

Fr Jack Soulsby SM

13.10.1931 ~ 22.4.2019



Phillip John Soulsby, known to all of us as 'Jack', was born in Saltash, Cornwall, in the UK, on 13th Oct 1931. His parents, Ronald and Margaret had two daughters as well as their son, Jack. Ronald was a boilermaker. Jack's formal education, 13 years of primary and secondary, took place in Saltash, Cornwall. The Soulsby family emigrated to Australia and settled in Sydney. Jack attended Sydney Technical College for five years and qualified as a civil engineer.

A newspaper item one day brought to Jack's notice the Aquinas Academy. Jack followed it up and was introduced to Thomistic philosophy by Doc Woodbury. With a fierce passion for something that we all know Jack is capable of he became engrossed in his studies at the Academy. This led Jack at 33 years of age to enter the Marist Fathers in February 1964. His profession was made in Feb 1966 and he was ordained in April 1969 at St Patrick's, Church Hill.

Fr Jack's first appointments were to Woodlawn and Burnie colleges followed by two years' parish work at St Pat's with short visits to Burnie and Hunters Hill. In 1975 he did a course at Nemi (Rome) during the first half of the year and completed the year acting as assistant to the vocations director. After another year at Woodlawn teaching, he returned to parish work at St Patrick's and Gladstone.

Fr Jack had become very involved in the charismatic renewal movement in the early seventies. More and more he was being drawn into a charismatic prayer and healing ministry. In 1978 he moved to Toongabbie where his special assignment was to give retreats and to animate prayer and healing gatherings.

In 1980 Fr Jack moved to Brisbane where, first from Ashgrove and later from Herston, he was involved in retreats, crusades, prayer and renewal ministry in Australia and abroad.

His ministry took him to ninety-one countries in crusade work mostly in Africa, Asia and Europe.

In 2018, Fr Jack's health declined and he took up residence at Holy Spirit Centre, Aspley, Brisbane, ever-cheerful and faith-filled, welcoming confreres and visitors until his final days.

On April 22, 2019, he died peacefully at St Vincent's Hospital, Brisbane, four days before his golden anniversary of priesthood.

May he rest in well-deserved peace.