

REV. RICHARD DOCHSTADER, 54

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Rev. Richard Dochstader, 54, associate pastor at St. Mary Immaculate Parish in Plainfield, whose outgoing personality was embraced by the parishioners of the six churches he served in the Roman Catholic Diocese of Joliet, died Friday, Sept. 5, in a Chicago hotel of a heart attack. He was visiting the city to say a funeral mass the morning he died, family members said. One of nine children, Father Dochstader was born and raised in Sarnia, Ontario. After he studied at Sacred Heart Seminary in Melrose Park, Maryknoll College in Glen Ellyn and the University of St. Michael in Toronto, he was ordained into the Missionaries of St. Charles on May 31, 1975. He served churches in British Columbia before coming to St. Charles Borromeo Parish in Melrose Park. In 1983, he began working in the Joliet Diocese as a parochial vicar at St. Joseph Parish in Lockport before he moved to St. Joseph Parish in Bradley, Ill., in 1985. Two years later he became a diocesan priest and served at St. Anthony Parish in Frankfort in 1989 and then St. Petronille Parish in Glen Ellyn from 1990 until he joined St. Margaret Mary Parish in Naperville in 1993. In 1991, he became a U.S. citizen. "He loved working with the people here in the Joliet diocese. He was extremely happy with everything here," said his brother Gerry. Since 1998, he served St. Mary's Parish, the largest parish in the seven-county diocese with 5,938 families. "He will be remembered for his love of people," said Rev. Tony Nugent. "He lifted the spirit of the parishioners." Father Rick, as he was called by parishioners, was in a constant good mood, his brother said. "To know him was to love him. I don't ever remember Richard not smiling. Usually he had everybody laughing. He could turn a frown into a smile in two seconds," he said. Other survivors include his mother, Florence; three other brothers, Larry, Bill and Jim; and four sisters, Bonnie Griffin, Kathy Brousseau, Diane Belling and Elizabeth. Services were held.

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