



## Fr. Roland Henry Lacasse, S.M.

October 24, 1931 - May 11, 2020

Born on October 24, 1931 in Lawrence, Massachusetts, Father Roland Henry Lacasse, S.M. died on May 11, 2020 at the age of 88 from complications of COVID-19 at the Nevins Manor, Methuen. He was predeceased by his parents, Wilfred and Eva (Ouellette) Lacasse and his younger sister, Lauraine Nadeau. Fr. Roland is survived by his elder brother, Rev. M. Eugene Lacasse, OCSO, his younger sister Doris (Paul), Bitler, by five beloved nieces and nephews, Kathleen, Cynthia, Christine, Stephen and Michael, and many grandnephews and grandnieces.

Father Roland loved being a priest. His profound faith was first nurtured by the deep Catholic faith of his parents, especially that of his mother Eva. When he was six years old his father died suddenly and left his mom with four small children to raise alone. Her example and that of the Good Shepherd Sisters, the Marist Brothers and Marist priests who educated him at St. Anne's Parish in Lawrence are probably the reason that his brother Eugene and he both became priests. When he applied to Maryvale Seminary in Bedford, Massachusetts and was asked why he wanted to become a priest he wrote, "To help people to be happy and holy" - a goal that he achieved "in spades" as his many surviving relatives, loyal friends, and former parishioners will attest.

Ordained to the priesthood on February 2, 1960, the first of Father Roland's many assignment included secondary education at Marist schools in Michigan, New York and Maine, and then as a chaplain at the Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston. Following that he was sent to serve as a curate and then as pastor in seven different parishes in Massachusetts, Maine and Vermont.

He was a great homilist and would sometimes sing part of a song to illustrate the meaning of a Scripture passage. Commenting on the problem of suffering, for instance, he would sometimes sing a verse of "I Never Promised You a Rose Garden."

Fr. Roland was a great writer. Every month for five years he wrote a letter to the editor of the Lawrence Eagle Tribune. This developed into a weekly column called "Insight" and

became a very popular item that included Fr. Roland's inspiring reflections on the deeper meaning hidden in the ordinary events of life.

The last phase of his ministry was served as a member of the Marist community at the Lourdes Center in Boston, helping to organize pilgrimages to Lourdes, answering letters from the sick, and writing a bimonthly column, "Marist Guidance" for "Echoes from Lourdes". At that time it was circulated bi-monthly to 50,000 readers in the US and Canada. It was a faith-filled, uplifting column, sprinkled with stories from his own experience and encouraging readers to take Jesus and Mary seriously, and themselves not so much.

Finally, in failing health, Fr. Roland retired to the Nevins Manor in Methuen, MA. From there he continued a huge correspondence with family and friends. Because of his sunny disposition he brought joy to any gathering at the Nevins. His family and the Marists are thankful for the skilled and compassionate care that he received there.

Services for Fr. Roland are private. Interment will be at Sacred Heart Cemetery, Andover, MA. Mass and a mercy meal will be held at a later date. In lieu of flowers Fr. Roland requested that donations be sent to Marist Ministries, The Lourdes Center, 698 Beacon Street, Boston, MA 02215. For online guestbook, please visit the funeral home website, <http://www.pollardfuneralhome.com>. The Kenneth H. Pollard Funeral Home is honored to serve the Lacasse Family and Marist Fathers.

# Comments

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“ I had the honor of knowing Fr Lacasse for 10 years and have many wonderful memories of our conversations. He loved to travel and was a avid letter writer. He was incredibly generous and I am going to miss him.

Michelle Lavery

Michelle Lavery - May 26, 2020 at 12:57 PM

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“ Fr. Lacasse was a great guy. I always enjoyed his story's on Sunday's at Mount Carmel. My husbands uncle is Father Andy Gosselin and they were together until the church closed. My husband and I were the last wedding there. Father Lacasse helped with all our Classes. Such great memories.



Dawn Gosselin - May 14, 2020 at 10:48 PM

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“ My late father, Florian Ouellette, and Father Lacasse's mother were first cousins. I send my sympathy to his family at this time of great sorrow. May Father Roland be blessed with eternal happiness in heaven as a reward for all the good he did during his priestly vocation. Alleluia!

James J. Ouellette - May 14, 2020 at 09:28 PM

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“ I knew Father Lacasse from Our Lady Of Mount Carmel Church in Methuen, he was the best.  
May he rest in the peace love and happiness of Heaven

Art M - May 13, 2020 at 09:14 PM

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“ Jason Houle lit a candle in memory of Fr. Roland Henry Lacasse, S.M.



Jason Houle - May 13, 2020 at 08:28 PM

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“ Lori Blackington Gaudet lit a candle in memory of Fr. Roland Henry Lacasse, S.M.



Lori Blackington Gaudet - May 13, 2020 at 07:50 PM

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“ I meet Father Roland a few years back I enjoy talking with him ,He will be miss  
Jocelyne Sirois

Jocelyne Sirois - May 13, 2020 at 07:03 PM

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“ Fr. Roland is now in the presence of the God he loved and served so well in life, especially his life as a priest. I will always remember how helpful he was when we prepared the Mass and celebrated the life of our youngest sibling, Michael, who had died so young and so unexpectedly. May you rest in perfect peace, Fr. Roland.  
Gratefully, Sr. M. Jane Newcomb



**Mary J. Newcomb** - May 13, 2020 at 04:21 PM

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“ Ronnie Demers lit a candle in memory of Fr. Roland Henry Lacasse, S.M.



**Ronnie Demers** - May 13, 2020 at 12:58 PM

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“ Pauline Belanger lit a candle in memory of Fr. Roland Henry Lacasse, S.M.



**Pauline Belanger** - May 13, 2020 at 12:46 PM



“ He's going to be missed. He was a wonderful man. So friendly and caring. Always had a smile for everyone. Rest in peace Father Roland!

**Pauline Belanger** - May 13, 2020 at 12:50 PM



“ Fr. Roland married us and baptized our son Chris. What a fun time when he was around. We could talk about anything, play cards and tennis, and get into wonderful spiritual talks. His articles for the Echoes of Lourdes were so inspirational. Even at Nevins he was a priest first, always there for others, no matter how he was feeling. He truly lived for the Lord and the Blessed Mother. “Thank you Lord for your servant Roland.” Lots of love, Corey and Steve

**Corey & Steve Tetreault** - May 13, 2020 at 06:56 PM



“ Our mothers were both residents at Nevins in 2002-2003. Fr. Roland visited his Mom most every day. They would play cards and sometimes he would just burst out in song, “Hello Dolly, well hello Dolly” waking up the residents sharing the day room and giving our mothers big smiles. My mother, Irene Schultz, loved him and how he always cheered them up. Fr. Roland celebrated her funeral and brought her to life in his homily...one happy soul to another.

Roland, I will miss your happy smiles, encouraging letters and the twinkle in your eye that was surely the Holy Spirit blessing God's people with joy.

Bev Eskel

**Beverly Eskel** - May 13, 2020 at 11:46 AM



“ Fr. Lacasse was one of my favorite priests. During one homily he mentioned ONE WORD that has stuck with me though all these passed years..That word is "ENTHUSIASM".

That's what he had and that's what he shared...

Bless you, Father Lacasse. Enjoy your time with Jesus.

Bob Mesiti

**Bob Mesiti** - May 13, 2020 at 10:27 AM



“ Fr. Roland was a warm and caring man, whose smile lit up a room. He and his sister Doris were very kind to the residents of Nevins. I know Doris and all the wonderful people who knew Fr. Roland will greatly miss him.

**Sharon M. Pollard** - May 13, 2020 at 08:34 AM

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“ Marian Bernier lit a candle in memory of Fr. Roland Henry Lacasse, S.M.



**Marian Bernier** - May 13, 2020 at 12:22 AM

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“ I remember when it was time to go to my First Confession. I wanted to get there early because I knew the line to see Father Lacasse would be so long. I was right too. He was so kind and caring. I'll always remember him fondly.

**Christine La Plume** - May 13, 2020 at 12:02 AM

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“ When I was at Sacred Heart School in the '80s, Father Lacasse would sometimes come out at recess and play football or Red Rover, Red Rover. All of the kids loved him! I was at Nevins a few years ago and I recognized him - & his smile - right away. We reminisced about Sacred Heart. He loved the parishioners as much as we loved him! I took this photo of him & his sister. Though they were part of the audience gathered for a glimpse of the Red Sox World Series trophy, they were more interested in just talking and laughing together!



**Melissa Fili** - May 12, 2020 at 08:40 PM



“ I remember visiting my in-laws at Nevins and my mother inlaw said there was a Priest here from Sacred Heart Church. I saw him and realized it was Father Roland



**Fran Fitzgerald** - May 12, 2020 at 08:33 PM

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“ Patricia Minghella lit a candle in memory of Fr. Roland Henry Lacasse, S.M.



**Patricia Minghella** - May 12, 2020 at 07:44 PM

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“ Patrick Ord lit a candle in memory of Fr. Roland Henry Lacasse, S.M.



**Patrick Ord** - May 12, 2020 at 07:36 PM

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“ Fr. Lacasse, you brighten everywhere you were. You were a great priest, your homilies were inspiring, and your smile was bright. I only have good memories of you while you were at Sacred Heart. Your devotion to your mother was outstanding. It seems that a day never went by that you didn't mention her and you visited her often. Rest in peace, Fr. Lacasse, you are surely in God's arms now.  
Arleen Bradley

**Arleen B Bradley** - May 12, 2020 at 07:25 PM

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“ Remembering Fr. Lacasse for his Sermons. He had a good sense of humor and liked to joke. He always followed through making sure everything was ok. His smile and sense of humor brightened up the room no matter where he went. We will miss him.

**Anne and David Martineau and irene Potvi** - May 12, 2020 at 07:24 PM



“ I had the pleasure of meeting Father when I volunteered at Nevins Nursing Home last year. I have since moved away but a friend saved this obituary as she knew how special he was to me and others.  
I would pop in when going by his room, leave the Pilot magazine and he always would say come in and sit. We would chat about the ways of the world and concerns for younger clergy who have so many added responsibilities managing multiple parishes. His warm smile and welcoming heart still remain with me.  
May he rest in the Peace of the Lord who he served so well.

**Jeanne Desmond** - November 20, 2020 at 11:27 AM