



## Fr. Robert S. Liberty Jr

February 24, 1970 - April 17, 2013

Fr. Robert S. Liberty Jr. age 43 died suddenly on 4-17-2013. Born in Warren, Michigan on 2/24/1970 he was the son of the late Robert Sr. and late Kathalene Liberty. Loving brother of June (Irvin) Miller, Annette Zalucki and late Dianna Liberty. Also survived by many nieces and nephews. Former Pastor at St Jude Catholic Church in Detroit, and Associate Pastor at National Shrine of the Little Flower. Served as a chaplain in the US Army. Visitation at Rudy Funeral Home 25650 Van Dyke in Center Line, MI. Sunday, April 21, 2013, 12-9 PM with 7 PM Scripture, Instate on Monday 10 AM at National Shrine of the Little Flower Church in Royal Oak for 11 AM Mass of Christian Burial. Interment at Holy Sepulchre Cemetery. Memorials to the wishes of the family appreciated.

# Previous Events

## Visitation

APR 21. 12:00 AM - 9:00 PM (ET)

Rudy Funeral Home  
25650 Van Dyke Ave.  
Center Line, MI 48015  
(586) 757-3230  
kathynovak@rudyfuneral.com  
<https://www.rudyfuneral.com>

# Tribute Wall

KE

“ *Thinking about you today brother. I miss you.*

Kevin - December 09, 2024 at 01:52 AM



“ *I was listening to a podcast this morning while working on some homework and found myself thinking about Fr. Liberty. What a gift we had in this wonderful young man. He was one of my "inaugural priests" when I was baptized at Easter Vigil in 2006, and I always loved his enthusiasm for his vocation and his love of God. I have two memories of him that always make me smile --*

*First, watching him and Fr. Tomek Maka at my EV mass when it came time to light the Easter candle. Fr. Maka may as well have been 6'12 compared to Fr. Liberty's smaller frame. I remember seeing a playful exchange between them as Fr. Liberty was looking up at that tall candle looming very far above his head. Fr. Maka's face seem to ask, "Shall I get you a step stool?" and Fr. Liberty's quirked eyebrow answered, "Kneecaps..." I remember smiling to myself, thinking, "Brothers, lol."*

*A second memory -- going to visit Fr. Liberty at St. Jude's with Shrine's garden club. We were planting flowers on the grounds. It started to rain, a light and tolerable drizzle that suddenly erupted into a pretty ridiculous downpour. By that point, I was already soaked, so I just finished what I was doing before coming in. I remember Fr. Liberty seeing me come around the corner and asking if I needed to borrow a dry shirt. I politely declined, stating (without thinking), "Not unless you've also got a dry bra to go with it!"*

*Somewhere in a box, I have my Vigil candle from 2006. I can still hear his voice in my head, "Receive the Light of Christ," as he handed it to me. \*sigh\**

*I miss you, Father. You left us far too soon.*

Octavia Marquess - March 30, 2023 at 08:54 AM

MJ

“ *One of the nicest people I knew! And had a dear sweet mother. I just found out ,so sad!*



Maxine Jones - December 09, 2016 at 12:20 PM

RE

“ Today I was thinking of Fr. Liberty, out of the blue, as I occasionally do, and I decided to Google him. I am so sorry to hear the news of his passing, but I am sure he is in a much better place than we are now, and that is some comfort. I hope his family is doing OK, navigating life after such a loss. I made an appointment with Fr. Liberty at Shrine after being diagnosed with cancer, as a frightened young woman back in 2004. I spoke with him in his office for a little over an hour, but I felt such a tremendous weight lifted off of my shoulders after just that brief time. I'm tearing up as I write this, because I remember feeling so lost and hopeless and leaving in a much better state of mind, believing completely that I was in God's care, after a period of extreme doubt after my diagnosis. Reading the comments below just reinforces to me what an absolute treasure he was to anyone who had the good fortune to meet him. It was so clear that he was full of the Lord, you could see it in his eyes, hear it in his sermons... What a tremendous loss for this world. Rest in peace, Fr. Liberty, and rest knowing that you made this world better for a lot of people, including myself.

---

Rebecca - January 14, 2015 at 02:07 PM

TB

“ It's been a year now that Father Robert has gone home. Each and everyday he comes to mind. I pray some how he will know how deeply he helped me through a very dark and difficult time in my life. My heart still aches for the loss. I want just one more hug.  
"To touch another human soul, is to walk on Holy ground" I look forward to the day we meet again. So many of us needed him still. However God had a different plan. One day..I'll see him again and his beautiful smile!

---

tammy Boutin - April 18, 2014 at 11:11 AM

KB

*That's so nice of you to remember. He is missed by many, a life taken way too soon.*

---

Kari Boomer - June 28, 2014 at 01:00 AM

NE

“ May Fr. Robert S. Liberty RIP, the Heavenly Father above yearns to make right what he originally purposed in the Garden of Eden. Why should we have to perish and endure the grief and pain of death, when life is a Gift from God, a God of Love? Psalms 115:16; Matthew 6:9,10; Psalms 83:18; John 5:28,29

---

Neighbor - June 04, 2013 at 08:43 AM

JL

“ My dad passed away in January of 2005 and his funeral mass was at St. Blase in Sterling Heights. St. Blase was my childhood parish but Shrine was now my home. I can't describe what a huge comfort it was to me and my family during that difficult day when Fr. Robert showed up, much to my surprise, to concelebrate with the pastor of St. Blase.

*Because Fr. Robert, my spiritual father, was with me during the mass for my earthly father, he will always hold a special place in my heart.*

---

**Janie Lynch** - April 24, 2013 at 08:24 PM

ME

“ Meg Eib lit a candle in memory of Fr. Robert S. Liberty Jr



---

**Meg Eib** - April 24, 2013 at 07:05 PM

AC

“ Father Liberty was a true inspiration. He came to Shrine when my son, Chaz, was in high school. He had such a humble, kind personality with a wonderful sense of humor. He was so personable with everyone, young and old. He made everyone feel welcome and special! My heartfelt sympathy to his family and friends. His warm spirit and sunny smile will live on forever! Rest in peace!

---

**Amy (Bauer) Campbell** - April 23, 2013 at 05:50 PM

KE

“ I was on vacation when Bobby passed and am truly sorry I was not able to visit or send flowers . I am shocked and deeply saddened by the loss. Annette, I wish I could be there for you.

*Kendra McMillan nee Bell*

---

**Kendra** - April 23, 2013 at 10:58 AM

AH

“ Went to pay our respects to a former priest from Shrine.  
Such a positive influence to so many young minds and hearts.  
Didn't expect  
to see a photo of Father Liberty  
along side (now) Bishop Quinn of Minnesota  
on the day he was assigned his own parish.  
The same beloved Father Quinn  
who married us over 25 years ago.  
Just as he had given us his blessings  
he was there to celebrate with Father Liberty.  
Didn't expect  
to meet Father Liberty's nephew  
recently back from serving as a Marine.  
Originally from Petoskey who through conversation  
realized went to school with our son's college roommate Pat.  
Didn't expect  
to chat with Father Liberty's sister who taught catechism to Pat  
so many years earlier and was as fond of Pat's family as we are.  
Didn't expect  
to have to say goodbye to a such warm, giving, beautiful person  
far too soon.  
Yet something tells me  
I Do expect  
it's all part of God's plan.

---

Anita Harris - April 22, 2013 at 07:48 PM

DD

“ I remember Bob as a seminarian. Working in the financial aid office in the evenings and into some pretty late hours, I didn't get many visitors. But Bob would often pop by, just to say "hi" and we'd talk about a lot of different things. He was always warm and friendly and maybe what we talked about wasn't really important--things like family, studies, things he'd done before--nothing earthshattering or anything, but it always made me happy to see him, even if I was busy and we didn't really have time to talk very much. I was sure that he was going to relate well to his colleagues and eventually to the congregation he would serve. A lot of priests, even as students, can be stand-offish, but Bob wasn't like that. He had a great smile and a warm personality and he is definitely going to be missed. God bless Bob and hold him in the palm of His hand.

---

Denise Daniel - April 22, 2013 at 05:55 PM

BP

“ We deeply appreciate the love of Father Liberty at Shrine. May the light of Christ he brought to our community shine perpetually upon him. Rest in peace brother.

Brian Peaslee - April 22, 2013 at 07:00 AM

BP

“ 1 file added to the album New Album Name



Brian Peaslee - April 22, 2013 at 06:56 AM

PE

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Peace. - April 21, 2013 at 10:43 PM



I will always remember the miracle we shared. If you had met my daughter before it was too late. My children will always know you Fr. Liberty. Joanna Noble

Joanna Noble - March 30, 2025 at 03:00 AM

DH

“ We are very saddened to hear of the passing of Father Liberty. He made a lasting impression on our family while at Shrine. We were so excited to see that he would be the priest that baptized our eldest daughter and he did so with much love, kindness and humor. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family, friends and the parishoners of St. Jude.

Dina Heiler - April 21, 2013 at 09:34 PM

DH

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



---

**Dina Heiler** - April 21, 2013 at 09:21 PM

TF

“ *The Visioni Family lit a candle in memory of Fr. Robert S. Liberty Jr*



---

**The Visioni family** - April 21, 2013 at 09:16 PM

“Fr. Robert Liberty was an associate pastor at the National Shrine of the Little Flower several years ago, when the oldest (now in college) of my three children was at the middle school (Shrine Academy). Fr. Liberty made quite an impression on us with the intensity and enthusiasm of his homilies. I grew up with Star Trek and Star Wars, and as an adult, I was able to see these stories as metaphors for our faith, especially Star Wars. I really enjoyed having my children learn about Star Wars and watch the original films with me. I explained to my children as I understood it, that 'The Force' was Jesus, and that the Jedi Knights were our Catholic priests, and that the light saber was the Word of God, Jesus' love and mercy. An example of how even the hardest hearts can be turned toward the Lord by the words of a priest is at the end of Episode 6, when Luke Skywalker, in his loving persistence, is able to turn Darth Vader against the Evil Emperor, and together they are able to defeat him. Although Darth Vader loses his life in the battle, we are given the understanding as viewers of the movie at his funeral that he has gone to heaven, like the thief on the cross next to Our Lord.

Once at Mass, the way Fr. Liberty walked up and down the steps quickly and smoothly with his priest vestments flowing behind him reminded me of Luke Skywalker. The timber of his voice and the intensity of his gaze were amazingly similar to this well known Jedi Knight in our household. I talked to my oldest about it and she agreed. He made quite an impression on her and was instrumental in her faith formation at the time he was at Shrine.

I went to confession once, and when I walked into Father Liberty's confessional I got a distinct visual of the scene in Episode III of Princess Leia in a prison cell as Luke walks in and taking off the helmet he had on as a disguise says, "My name is Luke Skywalker and I'm here to rescue you." I looked at Fr. Liberty and understood that Our Lord was saving me through this young priest's ministry. I didn't see myself as being in prison or needing to be rescued at the time. I gave a good confession and after being absolved felt free and light and thankful that Father was at Shrine, and thankful for the priesthood, and the sacraments they give us, the church.

I invited him over for a spaghetti dinner just before he left Shrine to be pastor at St. Jude, but he didn't have time to come over. At his going away gathering at the Shrine in May, 2006, we said good by to him. He told me, "Hi, Doc. Keep the spaghetti dinner warm for me." He always called me "Doc." He posed with my daughter for a quick photo. Before we left we signed the big card (on the stand in the back ground of the photo) and my daughter drew a picture of a light saber on the card by our names.

Lisa Fulgenzi, MD



**Lisa Fulgenzi, MD** - April 21, 2013 at 08:38 PM

AH

*Lisa, this is SO nice, thank you for sharing!  
Anita Harris <3*

**Anita Harris** - April 22, 2013 at 07:46 PM

KB

“ *Bobby was more than a friend to our family, he was part of our family. He was like a brother to my cousin and was there in the hospital when my father passed away. Although time had gotten away from us and we didnt see each other much I always thought about him. It's wonderful to read all these memories and how he touch many lives. There will always be a part of him in my heart. Love you Bobby, rest in enteral peace.*

**Kari Boomer** - April 21, 2013 at 04:54 PM

WS

“ *Fr. Liberty was one of the priests at Shrine Church that left a lasting influence on our family during his short assignment. We were sorry to hear of his sudden passing. We know that God has called him home for a larger assignment in His Kingdom. We thank God for allowing us to be touched by Fr Bob. Our prayers go out for his soul and for the strength of his family and friends.  
Wayne & Joan Stamps*



**Wayne Stamps** - April 21, 2013 at 11:41 AM

KB

“ *Bobby and I shared many life experiances, Bobby was my first roommate when we both entered the "grown up world" Bobby was like my brother. Bobby I will forever treasure everything you and I shared together. Thank you for everything you have given me and taught me. I will go forward knowing I am a better person because I had you in my life. I promise I will take the things we learned together and share them with the people whose hearts need to be touched . Bobby you will always be with me, I will miss you. Rest in peace my friend. AMEN*

*Kevin Borycz*

**Kevin Borycz** - April 21, 2013 at 10:52 AM

TK

“ Father Robert led the most beautiful, sacred and heartfelt holiday and Holy Day masses at St. Jude. I will always remember one particular Holy Thursday mass and his first Christmas Midnight mass at St. Jude as two of my favorite celebrations. Father Robert was such a sweet, loving soul and truly shined with Christ's light. And he was so witty and frank and down to earth! He just made you feel at ease. I am so happy and blessed to have known him and spent time with him at St. Jude. He truly touched my life and many others. We love you Father Robert!

*Tia Klein (Schnee)*

---

**Tia Klein** - April 21, 2013 at 09:27 AM

TK

“ Tia Klein lit a candle in memory of Fr. Robert S. Liberty Jr



---

**Tia Klein** - April 21, 2013 at 09:20 AM

SB

“ Fr. Liberty and I had long and deep conversation when he was at Shrine, and inspired me to look at my Catholic faith in a deeper way-I switched parishes and joined the Shrine because of him-rest in peace. Sue and Dave Budzinski

---

**Sue Budzinski** - April 20, 2013 at 08:03 PM

TO

“ I looked forward to attending Mass at Shrine when I knew Fr.Liberty was going to be the celebrant. As well, I always looked at him saying Mass in front of a huge congregation, and I wondered how God could call such a great, yet "common" man to the priesthood.

*I knew he was very good for us but thought, for some reason, he wouldn't "last" for a huge amount of years with us. I am very sad now, and I wish he was still with us.*

---

**tomgainer** - April 20, 2013 at 06:30 PM

KB

“ Kari Boomer lit a candle in memory of Fr. Robert S. Liberty Jr



Kari Boomer - April 20, 2013 at 06:27 PM

JL

“ I knew Fr. Liberty as a gentle soul with a loving heart. He will always be with us. Unforgettable...

James Lowery - April 20, 2013 at 01:30 PM

RO

“ 2 files added to the tribute wall



Rob - April 20, 2013 at 10:10 AM

PG

“ Fr. Robert was a special person and a special priest. AMEN! I was blessed to have him as my pastor at St. Jude and to have had him baptize two of my grandchildren. May he rest in the everlasting peace of Christ! AMEN!

Patti Gonyeau - April 19, 2013 at 08:57 AM



“ I first met Fr. Liberty when I returned to the church after 35 years. It was because of him that I was inspired to return and enjoy going to mass again. It broke my heart when he left Shrine and I would often visit him at St. Jude. I will never forget the homily he gave about the "last time" vs "first milestones". God Bless you Fr. liberty !



Gay Thacker - April 19, 2013 at 04:47 AM

GT

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Gay Thacker - April 19, 2013 at 04:40 AM

DI

“ Diane lit a candle in memory of Fr. Robert S. Liberty Jr



Diane - April 18, 2013 at 10:35 PM



“ I remember Fr. Robert at Shrine of the Little Flower years ago. He was a dynamic, young, energetic priest, with zeal for the Lord and our Catholic Faith. Praying for God's consolation to his family, and his peaceful rest in God's loving embrace.  
With Love,  
May Bluestein

May Bluestein - April 18, 2013 at 09:30 PM

EK

“ Rest in peace, our dear friend Fr. Robert. You will be in our hearts always. --Ellen, Larry, Leslie (and Pat), Joe (and Jessica) Kehoe



Ellen Kehoe - April 18, 2013 at 09:01 PM

KD

“ *Fr Robert touched so many lives. Since his death was announced I have gotten so many people talking to me about what he meant to them. He was a great friend to our family and we will never forget all the fun times. Just a few Italy, Michelle and Bills wedding, the pig roasts, just sitting around talking, and of course Fr Roberts masses and homilies. My dear friend you will be greatly missed but forever in our hearts and our prayers. May God hold you in the palm of his hand. Rest in peace friend.*

*Kathie and Mike Dorsch*

---

**kathie Dorsch** - April 18, 2013 at 08:51 PM

 Jennifer Kalt

“ *6 files added to the album New Album Name*



---

**Jennifer Kalt** - April 18, 2013 at 07:43 PM

 Jennifer Kalt

“ *Fr. Liberty was the 1st priest our family met as we all came to the Church together in 2004, me through RCIA and the kids in one big Baptism. He had such an instant connection to my son Dylan. You'd think he'd been trained in autism. He made the Catholic Church easy for me to understand as a new member through his sermons. I remember talking with him after 2 masses and thanking him for the inside music jokes/references during his sermon. He was laughing because he was "slipping them in there" but not sure who was "getting" them. We lost an Angel on earth. God Bless your whole family.*

*Jennifer, Dylan, Riley, & Maggie Kalt*

---

**Jennifer Kalt** - April 18, 2013 at 05:40 PM

JK

“ *Fr. Robert made the most lasting impression on me as a Catholic so far. He performed a special Baptism on all 3 of my children at once as we came to the Church as an entire family in 2004. He took such great care of us, and had such a special understanding of my autistic son, Dylan. God Bless your entire family. We have lost an Angel on Earth.*

*Much Love,*

*Jennifer, Dylan, Riley, and Maggie Kalt*



---

**Jennifer Kalt** - April 18, 2013 at 05:19 PM