

Fr. Lawrence Heiman

Fr. Lawrence (Larry) Heiman, C.P.P.S., 94, died peacefully in his sleep on the morning of Sunday, Feb. 26, 2012, in the infirmary of St. Charles Center in Carthagen, where he made his home.



He was born on Aug. 24, 1917, in Decatur, Ind., the son of John and Anna (Rumschlag) Heiman. He entered the society in 1932 and was ordained on Dec. 5, 1943.

He was a gifted musician and teacher. Soon after his ordination, he was assigned to teach music and drama at St. Joseph's College in Rensselaer, Ind., which is sponsored by the Missionaries of the Precious Blood. There, he spent most of his life as a priest, teaching countless young people to praise God through song. He earned a doctoral degree in music from the Pontifical Institute of Sacred Music in Rome in 1970.

He was instrumental in establishing an advanced music degree program at St. Joseph's College. In addition to his teaching duties through the academic year, Heiman spent his summers as the director of the Rensselaer Program, an annual summer institute on church music. He directed the institute from its founding in 1960 through 1993. It remains the nation's longest running program of its kind. In 2007, after 63 years of campus life, Heiman retired to St. Charles Center.

Heiman received numerous awards during his lifetime for his work in musical education. In 2002, he received the prestigious Jubilate Deo award from the National Association of Pastoral Musicians for his accomplishments.

Remembrances from Heiman's many former students came pouring in moments after his death was announced. Many recalled his cheerful attitude, ready help and constant encouragement. Most credited him with adding to or enhancing the music in their lives, but equally recognized his willingness to spend extra time with them when they needed his support.

Happy in his vocation, he was also committed to his community, attending meetings and taking an active part in assemblies well into his 90s.

He is survived by his sister, Irene Hamrick of Decatur, Ind.; numerous nieces and nephews and great-nieces and great-nephews.

He was preceded in death by three brothers, Fr. Ambrose Heiman, C.P.P.S., Edward and Richard; in-laws, Mary Heiman and Victor Hamrick. The late Br. Denis Rumschlag, C.P.P.S., was his cousin.

A Mass of Christian burial was celebrated on Feb. 29 at St. Charles Center, Carthagen, with the Rev. Larry Hemmelgarn, C.P.P.S., officiating. Burial followed in the Community cemetery.

Memorial contributions may be directed to the Missionaries of the Precious Blood, Cincinnati Province.