

Father Stephen Jasso, TOR, Obituary

Father Stephen Jasso, TOR, longtime pastor of All Saints Catholic Church, died February 12, 2021 at his home surrounded by family and friends after a three-year battle with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS). He describes his battle with ALS as “This is my cross to bear.” He was 88.

The retired pastor was a tireless champion for immigrants, the unborn, and Catholic education.

Fr. Jasso was born in Waco on November 26, 1932, to the late Domingo and Leonor Jasso, who came to Texas from Mexico. As a youth, he and his family worked as migrant workers in Texas, Indiana and Michigan. He attended elementary schools in Waco as well as Austin and Kopperl and received his high school diploma from the United States Armed Forces Institute. He served in the U.S Army during the Korean War, from 1953 to 1955, and the active reserves afterwards and earned the rank of sergeant first class.

Raised by devoutly Catholic parents, Father Jasso credited time spent with Franciscans for his spiritual growth and vocation to the priesthood. The order staffed St. Francis Catholic Parish in Waco where he was baptized and made his first Communion and Confirmation.

Father Jasso entered the Mexican Franciscan order, the Mexican Third Order Regular of St. Francis, Viceprovomcoa de Santa Maria de Guadalupe, in 1957. After earning his undergraduate degree at St. Francis College in Pennsylvania, he began seminary studies in Majorca, Spain, and then the University of St. Thomas Aquinas (Angelicum) in Rome where he was ordained to the priesthood in 1965.

He celebrated 63 years as a Franciscan and 56 years as a priest.

During his early years in the priesthood, he was assigned to Peru where he spent four years as a missionary. His next assignment was to Mexico where Father Jasso spent 24 years serving as a parish and later the TOR community in leadership roles including the provincial commissioner from 1981 to 1989.

In 1994, his order allowed him to come to Fort Worth where he worked at St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic Church for six months before assuming the role of All Saints pastor. He retired in 2018 after serving as All Saints pastor for 23 years.

Under his leadership, the historic parish flourished. He recruited religious sisters to work in parish ministries, spearheaded construction of a parish hall desperately needed for religious education classes and raised the profile of Hispanics in Fort Worth by participating on civic boards and committees. In 2002, Father Jasso met with then President George W. Bush during the Hispanic Leadership Summit. Locally, he served on the board of United Way and the Task Force on Racism.

Father Jasso’s ability to influence community leaders and his personal commitment to provide tuition assistance, along with pledges of support from alumni and benefactors, helped the All Saints parish school avoid financial crisis and a shutdown in the early 2000s. The Father Jasso Tuition Assistance Fund assisted parish families with tuition to the All Saints School. He

received the University of Notre Dame Sorin Award in 2013. Accepting the honor, he called Catholic schools “a gift to the country.”

Before becoming ill, Father Jasso, wearing his sombrero and mariachi suit, would lead the Cinco de Mayo or Mexican Independence Day parade on a horse.

Funeral services will include:

The receiving of the body Father Jasso at 7:30 p.m. Sunday, February 21, 2021 at All Saints Catholic Church with current pastor Father Manuel Holguin presiding at a funeral rite.

Father Jasso’s body will lie in repose from 9 a.m. until 6 p.m., Monday, February 22, 2021 in All Saints Catholic Church. Public viewing will be allowed with social distancing, wearing of face masks and observance of other diocesan safety protocols. A Vigil for Father Jasso will be held at 7 p.m. at All Saints Catholic Church. Bishop Michael Olson of the Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth will preside at the Vigil with eulogies from representatives of the community.

Father Jasso’s funeral Mass will be at Noon on Tuesday, February 23, 2021 in All Saints Catholic Church with Bishop Olson the celebrant and Father Mauricio Alarcón Martínez, TOR, the provincial of the religious order to which Father Jasso belonged, as the homilist.

Burial of Father Jasso will be in Waco Memorial Cemetery near his father. Bishop Olson will be present.

Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth requires social distancing, face masks, and other safety protocols to be observed at all services.

Survivors include 14 brothers and sisters and a half-brother: Grace Quiroz, Janie Hernandez, Filipe Jasso, Sister Olivia FHM, Angel Jasso, Gloria Jasso Duncan, Phillip Jasso, Helen Cooper, Domingo Jasso Jr., Ramiro (RJ) Jasso, Maria Jasso Lopez, Olivia Jasso Birones, Margaret Jasso Condon, Irene Jasso Duplantier and Orlando Compos and many nieces and nephews. Twin sisters died as infants.

He also is survived by his fellow Franciscan friars and his fellow priests of the Diocese of Fort Worth.

The vigil and funeral Mass will be live streamed on the Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth web site, www.fwdioc.org