

Atchison Community Mourns Beloved Monk

(KAIR)--A well known and beloved figure in Atchison's Catholic Community was lost Monday when Father Gerard Senecal, of the Order Of Saint Benedict passed away.

According to an obituary from the Arensberg-Pruett funeral home, Father Gerard died fortified by the Sacraments and the Apostolic Pardon. His brother, Abbot Barnabas Senecal was able to be with him as he passed.

Father Gerard became a Benedictine monk in 1948 at the age of eighteen, professing vows one year later. He graduated from St. Benedict's College with a degree in mathematics in 1951, and was ordained to the priesthood in 1954.

He became President of Benedictine College in 1972, and served in that capacity for fifteen years.

Liz Wagner, owner of Jerry's Again restaurant, has very fond memories of Father Gerard saying that "He was a great guy...he has done a lot for Atchison, and the Catholic community of Atchison. He got something in his head, and he stuck to it. He made sure he went through with whatever he had going. His biggest concern was the Atchison Catholic Elementary School and Maur Hill-Mount Academy. Benedictine College was a big thing to him, that was his passion here in Atchison. He knew everybody, he knew your kids by name and he always greeted you outside of mass...he greeted you by name".

Wagner adds that it is a sad day for the Catholic community and Father Gerard will definitely be missed.

A vigil service, followed by visitation for Father Gerard Senecal will be held Sunday evening at 7:00 in the St. Benedict's Abbey church. The Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated at the church Monday morning at 10:30. He is survived by four siblings.

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