

[Obituary from the Chicago New Catholic World]

Fr. Gerard Weber, Catechetical Writer

Father Gerald Weber, a priest of the Archdiocese of Chicago and a prolific writer of religious education texts, died Dec. 22 in Los Angeles. He was 91 years old.

Father Weber last served in Chicago from 1968-72 as pastor of St. Columbanus Parish on Chicago's South Side.

Father Weber served as assistant pastor at St. Carthage Parish from 1958-68, where he mentored Wilton Gregory, a non-Catholic, African-American student attending St. Carthage School, who later was ordained a priest, served as auxiliary bishop of Chicago and is the current Archbishop of Atlanta.

In 1949, he founded Apostolate, a magazine for chaplains in the specialized Catholic Action movements, and edited this publication until 1954. In 1952, Father Weber co-authored with James Killgallon a manual for chaplains in the popular Christian Family Movement and in 1958 the two co-authored the adult instruction book, "Life in Christ," which solidified their reputation as best-selling catechetical writers.

During the 1960s, Father Weber co-authored a book for the Archdiocese of Chicago's Liturgical Press that outlined sermons, many of which were later reprinted by other religious publishers. He coauthored "Beyond the Commandments" for Herder and Herder with Killgallon. He also created the series "Word and Worship" with Killgallon and Sister Mary Michael O'Shaunessey that included eight texts and teacher's manuals used in archdiocesan elementary schools and parish religious education classes.

During that same period, he coauthored or edited four books for children and parents on preparing for the sacraments for the Catholic educational publisher Benzinger, and in the early 1970s, he co-authored that company's book on the religious program "The Word is Life." By 1972, Father Weber was working full time as a writer of religious education texts.

Father Weber was the founder of ACTA Foundation, an organization created to serve anyone who wanted to contribute to the catechetical writings of the Catholic Church. ACTA Foundation was eventually sold to a Catholic publisher and is now ACTA Publications.

Father Weber was a Chicago native and a graduate of the Chicago public school system, Archbishop Quigley Preparatory Seminary and St. Mary of the Lake/Mundelein Seminary. Ordained in 1943, he served as assistant pastor for the next seven years at St. Nicholas Parish, Evanston, then as assistant pastor at Immaculate Conception (1950-52) and St. Francis Xavier (1952-58).

Father Weber is survived by a brother, Donald, and a sister, Rose.

