

Msgr. Grill, founding pastor in Chatsworth, dies at 92

By **HOLLY ANDRES** | handres@scng.com | Daily News

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The founding pastor of St. John Eudes Roman Catholic Church in Chatsworth, the Rev. Msgr. Philip Grill, died from complications of Alzheimer's disease June 6 at St. John of God Retirement and Care in Los Angeles. He was 92.

Grill was the the associate pastor at Our Lady of the Valley in Canoga Park when he was tapped by the late Cardinal James Francis McIntyre of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Los Angeles to start the parish of St. John Eudes in May 1963 at Mason Street and Lassen Avenue.

His religious career, however, was tainted in 2004 when the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Los Angeles released a report naming 211 priests in the archdiocese accused of molesting minors since 1930. Grill was on the list with one accusation from 1965-66. He was never charged with a crime.

“He had an eye out for lay potential to become more active in ministries. He found a lot of leadership here,” said Msgr. Peter Nugent from St. John of Eudes. “He was very reserved, kind of quiet, but very dedicated to his work.”

Grill was ordained April 21, 1943, in the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Los Angeles. Previous to establishing St. John Eudes, he served at All Saints in Los Angeles, St. Cyprian in Lakewood and St. Matthew's in Long Beach. After his retirement in 1989 he assisted at San Roque Roman Catholic

Church in Santa Barbara.

“Father Grill was always serious about the parish,” said founding parish member Gene Walinski.

Grill was a very good singer back in the days when the Mass was said in Latin, said Walinski, who was a longtime church choir member.

Grill also was well-known for being a regular ocean swimmer and he also enjoyed camping.

Philip Lawrence Grill was born on May 13, 1916, in Ogden, Utah. His family moved to San Pedro when he was 4 and later to Long Beach. He graduated from Loyola High School.

He is survived by a sister, Emilie Hurd, and a brother, Gilbert Grill.

A Vigil Mass will be held at 7 p.m. Tuesday and a funeral Mass at 11 a.m. Wednesday at St. John Eudes Roman Catholic Church, 9901 Mason Ave., Chatsworth.

Grill will be buried at All Souls Roman Catholic Cemetery, 4400 Cherry Ave., Long Beach.

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