



Edgar Conrad Cowart

April 13, 1939 - November 19, 2025

Father Edgar "Conrad" Cowart Dies at 86

Father Edgar "Conrad" Cowart, a priest of the Diocese of St. Augustine known for his Marian devotion, love for the Eucharist and gentle pastoral care, died Wednesday, Nov. 19, after an extended illness.

Born and raised in Jacksonville, Father Cowart was the son of Edgar Cowart and Susan O'Hara Cowart and one of two children. His sister, Gail Middleton, survives him, along with his nephew Rob Middleton, both of Jacksonville; his niece, Pam McClain of Hattiesburg, Miss.; and her six children - three grandnieces and three grandnephews - whom he spoke of frequently and with great affection. He baptized the last four after his ordination to the priesthood.

He was a lifelong member of St. Paul Parish in Riverside. He attended St. Paul Catholic School, where the Sisters of St. Joseph nurtured his early love for the faith. He graduated from Bolles in 1957 and later earned an English degree from Rollins College.

Before entering seminary, he served in the Coast Guard, taught in public schools and at Bishop Kenny High School, and worked in his family's construction, hardware and mini-storage businesses. Active in faith formation at Our Lady Star of the Sea Parish, he discerned a call to the priesthood

through Cursillo, a rosary prayer group and pilgrimages to Fatima, Medjugorje and the Holy Land.

Father Cowart began formation at Sacred Heart Seminary in Hales Corners and completed his studies at St. Vincent de Paul Regional Seminary in Boynton Beach. He was ordained on May 11, 1996, by Bishop John J. Snyder at the Cathedral Basilica of St. Augustine.

His first assignment was as parochial vicar at Sacred Heart Parish in Jacksonville from June 17, 1996, to June 2001 and at Assumption Parish from 2001 to 2003. On Sept. 15, 2003, Bishop Victor Galeone appointed him chaplain of Shands Hospital in Gainesville, a role he held until Dec. 1, 2008, ministering compassionately to patients, families and hospital staff. Beginning in 2004, he served as administrator and later pastor of St. Edward Parish in Starke. Bishop Felipe Estévez granted Father Cowart senior priest status on April 13, 2016.

Remembered for his compassion, steady prayer life and devotion to Mary, Father Cowart often said his vocation came through her gentle guidance. Once she had his attention, he said, she led him to her Son and the priesthood.

His love of all things Jacksonville - especially the St. Johns River and his boats - brought him joy throughout his life and were among the pastimes he treasured most.

A Vigil Service will be held on Monday, Nov. 24, from 5:30 to 7 p.m. Father John Reynolds will lead the rosary at 6 p.m., at the Basilica of the Immaculate Conception, 121 E. Duval Street, Jacksonville.

The Funeral Mass will be celebrated Tuesday, Nov. 25, at 3 p.m. at the

Basilica. Bishop Erik Pohlmeier will be the principal celebrant, and Father Edward Murphy will serve as homilist.

A light reception will follow Mass

Previous Events

Rosary

NOV **24.** 6:00 PM - 7:00 PM (ET)

Basilica of the Immaculate Conception
121 East Duval Street
Jacksonville, FL 32202

Funeral Mass

NOV **25.** 3:00 PM - 4:00 PM (ET)

Basilica of the Immaculate Conception
121 East Duval Street
Jacksonville, FL 32202

Tribute Wall

GS

“ Greg & Maggie Smith lit a candle in memory of Edgar Conrad Cowart



Greg & Maggie Smith - November 29, 2025 at 08:50 PM

HW

“ Hambleton, Tomaszycski, and Wilcox purchased the Strength & Solace Spray for the family of Edgar Conrad Cowart.



Hambleton, Tomaszycski, and Wilcox - November 25, 2025 at 09:04 AM

CG

“ It is with sadness to I learn of Conrad Cowart's passing. We taught English across the hall from one another at Englewood High School in the 1960s. I will always remember the day President Kennedy was shot and what comfort Conrad offered his students and colleagues.

Carolyn Gentry - November 25, 2025 at 08:34 AM

DH

Dis he teach English at Wolfson Sr. High in 1970?

Dianne Hughey - November 25, 2025 at 08:02 PM

DH

He was so special to me in my junior year in high school. He went to Hawaii in 1969 and invited me to join him. But by the time I got in invitations I was engaged to be married so I turned him down. He was a wonderful teacher. I had no idea he went into the priesthood. I'm also catholic.. may ou God Bless him a Ind hold him in his arms as he arrives in heaven.

Dianne Hughey - November 25, 2025 at 08:10 PM

DG

He did teach English at Wolfson. I did visit him in Hawaii in the summer of 1969 for 3 days. I knew him since 1968. We rode bikes together and went on his boat. It's hard to imagine that he's gone. Lots of memories.

David Griswold - November 26, 2025 at 09:21 AM

SR

Father Conrad Cowart was a true friend, a boater, and a faithful companion. He brought warmth, kindness, and steady friendship to the people around him, and he made life better simply by being part of it.

He loved the water, and in many ways it reflected who he was — calm, strong, and full of peace. The time spent with him, whether in conversation, in laughter, or out boating, created memories that will stay with us. We mourn his loss, but we also give thanks for his life, his friendship, and the joy he brought to others. He will be deeply missed and fondly remembered. May he rest in peace.

Stuart Rutland - April 14 at 10:24 PM

CF

“*Christine L Green And Family lit a candle in memory of Edgar Conrad Cowart*”



Christine I Green and family - November 23, 2025 at 10:08 PM



“ *Beautiful Dreams* was purchased for the family of Edgar Conrad Cowart.



November 23, 2025 at 02:06 PM



“ *The Kurtz Family* planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Edgar Conrad Cowart.

The Kurtz Family - November 23, 2025 at 02:06 PM