



## *About Our Patron*

### *St Philip Benizi*

1233-1285

Servite Cardinal and preacher

**Feast day:** August 23

Born in Florence, Italy, to a noble family, he was educated in Paris and Padua where he earned a doctorate in medicine and philosophy. He practiced medicine for some time, but in 1253 he joined the Servite Order in Florence. He served as a lay brother until 1259, when his superiors directed him to be ordained. Philip soon became known as one of the foremost preachers of his era, becoming master of novices at Siena in 1262 and then superior of several friaries and prior general of the Servites. Reforming the order with zeal and patience, he was named as a possible candidate to become pope by the influential Cardinal Ottobuoni just before the election to choose a successor to Pope Clement IV. This possibility was so distressing to Philip that he fled and hid in a cave until the election was finally over. He attended the Council of Lyons which brought about a brief reunion with the Orthodox, worked to bring peace between the Guelphs and the Ghibellines in 1279, assisted St. Juliana in founding the third order of the Servites, and in 1284, dispatched the first Servite missionaries to the Far East. He retired to a small Servite house in Todi, where he died on August 22. He was canonized in 1671.

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## *Father Jaime Diaz*

### *His Life and Ministry*

Fr. Jaime Diaz was born in Colombia, South America, on Jan. 6, 1932. He was ordained priest in Bogotá, Colombia on December 6, 1955. In his long ministry he has been Pastor, Seminary and University professor, writer, co-Director and Professor of the Latin-American Institutes for Liturgy (Medellin) and for Pastoral Studies (Quito). In 1999 he decided to devote his life especially, but not exclusively, to the Hispanic Ministry in the USA, responding to the call of John Paul II for cooperation among the sister churches of the Americas. He was Director of the Hispanic Mission Our Lady of Guadalupe in Fellsmere, Florida. He started his ministry in Potteet on June 2, 2003. He is now a permanent legal resident in the USA.

Father Jaime Diaz' **studies** are prolific. Besides Philosophy and Theology at the Seminary in Bogotá, he made special studies in Pastoral Theology and Catechesis in the **International Institute Lumen Vitae** in Brussels, Belgium and at the **Catholic Institute** in Paris France; Liturgy at the **German Liturgical Institute** in Trier, Germany; Adult Education at the **Sorbonne University** in Paris, France; as well as Audiovisual Education at the **CREC (Center for research in education and communication)** in Lyon, France. He speaks several languages.

Father Diaz served as President of the **World Council for Curriculum and Instruction (WCCI)**; is founding member of **Peace Brigades International**, of the **Latin-American Commission for Church History (CEHILA)**, of **Defense for Children International** and of the **World Forum for Child welfare**. He founded and directed for 27 years, **CODECAL**, an organization devoted to human rights, community, social, and religious education in Latin America. Father Diaz' **publications** include the following: articles in international professional magazines; educational materials for religious and social education of adults; school religion textbooks; **"The Amen of the Mass"**, **"The Liturgical Renewal on the way"** **"To Save the Planet, a moral challenge"**; **"Peace, a task for all"**; Co-author of **"The Teachings of History as a Strategy of Regional Integration"** and of **"Camilo Torres Restrepo, a prophet for our time"**.

The Colombian Government honored Father Diaz with the awards **"Simon Bolivar"** and **"Camilo Torres"** for his service to education.

# *The History of the St. Philip Benizi Parish*

## **The Early History of our Parish:**

- ✧ In 1896 the first church was built in Rossville by Rev. J.A. Lagier. Rev. Lagier served as the parish priest for the following 13 years until he passed away in 1909.
- ✧ In 1912 the Claretian Fathers took charge of the spiritual needs of the Catholic community and operation of the church. They served for the next 19 years from 1912 to 1931. The first priest was Father Tort.
- ✧ In 1914 the first church was a public school building.

## **The community changes and grows, so does our parish:**

- ✧ In 1917 the land for the current cemetery, *Madre Dolorosa*, was acquired.



In 1931, Rev. Jose C. Cabrera, a refugee from Mexico, was appointed resident pastor and served for 13 years from 1931 to 1944

## Our Original Church building is erected:



The Immaculate Heart of Mary Church

- ✧ In 1944, the Holy Fathers took over spiritual needs of the church.
- ✧ Father Wenzel Lieb, served from June 1944 to September 1947, He departed and later returned to serve the community from February 1949 to May 1949.
- ✧ Father Clement Gozenia, served from September 1947 to July 1948
  
- ✧ Father John J. Fickinger, served from August 1948 to January 1949. He left and returned to service June 1949 to September 1952.
- ✧ Father Henry W. Erner, served from October 1952 to August 1955
  
- ✧ September 1955, Rev. Cayetno Romero took over as Parish priest and served from September 1955 to January 1965. During Father Romero's time as parish priest the current parish hall was built (1960).
  
- ✧ In 1965, Father Joseph L. Van Winkel was assigned to our parish. He served from February 1965 to May 1966.

## A New Larger Modern Church is built:

- ✚ In July 1966, Father Paul Van Houtteghem, was assigned as Parish priest and he served from July 1966 to November 1976.



Fr. Paul Van Houtteghem CICM  
Born: November 19, 1922  
Died: January 19, 2001

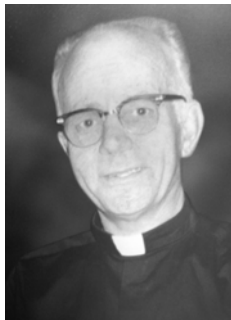
- ✚ During his time as parish priest the following was accomplished:

- † October 1966, the first fall festival was held to raise funds to build a larger church.
- † In 1968, father Paul was given permission to consult an architect. Also a grant was obtained from the Catholic Extension Society in Chicago to cover costs of constructing a larger church.
- † February 28, 1969, bidding was opened for the awarding of the construction contract. The contract was awarded to James Cude for \$ 79,700.00.
- † March 1, 1970, the newly built St. Philip Benizi Church was dedicated.

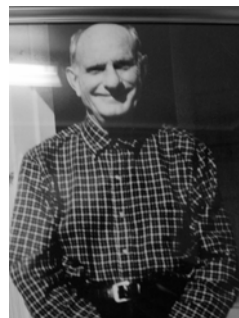


## Our Parish adopts a new annual event:

- ✚ November 1976, Father Michael Maertens was appointed as Parish priest. He served the community from November 1976 to May 1983.
  - † During his time as a St Philip's parish priest Father Michael organized the annual Bike-a-thon to help raise money for the St. Jude's Children's Hospital. The tradition of this annual event continues to be held.



Rev. A. Michael Maertens CICM  
Born: July 4, 1918  
Died: May 29, 1983



Father Felix Avau

- ✚ June 1983, Father Felix Avau was appointed as parish priest. He served from June 1983 until May 2003

## The Diocese takes over and appoints a new priest:

✎ June 2, 2003 Father Jaime Diaz joined our parish to serve as parish priest.

† Thanks to his efforts: Our parish was graced by the presence of his Eminence Cardinal Pedro Rubiano on February 19, 2004



Left: Cardinal Pedro Rubiano of Columbia officiates over a special mass at St Philips; the Knights of Columbus were also present for the rituals of the Mass.

✎ Archbishop Patrick Flores presides over confirmation mass.