



## Msgr. Vincent John Fecher

February 10, 1924 - March 8, 2012

Msgr. Vincent John Fecher, who died in San Antonio on March 8, 2012, was born in Illinois in 1924 and grew up in Missouri. To attain his boyhood dream of becoming a missionary priest, he began training with the Divine Word Missionaries SVD at the age of fourteen, and was ordained by them in 1950, just two months short of his 27th birthday. However, instead of a coveted overseas assignment in some "bush mission", he was sent to Rome for three years of graduate studies in church history at the Jesuit Gregorian University, to prepare him for a lifelong career as a seminary professor. Upon completing his doctoral studies in church history, he was set to teaching philosophy at the Society's major seminary at Techny Illinois. His teaching career there spanned five years, during which time he acquired a Master's degree in philosophy by attending five sessions of summer school at the Catholic University of America in Washington DC. For five semesters he also pursued psychology courses in night school at Loyola University of Chicago. In 1959, his superiors sent him on what was to be a two-year loan to the Divine Word Major Seminary in the Philippine Islands. In fact this assignment lasted five years, including three years as prefect of scholastics and dean of theologians. At the end of this time he was called to Rome to serve as English language secretary at the SVD international headquarters. The Roman years lasted from 1964 to 1974, and included two terms as secretary general of the order. On the side, he was also involved in work for the Holy See. For example, he helped on Synod of Bishops staff for the three sessions of 1967, 1969, and

1971. On occasion he did some work for the Propaganda Fide Congregation and for the Pontifical Commission Justice and Peace. Before leaving Rome, he completed work on a doctorate in philosophy at the Angelicum University. Later while serving in a San Antonio parish, he earned an M.A. in gerontology from Trinity University, making a total of two Ph.D.'s and two M.A.'s from four different universities. However, he never used any degree letters behind his name. During his ten years of work in Italy, from 1964 to 1974, he spent his Sunday mornings at a worker's parish on the rim of Rome. He said it was here that he felt closest to Christ, at the altar, in the pulpit, in the confessional. Therefore, with no hope of full-time pastoral or missionary work as a member of his religious family, he obtained permission from the Holy See to be incardinated in the San Antonio Archdiocese as a parish priest. From 1974 to 1999 when he retired at the canonical age of 75, Fecher served five parishes: Weimar, Our Lady of Grace in San Antonio, Uvalde, Gonzales, and Hondo. In retirement, he continued to help out as called upon by his brother priests until "the nightfall, when it was no longer possible to work". May he rest in peace.

## SERVICES

A Rosary will begin at 9:00 AM on Saturday, March 10, 2012 at St. Elizabeth Ann Seaton Catholic Church, 8500 Cross Mountain Trail, San Antonio, Texas 78255, followed by the Mass of Resurrection at 9:30 AM. A graveside service will be held on Saturday, March 10, 2012 at 2:30 PM at St. Michael's Cemetery in Weimar, Texas.