



Fr. Ronan Newbold.

### FR. RONAN NEWBOLD, C.P.

Born  
August 9, 1942

Professed  
July 22, 1963

Ordained  
May 24, 1969

Died  
March 6, 2022



Ordination in 1969.



Brothers George and Mark in Indianapolis, IN - 1944.



Newbold Family  
Dad-Robert and Mom-Cyrilla with Mark and George.



Snowman builders, George, Dad, Mark.



First Communion  
1949.



Seminarian.



Ordination class: Frs. Michael Buschmohle, Ronan and Richard Thomson.



Nephew Ronan and Uncle Thomas More, CP.



Ronan and Hugo Esparza catching up during a meeting break!



Vice-Provincial Ronan at Japanese Vicariate Meeting.



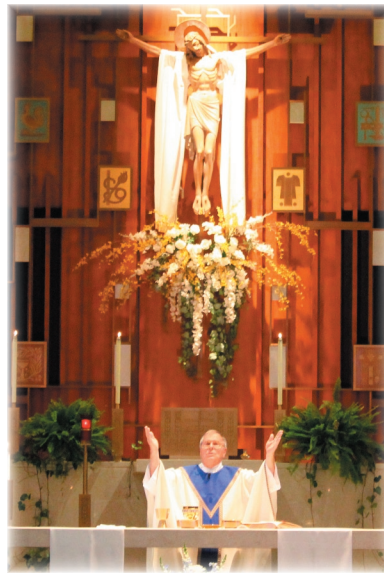
Japan becomes a Vice-Province 1999. Ronan Newbold, Paul Hata, Benita Huerta, Denis McGowan, Michael Suzuki.



Ronan with Linda and Bill Berger, a seminary classmate.



Ronan's 50th Jubilee Celebration Immaculate Conception Parish, Chicago.



Ronan with Fr. Carl Tenhunfelt.



Ronan giving a presentation in 2019.



Lunchtime at Holy Name.



Relaxing at Lake Apache, TX.



Bill Berger and Ronan at Houston Airport.



Clemente Barrón proclaims the Gospel and Homily.



Joe Moons blessing the remains of Ronan.



Kurt Wernert and Nelson Alphonse greet Ronan in Louisville.



Final Commendation lead by Alex Steinmiller.



All Saints Cemetery Joe Moons, Janice Newbold, cousin Karen Wood Newbold and Mark Newbold.

**FUNERAL HOMILY**  
**FR. RONAN NEWBOLD, C.P.**  
**MARCH 22, 2022**  
**Immaculate Conception Church**  
**Chicago, Illinois**  
**Fr. Clemente Barron, C.P.**

Good morning. My name is Fr. Clemente Barrón, Passionist, Ronan's classmate, good friend and my Passionist brother for 59 years. First, my sincerest condolences are extended to Mark Newbold, Ronan's brother, and to his wife, Janice, their children, Deb and husband Tom and Mark Jr.

My sympathy is also extended to his family and friends that mourn his passing, as well as to our Passionist family, especially those in Japan, who knew and loved him dearly.

The expression we use in Spanish, *te acompañamos en tus sentimientos*, (I accompany you in your sentiments) says it best for me. For that expression of condolences focuses our attention on the solidarity we experience in our suffering, on our compassion, at this moment of sorrow.

Every person who dies, whatever the cause, is always a deeply personal loss, no matter how well we knew the person in life. Many of us here this morning had the blessing of knowing Fr. Ronan Newbold well, and thus, deeply mourn his loss. We celebrate Ronan's life and death, by gathering in Faith, by celebrating this Mass of Resurrection, and by commending his body to the earth and his soul to God.

**Eternal rest grant unto him, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon him!**

The reason why we say this prayer so many times during our funeral services is because we all have this deep longing for rest, not just for short periods of time, but a rest that takes away the burdens of life. Little do we realize that "rest" has biblical roots. The second chapter of the Book of Genesis says: "*On the seventh day God completed the work he had been doing; he rested on the seventh day from all the work he had undertaken. God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work he had done in creation.*"

This notion that God made rest "holy" may not be a familiar one to us. But we all recognize the important role that "rest" has in our lives. What we may not reflect upon often, however, is that this prayer of eternal rest we offer for Ronan at this Mass is a holy longing, as well as God's reward for being a faithful follower of Jesus Crucified.

So many of us are hard workers who carry the heavy burdens of life daily. Ronan had a personal work ethic that embraced work as a ministry to the people of God, the people he served. So now we pray from the bottom of our hearts: **Eternal rest grant unto him, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon him!**

My first encounter with Fr. Ronan happened the first month of my freshman year at Mother of Good Council Seminary, Warrenton, Missouri. In those days, his name was George to us and Butch to his family. He came from the great state of Indiana.

It was a nasty day outside, so we found ourselves in the Gym playing basketball. I was invited to join a group of guys that were already playing a game but were a player short. I was not really a basketball player and knew little about this sport, except what our 8<sup>th</sup> grade coach had taught us: basketball was a “no contact sport.”

During the game, I suddenly found myself defending our basket, and old George was barreling down upon me. Believing that this was a “no contact sport,” I stepped in front of him, hoping that he would move around me and miss his shot. Did not happen! He ran right through me, made the basket as I tumbled to the floor, giving me a Hoosier welcome. As he turned to go back down court, he gives me one of those “Ronan” looks. He didn’t even bother to help me up. It was his way of saying to me, “welcome to my world!”

I really didn’t get to know Ronan until our Theology years at St. Meinrad, Indiana, when we became roommates, and then we became buddies. At St. Meinrad’s, we began to go out to do ministry in the surrounding parishes. We would organize these day-long gatherings with highschoolers, where we would have talks, fun and games, a Mass, maybe pizza and then end with a dance. We would call these programs, Whoosits.

One day, Ronan says to me, “Let’s give a talk at the next Whoosit.” I asked, “On what?” He says, “Let’s call our talk: Praying is like Dancing.” It was a lot of fun. We had the kids laughing. I can tell you this much, his basketball moves were a lot better than his moves on the dance floor. To this day, I don’t know if the kids were laughing with us or at us!

Ronan never lost that sense of humor that brought joy to our lives. He was always a good sport and a great companion to be with in our many adventures. He was never a mean person, in thought, word and deed. That may be the reason why so many people were attracted to him.

Like all members of a religious community, we Passionists have a Rule and Constitutions that guide our lives as Passionists. In the second paragraph of our Rule, we read:

“Recognizing in our founder, Saint Paul of the Cross, the action of the Holy Spirit, the Church with her supreme authority approved our Congregation and its Rule and entrusted us with a mission: to preach the Gospel of the Passion by our life and apostolate. This mission still retains all its force and authenticity.”

This text came to mind as I reflected upon Ronan’s life as a Passionist. As we were approaching ordination to the priesthood, the Provincial came to see him and to ask him if he would consider going to Japan for his first assignment.

It took some time before Ronan was able to say with the Prophet Isaiah, “Send me, Lord, send me.” He later told me that one reason why he accepted to go to our mission in Japan was because his good friend, Fr. Dick Thomson, another Passionist, had accepted to go to Korea at

the same time. They would have each other for support and companionship.

For Ronan, being a Passionist was his ultimate joy. It was that deep sense of vocation that allowed him to overcome the trials and tribulations of being a missionary in a country that was so different and dissimilar to the Midwest, where he grew up.

I had the privilege of visiting Ronan in Japan three times. During my first visit, he talked about how difficult it was to learn to speak the language, but now he was able to celebrate Mass in Japanese. He took me to have dinner with a Japanese family. We went to visit a parish where he celebrated Mass in Japanese regularly. He had set up regular visits with his Passionist companion, Dick Thomson. He was making the best of it.

Our second reading for today's Mass says that it is the Love of God in Christ Jesus that enable us to live difficult times and to guide us in making important decisions.

During my third visit to Japan, he began to talk about returning to the States. He became aware that after being in Japan for nearly 30 years, he had given as much as he could to our mission in Japan and now it was time for him to continue his Passionist ministry stateside. It was a difficult decision for him to make because he deeply loved the Japanese people and culture, had formed close, personal relationships there, and had bonded well with his fellow Japanese Passionists.

In one sense, this decision was his Garden of Gethsemane. This was one of those moments in his life when he called upon his personal faith in the Crucified Jesus and his Passionist roots to help him be at peace with his decision. So, he came back to the States as we began a new century, and he began a new ministry.

There are many reasons why Ronan was not only my friend but also a mentor. Over the years, I began to admire Ronan because he allowed our Passionist Rule to define his life and his ministry. He was truly a son of the Church, echoing this text from our Rule:

“Guided by the teaching of the Church and our own consecration to the Passion of Christ, we strive to make our lives and apostolate an authentic and credible witness on behalf of justice and human dignity.”

He once shared with me that he learned the meaning of justice and human dignity from his dad when his dad worked as a Clerk at the Federal Courthouse in Indianapolis. Ronan's love for his family was obvious to me. He would share little stories about his homelife, about hanging out with his brother, Mark, and especially about those times he spent with his family at the cabin at Birch Lake, Minnesota. He also had a Passionist uncle, Fr. Thomas More. Whenever we wanted to go somewhere during our Theology years, Ronan would tell me that he could always get his uncle's VW.

I can still remember him telling me about an extraordinary experience that he had in Japan while working outside. Suddenly, as he worked, he had a strong sensation of his dad's presence. Five hours later, he got a call from his brother, Mark, saying that their dad had passed

away about five hours before. He believed that this experience was how his dad said goodbye to him. Ronan always had a deep love for his family.

One thing about Ronan was that he was always a willing worker for the Province. Besides his time in Japan, he served the Church and the Province as an associate here at Immaculate Conception parish, at our retreat centers, Christ the King in Sacramento and Holy Name in Houston, and various social justice ministries within the Province. He was a tireless minister for God, for the Church and for the Congregation. **May he rest in Peace!**

Let me finish by recalling to mind Jesus' words in today's Gospel. These words are also comforting to me: *"Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart, and you will find rest for yourselves. For my yoke is easy and my burden light."* Jesus' invitation to come to him for Eternal Rest is what this Mass of Resurrection is all about. Ronan heard that invitation for the last time on March 6, 2022, and accepted it the moment he died. That is why we pray, **Eternal rest grant unto him, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon him.**

Let me conclude this homily with the beautiful words spoken to us by St. Augustine: "You have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our heart is restless until it finds its rest in you."

**Ronan, May You Rest in Peace. Amen. Amen.**

**REV. RONAN NEWBOLD, C. P.**  
**August 9, 1942 – March 6, 2022**

Father Ronan Newbold, C.P., was a member of the Passionist Community of Holy Cross Province for 59 years. He passed away on Sunday, March 6, 2022, at Nazareth Home in Louisville, Kentucky. Ronan was born on August 9, 1942; professed vows on July 22, 1963; and was ordained to the priesthood on May 24, 1969.

George Robert Newbold, the son of Robert and Cyrilla Newbold, was born on August 9, 1942, in Indianapolis, Indiana. He was baptized at St. Joan of Arc on August 10, 1942, by his uncle Fr. Thomas More Newbold, C.P. He made his First Communion at Immaculate Heart of Mary Church in second grade on May 15, 1949, and confirmed in 6<sup>th</sup> grade.

He has an older brother Mark. His Dad was a United States Deputy Marshal, followed by Clerk of the Federal Court in Indianapolis. His Mom was a home maker and a kitchen supervisor at Immaculate Heart of Mary grade school from 1950 to 1955. His father died in 1963 and his mother in 2002.

George and his brother lived a good life. They did a lot of bicycle riding together and Mark taught him sports. He attended St. Joan of Arc School and Immaculate Heart of Mary School grade schools. He particularly mentions his 5<sup>th</sup> grade teacher, Sister Paula Marie, who would join the boys for tag football games. In his brief autobiography, Ronan mentioned, “She was a fast runner, a good passer and could catch the ball like a pro.”

Another high point of grade school years at IHM was in 7<sup>th</sup> grade when they won the city football championship. As a boy scout there were outings at Turkey Run State Park – the place where he learned to appreciate nature.

Fr. Simon Herbers, C.P., came to the school and gave a talk on vocations. Afterwards, Fr. Simon was invited to the Newbold home to give George the steps for entering the prep school in Warrenton, MO. He completed his high school at Our Lady of Good Counsel in Warrenton. He was a star athlete. He earned a B.A. in Chicago. Theological studies at St. Meinrad, Indiana and Catholic Theological Union in Chicago. Ronan worked on a team giving retreats to teenagers in the Midwest, and served on the Christian Appalachian Project in Kentucky. He served as Deacon at St. Maurice Parish in Chicago. Studied one summer at Columbia University, and studied at Dayton University in preparation for missionary work in Japan.

One of the important events in Ronan’s life was the gathering of the family at his father’s parents’ home in Rushville, IN. His dad had five brothers, one of whom was Fr. Thomas More Newbold, C.P. There, the family would gather for Christmas and



Spring vacation time and enjoy the goodness and care of his grandmother, Marymom. She lived near Church and would take all the visitors to daily mass. Ronan states that this was the beginning of his vocation.

A great source of life for him was his Mom's cottage on Birch Lake near Grey Eagle, MN, purchased when she was 23 years old. His Mom was born in Freeport, MN, the youngest of 3 brothers and 2 sisters. She bought the cottage, the envy of her siblings...but a great source of fun and relaxation from the time Ronan could remember. That was the summer place for the Newbold family. After his ordination, Ronan would spend several weeks there and help the pastor in Grey Eagle. Ronan was assigned to the Passionists mission in Japan. He stayed for 30 years. When he came home every three years, he would spend a few weeks with the Passionists. Then, he would head to "the lake" for rest and relaxation, enjoying family and helping out at the parish on Sundays.

Ronan was appointed to Japan after his ordination in 1969. He lived with the Passionists in Tokyo while attending the Japanese Language School. After two years of study, he was transferred to Ikeda to minister in the parish for a year.

From 1972-1983 he was involved with retreat ministry in Takarazuka and also local superior for the community. He went back to Tokyo in 1983 to 1987 and did parish ministry. From 1987 to 1991, he was the pastor.

At the Regional Chapter in 1991, Ronan was elected the Regional Superior of the Passionist Vicariate in Japan. He held that position for eight years until 1998.

After fulfilling 30 years of ministry in Japan, Ronan came back to Holy Cross Province in the United States and was assigned to Christ the King Passionist Community in Citrus Heights (Sacramento, CA), where he was on the retreat center staff until 2001.

Ronan was appointed Associate Pastor at Immaculate Conception Church in Chicago in 2021. He remained at the parish until 2012, when he was assigned back to California.

After leaving Chicago, he was involved with retreat ministry as retreat director for one year at Christ the King Passionist Retreat Center in Citrus Heights and for seven years on the retreat staff at Holy Name Passionist Retreat Center in Houston, Texas. He was elected local superior of the Houston Passionist community in 2019.

In 2021, Ronan was being treated for blood clots in his leg. Treatment did not seem to be healing. Concerned about a stroke or heart attack, doctors recommended amputating his leg in order to protect him for the blood clotting. After the surgery in Houston in early 2022, Ronan was transferred to Sacred Heart Passionist Community in Louisville, KY, for follow-up treatment at Nazareth Home, next to the community. Ronan's health condition declined and was taken to the hospital where he was put in the

ICU. His medical team reported that there was nothing that could be done medically. It was decided to return Ronan, who was in a coma, to Nazareth Home under hospice care. He died on March 6. His brother and wife were with Ronan during this time as well as the local community.

The Funeral Mass was at Immaculate Conception Church, Chicago, on March 22, 2022 at 11:00 PM. Fr. Ronan was associate pastor at Immaculate Conception for eleven years. Fr. Joseph Moons, C.P., Provincial of Holy Cross Province, was the presider and Fr. Clemente Barrón, C.P., was the homilist. Fr. Ronan was buried at the Passionist section at All Saints Cemetery in Des Plaines, Illinois, where his uncle, Fr. Thomas More Newbold, C.P., is also buried.

***May the Passion of Jesus be always in our hearts.***