



Fr. Stafford Poole C.M.

March 6, 1930 - November 1, 2020

Father Richard Stafford Poole, C.M. died on Nov. 1, 2020, at age 90. He was a Catholic priest and a renowned historian and author with expertise in early colonial Mexico. He was born to Joseph Poole and Beatrice (Smith) Poole on March 6, 1930, in Oxnard, California, and raised in North Hollywood. He joined the Congregation of the Mission of Saint Vincent de Paul, taking his vows in 1949. He studied at St. Mary's of the Barrens Seminary in Perryville, Missouri, earning a bachelor's degree in 1952. He completed his theological studies there and was ordained in 1956. He received a master's degree in Spanish literature in 1958 and then, in 1961, his doctorate in history, both from St. Louis University.

Stafford made an impressive contribution to the field of Catholicism in Colonial Latin America, as well as his works on the history of the Congregation of the Mission and the American Catholic Church. Included in his life's work were 14 books, 23 publications in anthologies and encyclopedias, and 62 journal articles. His books include *Pedro Moya de Contreras: Catholic Reform and Royal Power in New Spain, 1571-1591*; *Juan de Ovando: Governing the Spanish Empire in the Reign of Philip II*; *Our Lady of Guadalupe: The Origins and Sources of a Mexican National Symbol, 1531-1797*; *The Guadalupan Controversies in Mexico*; and *Church and Slave in Perry County, Missouri, 1818-1865* (with Douglas J. Slawson).

Stafford was also a teacher, academic dean, and seminary rector. His teaching career included Cardinal Glennon College in St. Louis; St. Mary's of the Barrens Seminary in Perryville; and St. John's Seminary College in Camarillo, CA. For almost twenty years, he presided at Mass on Sunday at St. Jude's parish in Westlake Village, California. Starting In 1990 he moved back to Los Angeles to the Vincentian Residence, and he devoted much of his time to his research and speaking at conferences around the world. He had many interests including travel, clock repair, genealogy, and old movies.

He is survived by his nieces Monica Smith (Mike) of Gaborone, Botswana, and Michelle Emerle (Gary) of Boston, Massachusetts, and his great nieces and nephews. He died at the Apostle of Charity Residence in Perryville. Services were private. He was laid to rest at the Vincentian Community Cemetery with Fr. Patrick McDevitt C.M. officiating. Donations in his honor will be gratefully accepted by Vincent Gray Academy in East St. Louis, IL, and the Apostle of Charity Residence, St. Mary's of the Barrens, in Perryville, MO.

Online condolences may be made at www.fordandyoungfuneralhome.com.

Ford and Young Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements.

Cemetery Details

Vincentian Community Cemetery

Perryville, MO

Perryville, MO 63775

Tribute Wall



“ *Fr. Stafford Poole C.M.*

October 20, 2023 at 02:54 AM



“ *Fr. Stafford Poole C.M.*

October 20, 2023 at 01:44 AM



“ *Father Stafford Poole was the Rector of St John's College in Camarillo CA when I was a college seminarian there 1979-1983. I loved him. A good priest, a great lecturer (with no notes!) and a wonderful mentor. One year I remember meeting alone with him to address my annual review. He told me, "Damian, some of your associates here consider you naive. I do not. Let me give you my definition of naivety, he said. Naivety is the inability to recognize the presence of evil. I do not believe you're naive." I have never forgotten him telling me that. I also remember him telling a group of us, "A liberal arts college education should be impractical. Its purpose is to teach the student how to think, not how to do a job, however important that also may be."*

God rest his wonderful soul.

*One of his old seminary students,
Damian Gennette, MDiv*

Damian Gennette - July 29, 2021 at 12:47 AM



“ Rudy Garcia lit a candle in memory of Fr. Stafford Poole C.M.



Rudy Garcia - May 09, 2021 at 10:43 PM



“ *Stafford Poole was my uncle. He was a very kind and caring man. In addition to all of his accomplishments in research and teaching, he enjoyed traveling the world, photography, antique clock repair, genealogy, and old movies. He grew up in North Hollywood at a time when all of his neighbors and friends had some connection to the movie industry. As a result, he had many fascinating stories, and he was a great storyteller. He was adored by our family and is dearly missed.*

Michelle Emerle

Michelle Emerle - November 11, 2020 at 09:18 PM



If you wish to make a donation in his honor, Stafford was a proud supporter of two charities: Vincent Gray Academy, P.O. Box 428, St. Louis, IL, 62202, and St. Vincent Meals on Wheels, 2303 Miramar St, Los Angeles, CA, 90057.

Michelle Emerle - November 11, 2020 at 09:27 PM



Minor correction: Vincent Gray Academy is located in East St. Louis, IL.

Michelle Emerle - November 14, 2020 at 01:48 PM

JD

“ *Father Poole taught at the St. Louis seminary, the Vincentian seminary in Perryville, and the Los Angeles seminary. He was certainly the best history teacher I have ever had. His classes were always well-prepared and he could be a spell-binding lecturer. He was also a productive and influential scholar. May God bless him, his family, and the Vincentian family!*

John Donovan - November 10, 2020 at 11:32 PM

RH

“ *Fr. Poole has always been one of the 10 most influential people in my life. He inspired me as a teacher, personal adviser, and gave me the desire to see the world. I went into education and taught history, became a superintendent of schools for 30 years, have travelled to all parts of the world, and have been happily married for 48 years. I owe much of this success to the people in my life like Father Poole. I am so thankful our lives crossed at a very formative time.*
Rick Hoffman (former Vincentian student)

Rick Hoffman - November 07, 2020 at 09:01 AM