

# Father Kelmartin, area pastor, dies

Father John. J. Kelmartin, a former pastor of St. Bartholomew in Manchester and Our Lady of Victory in Arbutus who taught in several seminaries across the country, died March 7 at Stella Maris Hospice in Timonium. He was 83.

Bishop William C. Newman, retired eastern vicar, offered Father Kelmartin's funeral Mass March 14 at Our Lady of Victory. Bishop Newman grew up in Father Kelmartin's home parish of Blessed Sacrament in northeast Baltimore and was an altar server at Father Kelmartin's first Mass after his ordination in June, 1949.

Father Kelmartin served with the Sulpicians during his early years as a priest, teaching at St. Charles College Seminary in Catonsville - his alma mater that he entered when he was a young teen. He later served at St. Edward's Seminary in Seattle and was rector of St. Stephen's Seminary in Hawaii for five years.

After serving as an associate pastor of St. Joseph in Sykesville, Father Kelmartin was named pastor of St. Bartholomew in 1979 and became pastor of Our Lady of Victory in 1987.

Although Father Kelmartin retired in 1994 after having quintuple bypass surgery, he continued to assist at many area parishes including St. Thomas More in Baltimore and St. Mark, Fallston.

Bishop W. Francis Malooly, western vicar, described Father Kelmartin as a much-loved priest among his parishioners who was very generous with his time. Father Kelmartin promoted the idea of a new church for St. Bartholomew, a dream that was finally realized last year.

"He was able to come back and be present at the dedication," said Bishop Malooly, who had known Father Kelmartin since the early 1980s. "The parishioners welcomed him with open arms. He was good with everyone."

Father John Bowen, S.S., a close friend who attended primary school at Blessed Sacrament, said Father Kelmartin had an Irish wit and a deep love for his family.

"He was very much alive to his priesthood," said Father Bowen, the homilist at his

friend's funeral liturgy. "He was one of the best priests I've ever known."

Father Kelmartin was "quite unassuming," Father Bowen said. He was willing to take whatever assignment came his way.

"He went where he was sent," Father Bowen said. "He enjoyed what he was doing at any given time."