



TERTIUS ORDO REGULARIS SANCTI FRANCISCI
SECRETARIUS GENERALIS

December 29, 2025

Prot. N° 115/2025

**Subject: Death notice of Father Nicholas Polichnowski, TOR,
 Province of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, USA**



MOST REVEREND NICHOLAS POLICHNOWSKI, TOR

The Most Reverend Nicholas Polichnowski, T.O.R., a member of the TOR Province of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, was called home to the Lord on Thursday, October 23, 2025, at the age of 75, in his 51st year of religious life. Fr. Nicholas was born on September 30, 1950, in Pittsburgh. After graduating from high school, Fr. Nicholas attended West Virginia University, where he earned a bachelor's degree in chemistry with a minor in biology. He entered the Order in 1973 as a postulant, professed Simple Vows in 1974, and was ordained to the priesthood on November 15, 1977. He earned two master's degrees, including a Master of Divinity from Saint Francis Seminary in Loretto and a Master of Science in Chemistry from St. Joseph University in Philadelphia.

Following his ordination, Fr. Nicholas served one year in Brazil as a missionary. He began his priestly ministry teaching high school chemistry for nearly fifteen years at three institutions: Saint Francis Preparatory School in Spring Grove, PA; Bishop Egan High School in Fairless Hills, PA; and the United Nations International School in New York City. He also spent two years in the Republic of South Africa serving as a missionary. After his years as a high school chemistry teacher, his love for science motivated him to pursue a master's degree in nursing from Pace University and a Ph.D. in nursing from Johns Hopkins University.



In 2008, after completing his doctoral work, Fr. Nicholas taught nursing at Franciscan University of Steubenville until he was elected Minister Provincial in 2011. Eighteen months later, he was elected Minister General of the Third Order Regular, a position he held for six years. Following this role, owing to his dual citizenship, he stayed in Europe and resumed teaching nursing at Franciscan University's campus in Gaming, Austria. In 2023, he returned to Loretto to teach nursing online for Saint Francis University and used his medical experience and education to support our elderly friars.

Fr. Nicholas' life was a testament to a deep, abiding faith, expressed through his compassion as both a nurse and a priest. His caring nature and unwavering generosity shone through not only in his work as a nurse but also as a priest, friend, mentor, and all who knew him.

Fr. Nicholas was preceded in death by his parents, Edward and Frances (Martini) Polichnowski. He is survived by his brother, Ronald (Carol) Polichnowski; niece, Stephanie (Cameron) Martin; great nephews Ben and Cody Martin; cousins: Dolores and Paulette Parento, Timothy Park; friends, and his Franciscan Community.

Family and friends were invited to a viewing on Monday, October 27, 2025 from 4pm - 7pm at Saint Francis Friary at Mount Assisi in Loretto, PA. A Vigil Prayer Service was held at 7 pm. A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated at 11 am Tuesday, October 28, 2025 at Saint Francis Friary with the Very Reverend Joseph Lehman, T.O.R., as the principal celebrant. After the Mass, interment took place at the Franciscan Friars' Cemetery on the Saint Francis University campus in Loretto.

His legacy endures in the countless students he taught, the friars and faithful he guided, and the colleagues who experienced his gentle presence and compassionate care. With gratitude for a life so fully given in service to God and neighbor, the TOR Franciscan community commends Fr. Nicholas to eternal rest, trusting that he now shares in the joy and peace of the Resurrection.

May his soul and the souls of all the faithful departed, rest in peace.

Please offer the suffrages for the repose of his soul according to articles 61-67 of the *General Statutes*.

Faternally,

Fr. Shibin Kurian, TOR
Secretary General