all



merry romero - June 05, 2022 at 04:45 PM

ME

“ Father O'Brien you are going to be missed dearly . We had so many memories wi5h you . So sorry for 5he family hen was a great priest . Hugs to you all



merry - June 05, 2022 at 04:44 PM

AW

“ Fr. O'brien could always make a serious congregation laugh with a good joke inside the sermon. He saw all three of our children thru first communion to graduation, he will be missed. May God grant you peace in your hearts during this time of grief.

Alton Wenburg - June 05, 2022 at 04:08 PM

DL

Father was a wonderful man who wash so kind and loving to me and my family. Whether he was helping me through personal troubles or just talking Cardinal baseball, I always felt I could he was someone special.
I will miss you, Father Don, the world was a better place with you.

Dick LaBrayere - June 06, 2022 at 12:12 PM

HH

Father Don was a great priest and a all around good man. No matter if you was in church or at the grocery store he would always stop to say hi. He was loved by many and will be missed by many. Prayers to all his family. RIP Father Don.

Helen Hays - June 07, 2022 at 08:37 AM

JB

I had the pleasure of studying Theology with Fr. Don at St. Thomas Seminary in Denver (1957-61). Through the years we would see each other at the Class of '61 Reunions. Too many fond memories to recount ! He served the People of God, his parishioners with true love. May he enjoy the well deserved reward for his 61 years of service in the Vineyard !

Joe Binowski, Orleans, MA

Joe Binowski - June 08, 2022 at 10:32 PM

TH

There will never be another Fr. OB. We loved him so. He was so much more to our family than just our family priest, he was a dear friend. Whether it weddings, baptisms, Easter dinners....we were lucky to have gotten to share with him. I will forever and always be grateful my three kids were products of Fr. OB. Sure he taught them the importance of their Catholic faith, but more importantly he showed them how to be better Christians. Better humans. Thank you Fr. OB for being such an important part of our lives. We miss you so. You'll always be my favorite fella. ❤️

Theresa - June 10, 2022 at 02:23 PM

AJ

*I just read Father O'Brien's obituary, didn't realize that he had passed to heaven. In May 1981, my son was critically injured in a go-cart accident. I had the ambulance call the Scottsbluff ER and asked that a priest be there when we arrived so Clay could receive the "Anointing of the Sick"; he had a skull fracture and pulmonary edema. That is how I met Father O'Brien. He came back to the hospital that night and sat with us during Clay's surgery to do a tracheostomy and put him on a respirator. I will never forget his kindness and caring and prayers. It was 11:30 at night when he was with us....I am sure he needed some sleep at that time of the night. May the angels come to greet you, Father Don. God bless your dear and beautiful soul.
Anna Janssen; Immaculate Conception parish, Rushville*

Anna Janssen - June 29, 2022 at 03:34 PM

WR

Father O'Brien was one of the best, this world needs more Priests like him, he was down to earth and a very good human being, so very sorry to his Family The Rosenstiel Family

willaim Rosenstiel - July 11, 2022 at 09:16 PM