



## Rev. J. Ventura

January 22, 2016

Ventura, Fr. Gennaro J.

Rochester: Father Gennaro J. Ventura, the Diocese of Rochester's oldest priest, died Friday morning, January 22, 2016. He was 97 years old and had served as a diocesan priest for more than 72 years.

Father Ventura, born Sept. 5, 1918, attended Holy Apostles Parish in Rochester as a youth and was educated at Aquinas Institute and at the former St. Andrew's and St. Bernard's seminaries, all in Rochester.

He was ordained a priest on December 18, 1943, by Bishop James E. Kearney at Sacred Heart Cathedral.

During his many decades of ministry, Father Ventura served as assistant pastor at Rochester's Our Lady of Mt. Carmel for six months in 1944; assistant pastor at St. Francis Xavier in Rochester from 1944-1947; assistant pastor at Mt. Carmel from 1947-1956; administrator of St. Lucy's in Rochester from 1956-1957, then pastor from 1957-61; pastor of Mt. Carmel from 1961-68, as well as consultor for the Rochester Housing Authority in 1968; pastor of St. Francis DeSales in Geneva from 1970-80; and pastor of Holy Ghost in Gates from 1980 until his retirement in 1989.

Father Ventura was well-known in the diocese for his ministry to youth and participation at youth retreats, where he was affectionately dubbed Father "Ace" Ventura. He was fond of crafting lamps and windows with stained-glass, making wine, gardening and carpentry.

In August of last year Father Ventura was given a special Christian Witness

Award at a Mass that he concelebrated, with Bishop of Rochester Salvatore R. Matano and other priests, celebrating the 100th anniversary of St. Mary's Church in Dansville of the Holy Family Catholic Community, where Father Ventura served for many years in retirement. He received a standing ovation. Predeceased by his parents, Frank and Madelene; brother, Joseph; sisters, Betty, Marie and Frances. Survived by Jean and Tom Raisbeck; several nieces, nephews and cousins.

Calling hours will be Monday, Jan. 25th from 2-6pm at St. John the Evangelist Church Greece, 2400 W. Ridge Rd., Rochester, NY 14626, with Solemn Vespers at 4:00pm, with The Most Rev. Salvatore R. Matano presiding. Fr. Ventura will lie in state Tuesday, Jan. 26th from 9:30-10:30am at Sacred Heart Cathedral, 296 Flower City Park, Rochester, NY 14615, where his Mass of Christian Burial will be held at 10:30am, with Bishop Emeritus Matthew H. Clark presiding. Interment Holy Sepulchre Cemetery.