

Fr. Thomas Lee Weise, Jr.

January 10, 1969 – December 6, 2015

The Reverend Thomas Lee (Joseph) Weise, Jr., 46, a priest of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Juneau, Alaska, died December 6, 2015, following a cardiac arrest suffered while visiting family members in San Luis Obispo, California.

Fr. Weise was born January 10, 1969 in South Laguna Beach, California. After graduating from Dana Hills High School, he was appointed to the United States Coast Guard Academy in New London, Connecticut, graduating in 1992 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Marine Science.

While in the Coast Guard, he served as an officer on a buoy tender based in Ketchikan, Alaska, on shore duty at the Port of Long Beach, CA (obtained BA from CSULB), and rose to the rank of Lieutenant. At the end of his active duty service, in 1996 Fr. Weise entered Mt. Angel Seminary in Oregon to study for the priesthood and eventually become a Navy chaplain. However, in 1998 after discerning a call to serve as a parish priest, Fr. Weise became a seminarian for the Diocese of Juneau, Alaska.

After a pastoral year at Saint Gregory of Nazianzen Parish in Sitka, Alaska, he was ordained a deacon in April 2001. After graduating from Mt. Angel Seminary with a Master of Divinity degree as well as a Master of Theology, Fr. Weise was ordained a priest on May 31st, 2002 by Bishop Michael Warfel at Saint Paul the Apostle Parish in Juneau, Alaska.

Fr. Weise served as an associate pastor at St. Paul's in Juneau from 2002 to 2004. During this same period he also served as a chaplain in the United States Navy Reserve.

During 2004-2005 he served at Saint Rose of Lima Parish in Wrangell and Saint Catherine of Siena Parish in Petersburg as parish administrator. In 2005, he was made rector of the Cathedral of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Juneau. In 2010 he returned to Petersburg and Wrangell, as pastor of the two parishes in those communities.

Fr. Weise's ministry at St. Rose's and St. Catherine's is noteworthy for the many friends he made in each town, along with the major building renovations and improvements he initiated and which were accomplished with the help and encouragement of parishioners. As pastor he traveled by small plane every Sunday (weather permitting) between Petersburg and Wrangell to celebrate Mass.

In addition to his regular pastoral work in Juneau, Wrangell and Petersburg, Fr. Weise participated in the World Youth Day (WYD) celebrations in Rome (2000),

Toronto (2002), Cologne (2005), Sydney (2008), Madrid (2011) and had planned to attend WYD 2016 in Krakow, Poland. He was an avid outdoorsman who hiked and kayaked throughout Southeast Alaska. Fr. Weise was an active member of the Juneau chapter of Veterans for Peace, the Alaska chapter of the environmental group Interfaith Power and Light and a founding board member of the Canvas Art Studio for artists with developmental disabilities.

Fr. Thomas is survived by his mother, Irene Strateny, his father, Thomas Weise Sr. (Lee Ann), his sister Terry Burrows (Deacon Jim Burrows), brothers Tim Weise (Lorna) and Trent Weise (Lisa), as well as nephews Noah Weise, Isaac Weise and Logan Arentz.

Funeral events for Fr. Thomas Weise will begin in California with a Vigil at 6:30 p.m. PST, Monday, December 14 in San Luis Obispo, California at the historic Mission San Luis Obispo de Tolosa, 751 Palm Street, San Luis Obispo. The Funeral Mass will be held at 10:00 a.m. on Tuesday, December 15 in the same Mission church. Temporary interment will take place at the Old Mission Catholic Cemetery columbarium in San Luis Obispo. At a later date, final interment will take place at the columbarium at the Shrine of Saint Therese near Juneau, Alaska.

On Wednesday, December 16th at 7:00 pm at St. Rose of Lima Catholic Church in Wrangell, Bishop Edward J. Burns will preside at a Memorial Mass for Fr. Thomas, which will be preceded by the opening of the Holy Door for the Jubilee of Mercy.

On Thursday, December 17th at 7:00 pm, Bishop Burns will also preside at a Memorial Mass at St. Catherine of Siena Catholic Church in Petersburg.

In Juneau, on Friday, December 18th at 7:00 pm Bishop Burns will preside at a Memorial Mass at St. Paul the Apostle Catholic Church, 9055 Atlin Drive. This Mass will be livestreamed to the internet and viewable at the following link: <https://livestream.com/diocesEOFjuneau>.

The Diocese of Juneau has established the Fr. Thomas Weise Memorial Fund, which will be used to pay for any outstanding bills relating to Fr. Thomas' medical care and end-of-life expenses. Remaining funds will be distributed to the poor, as per Fr. Thomas's living request. Contributions can be mailed to the Diocese of Juneau, 415 Sixth Street, Suite 300, Juneau, Alaska, 99801-1074. Donations can also be made online electronically at <http://www.diocesEOFjuneau.org/ways-to-give>. When donating, please indicate "Fr. Thomas Weise Memorial Fund."

