



Rev. Edwin J. Sanders S.J.

October 29, 1928 - October 13, 2021

Today we gather as the friends and as the Jesuit brothers of Fr. Ed Sanders of the Society of Jesus to pray for him and to celebrate the Eternal Life that he has been called to. If there was ever anyone who was blessed and anointed adequately to get to heaven, it was Ed. He even joked about having been anointed so many times that he was going to be able to "slide into heaven!"

Ed lived and died as a man of the Society. Most of his life as a Jesuit was lived in Pastoral Ministries, as a Pastor of Saints Peter and Paul Church in Pittsburgh and Director of the East End Cooperative there. He served as both a teacher and counselor at Lancaster Seminary, as a Chaplain at Saint Joseph's Hospital, and as a Retreat and Spiritual Director, and taking on seriously at Manresa Hall, the mission to pray for the Church and Society of Jesus. Even in his years at Manresa, he maintained a telephone ministry of counseling and spiritual direction.

Perhaps his most rewarding ministry, came while at Manresa, in the loving accompaniment of his brother, Fr. Joe Sanders, in his final days. It was inspiring to watch him praying with Joe and holding his hand until he went home to God.

Some of us also remember Ed leading the rosary at the Manresa Masses.....sometimes dozing in the midst of it and moving ahead with more decades or longer decades of the rosary than anyone had experienced before! But, it was a labor of love for Ed, who carried his vow Cross every day with great affection and devotion and never stopped talking about Christ and his love for Mary.

Ed, for his whole life, took the words of Christ to heart.

This was the Gospel Ed requested for this Mass. He had come to realize that he and all those he served as a priest, were the Father's gift to Jesus. There is no comfort so penetrating as to know that one belongs to Christ....and that the Last Supper prayer of Jesus was that those who have been given to Him, would be with Him that they may see His glory that the Father gave Him.

Ed embraced the words of Christ....through the preaching of St. Paul. The example of Christ was to be one of humble giving...Paul tells,"....He emptied Himself, taking the form of appearance He humbled Himself, becoming obedient to death even death on a Cross." The Christ of Ed's inspiration was the Suffering Servant....the Lord Whose glory was found

in "Self-emptying" love....not coming to be served but to serve. The Vow Cross that Ed treasured was more than a religious article to be venerated. It was the place of contact with the Crucified Lord.

The Old Testament reading Ed requested from Isaiah, speaks to the inspiration for his life as a disciple -

...Releasing those bound unjustly...

...Setting free the oppressed

...Sharing your bread with the hungry

...Sheltering the oppressed and the homeless

...Clothing the naked when you see them

...Not turning your back on your own

Isaiah tells us...if you do these things," ...Then light shall rise for you in the darkness and the gloom shall become like midday."

The invitation to each of us present today, is to realize that Ed's passing from us is God's love in action....it is not destruction but transformation to real living....reminding us how close eternal life is... And calling us to live each day as though it were the most important day of our lives....

It is an invitation from the Heart of God, to Renew our relationship with our Eternal Father....knowing that if we eat the Bread of Life in faith we will live forever.

In this recent weeks, Ed seemed to be failing, I walked into his room and go got his voice back to sing me two verses of a hymn that gave him much delight. I will recite the words -- not sing them today.

"I'm comin my way into heaven, I'm comin my way into heaven. I may not be among the 11, but I hope I'll be a leaven, because I'm comin my way into heaven.

There may be parts of my life that are shady, but I'm lifting them up to Our Lady, for I'm comin my way into heaven, I'm comin my way into heaven!"

As we receive the Eucharist this morning, let's lift up Ed in prayer....that He may see the Face of Jesus Christ, Who Pope Francis tells us, is the Face of God's mercy....and may God give us a good share in the joy that accompanies it.

Ed, the Lord is your Companion now.

He is the Faithful One,

Whose power is stronger

Than death

And Whose love never heals.

We commend you to His

Loving Arms, where He

Will shelter you until

We all meet again....

Because you're comin your way into heaven!

Ed, May the love of God,
The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit
Be with you always. Amen

LINK FOR FR. SANDERS MASS

<https://sju.zoom.us/rec/share/n1CLiPn8BBllt31HJqu7TNnv8Gi3vvD8z2vzO16VJul1-irRkZ93wBdLcggtdzY-.04BAtlw63Ahvbpt>

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Cemetery Details

Jesuit Cemetery

Wernersville, PA

Tribute Wall



“ *Rev. Edwin J. Sanders S.J.*

February 03, 2023 at 04:11 AM

TG

“ *Fr. Ed was my spiritual director for many, many years. In 1993, he "talked me into" giving the guy I was dating "a chance," and in 1994, Rick and I were married. We were so excited to finally marry the right person, we asked Fr. Ed to renew our vows at a nuptial Mass at the Jesuit Center on our fifth anniversary. It was such a blessed, memorable day. Whenever Fr. Ed and I met for counsel, discernment, and prayer, I always felt he had a hotline to God. He was the ultimate priest and pastor, never shying away from any ministerial task, as evidenced by his vocation that covered so many fields from education to prison ministry. He will be tremendously missed, but I rejoice that Fr. Ed is with the Lord. Thank You, Jesus, for his life!*



The Rev. Dr. Nina George-Hacker - November 02, 2021 at 08:49 PM

SI

“ *My friends in Lancaster invited me to their house and Fr Ed was visiting. This couple were local leaders I Marriage Encounter and sought prayer and support from Fr Ed. A wonderful, holy man and priest. From Sr Clare IHM*

Sister Clare. IHM - October 21, 2021 at 08:28 AM

SF

“ *This eulogy gives tribute to Our Beloved Father Ed. When I would sit at his feet I felt I was sitting with Jesus. He was an earthly Saint and most assuredly a Saint in Heaven. We are saddened here in Lebanon county that the internment outside was not open to us in Wernersville. However, we know He knows how much he was loved. He taught us how to love. To forgive and to "give time, time." Alas, how to love mussels. Till we meet again. Pray for us. Sweet Man.*

Sullivan Family - October 19, 2021 at 09:41 PM