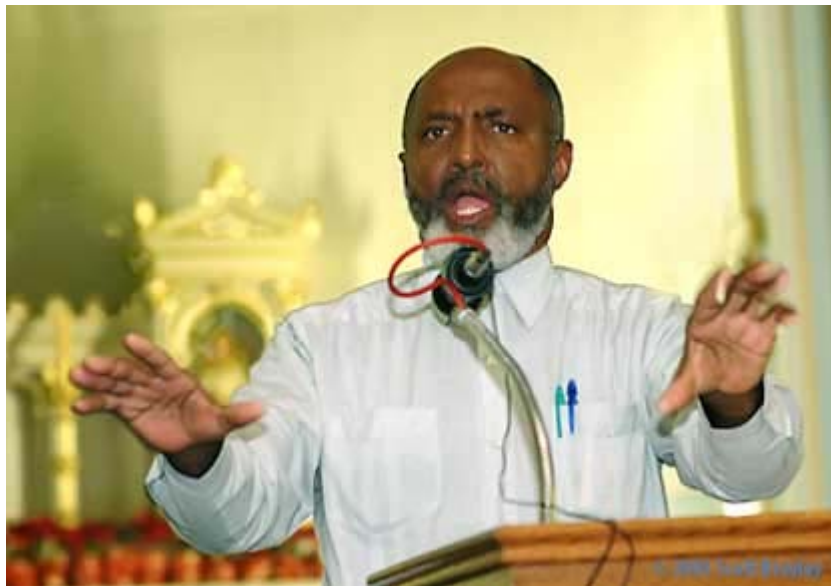


In loving memory of Father Dr. Gerard Jean-Juste



Sunrise: February 7, 1946
Sunset: May 27, 2009

Homecoming Service
Saturday, June 6, 2009
11am
at

Notre Dame d`Haiti Catholic Church

110 NE 62nd St.
Miami, FL 33138

Biography

Father Gerard Jean-Juste was born on Feb 7, 1946 in Deupas Cavillion, Haiti to parents Gesner Jean-Juste and Marie Joute. He was one of eight children. He attended primary school in O'Cayes, Haiti and attended secondary in Port au Prince. After completing school, he traveled to Montreal, Canada to attend a Seminary to pursue his calling in the ministry.

In 1971 he became the first Haitian ordained in the US in a ceremony at the Church of St. Avila in Brooklyn, where he was a deacon. Shortly after he returned to Haiti and worked in a remote parish. An adherent of liberation theology, he regarded political activity and service to the poor as his priestly mission. He was forced to flee to the US later that year when he refused to sign an oath of loyalty to the Duvalier dictatorship.

While living & working at the Cathedral of the Holy Cross in Boston, he earned a bachelor's degree in engineering technology from [Northeastern University](#) in 1974 and a second degree in civil engineering from Northeastern in 1977.

Father Jean-Juste moved to Miami in 1978 to work as a volunteer at the Haitian Refugee Center, which at that time was primarily funded by the Christian Community Services Agency (CCSA). The CCSA treated the Haitian Refugee issue as merely charity for poor people in need of help. "Jeri" as he came to be called affectionately by the Haitian community, challenged that assumption pointing out that Haitian Refugees were being discriminated against by the US government for racial and political reasons. Doing so, he challenged the US's support for Haiti's dreaded Duvalier dictatorship. Unfortunately, this drew the ire of the CCSA which then attempted to fire Fr. Jean-Juste because of this challenge to US government policies. In response, the Haitian community and its allies established a new refugee center under Fr. Jean-Juste's leadership that went on to successfully challenge, in both the streets and in the courts, the governments discriminatory practices against Haitians.

During this period Fr. Jean-Juste could be seen leading countless demonstrations, committing civil disobedience and going to jail to further the cause.

With the fall of Duvalier Fr. Jean-Juste helped organize Veye Yo, a grass-roots organization that continued the struggle for democracy in Haiti and for the rights of Haitians here in the US. In 1990, Fr. Jean-Juste returned to Haiti where he helped prepare the groundwork for the victory of Haiti's 1st democratically elected president Jean-Bertrand Aristide. When President Aristide was overthrown by a military coup after only 7 months of office, Fr. Jean-Juste went into hiding for over 3 years, organizing underground against the military regime. When President Aristide returned to power in 1994, Fr. Jean-Juste resumed his work as pastor of the Church of St. Claire in Port au Prince where he operated a free soup kitchen to feed the poor.

When President Aristide was overthrown again in 2007, Fr. Jean-Juste again refused to flee the country and became a target of the newly installed Latortue Dictatorship. During this time Fr. Jean-Juste helped organize protests against the regimes repression and as a result he was jailed twice. During his second arrest Fr. Jean-juste was beaten and denied medical treatment in prison where he developed Leukemia. Amnesty International declared him a "prisoner of conscience." Only after an international campaign was organized demanding his freedom was Fr. Jean-Juste released and allowed to come to Miami to seek medical treatment. In November 2007 Fr. Jean-Juste returned to court in Haiti to answer the remaining charges against him. Questioned about weapons, he told the judge, "My rosary is my only weapon." All charges against him were dropped.

Over the past several years Father Jean-Juste returned to Haiti as much as his health permitted, continuing to promote democracy and justice while providing leadership for the soup kitchen at St. Claire Catholic Church in Delamas (Petite Place Cazeau), Haiti.

Fr. Jean-Juste last resting place was in Jackson Memorial Hospital where he died the evening of May 27, 2009.

Prayer for Release of Political Prisoners

by Father Gerard Jean-Juste

Believing in God, we prisoners should always be grateful to you. O, God, it is true!

Some of us prisoners may have misused your gifts. Some of us tried to make others around us appreciate your gifts, be happy, and share. But they have not listened.

Instead, they handcuffed us, your messengers, like they handcuffed some of your prophets, such as John the Baptizer, your own son Jesus Christ, and many apostles. They, too, had tried to share the message, but the message put them in jail. While the body was in jail, the work continued, and we, too, spread the message of life.

Out of jail many of us do not find time to meet you- that's what we experience in jail. So many people never prayed before and now not only do they pray, they're singing! They become new people.

You God, want to give us total liberation. That's the reason why we say to you, God: we appreciate life in prison to bring comfort to our brothers and sisters wherever they are.

Today we pray for all political prisoners, not only in Haiti, but also all over the world.

May we by your power, God, find justice and be released from jail to public life. May we renew the good work and not be afraid, but with love in our heart for everyone, spread the message of freedom and love. In the name of God.

Amen

Prayer from Pere Gerard Jean-Juste, January 2006, while in prison in Port-au-Prince, Haiti.

Revolutionary Haitian Priest, Gerard Jean-Juste, Presente!

by Bill Quigley

Though Haitian priest Father Gerard Jean-Juste died May 27, 2009, at age 62, in Miami from a stroke and breathing problems, he remains present to millions. Justice-loving people world-wide mourn his death and celebrate his life. Pere Jean-Juste worked uncompromisingly for justice for Haitians and the poor, both in Haiti and in the U.S.

Pere Jean-Juste was a Jesus-like revolutionary. In jail and out, he preached liberation of the poor, release of prisoners, human rights for all, and a fair distribution of wealth. A big muscular man with a booming voice and a frequent deep laugh, he wore a brightly colored plastic rosary around his neck and carried another in his pocket. Jailed for nearly a year in Haiti by the U.S. supported coup government which was trying to silence him, Amnesty International called him a Prisoner of Conscience.

Jean-Juste was a scourge to the unelected coup governments of Haiti, who served at the pleasure, and usually the direction, of the U.S. government. He constantly challenged both the powers of Haiti and the U.S. to stop killing and starving and imprisoning the poor. In the U.S. he fought against government actions which deported black Haitians while welcoming Cubans and Nicaraguans and others. In Haiti he called for democracy and respect and human rights for the poor.

Pere Jean-Juste was sometimes called the most dangerous man in Haiti. That was because he was not afraid to die. His computer screen saver was a big blue picture of Mary, the mother of Jesus. "Every day I am ready to meet her." He once told me, when death threats came again. "I will not stop working for justice because of their threats. I am looking forward to heaven."

Jean-Juste was a literally a holy terror to the unelected powers of Haiti and the elected but unaccountable powers of the U.S. Every single day, in jail or out, he said Mass, read the psalms and jubilantly prayed the rosary. In Port au Prince he slept on the floor of his church, St. Claire, which provided meals to thousands of starving children and adults every week. In prison, he organized local nuns to bring him hundreds of plastic rosaries which he gave to fellow prisoners and then lead them in daily prayer.

When Pere Jean-Juste began to speak, to preach really, about justice for the poor and the wrongfully imprisoned, restless crowds drew silent. Listening to him preach was like feeling the air change before a thunderstorm sweeps in. He slowly raised his arms. He spread his powerful hands to punctuate his intensifying words. Minutes passed as the Bible and the Declaration of Human Rights and today's news were interspersed. Justice for the poor. Freedom for those in prison. Comfort for those who mourn. The thunder was rolling now. Crowds were cheering now. Human rights for everyone. Justice for Haiti. Justice for Haiti. Justice for Haiti.

To the rich, Jean-Juste preached that the man with two coats should give one to the woman with none. But, unlike most preachers, he did not stop there. Because there were many people with no coats, Pere Jean-Juste said, no one could justly claim ownership of a second coat. In fact, those who held onto second coats were actually thieves who stole from those who had no coats. In Haiti and the U.S., where there is such a huge gap between the haves and the have nots, there was much stealing by the rich from the poor. This was revolutionary preaching.

During the day, people streamed to his church to ask for help. Mothers walked miles from Cite de Soleil to his parish to beg him to help them bury their children. Widows sought help. Families with sons in prison asked for a private word. Small packets of money and food were quietly given away. Visitors from rural Haiti, people seeking jobs, many looking for food, police officers who warned of new threats, political organizers with ideas how to challenge the unelected government, reporters and people seeking special prayers - all came all the time.

Every single night when he was home at his church in Port au Prince Pere Jean-Juste led a half hour public rosary for anyone who showed up. Most of the crowd was children and older women who came in part because the church was the only place in the neighborhood which had electricity. He walked the length of the church booming out the first part of the Hail Mary while children held his hand or trailed him calling out their part of the rosary. The children and the women came night after night to pray in Kreyol with Mon Pere.

Pere Jean-Juste lived the preferential option for the poor of liberation theology. Because he was always in trouble with the management of the church, who he also freely criticized, he was usually not allowed regular church parish work. In Florida, he lay down in his clerical blacks on the road in front of busses stopping them from taking Haitians to be deported from the U.S. For years he lived on the run in Haiti, moving from house to house. When he was arrested on trumped up charges, he refused to allow people with money to bribe his way out of jail, he would stay with the poor and share their treatment.

He dedicated his entire adult life to the revolutionary proposition that every single person is entitled to a life of human dignity. No matter the color of skin. No matter what country they were from. No matter how poor or rich. No matter woman or man.

His last time in court in Haiti, when the judge questioned him about a bogus weapons charge against him, Pere Jean-Juste dug into his pocket, pulled out his plastic prayer beads, thrust them high in the air and bellowed, to the delight of the hundreds in attendance, "My rosary is my only weapon!" The crowd roared and all charges were dropped.

Gerard Jean-Juste lived with and fought for and with widows and orphans and those in jail and those being deported and

the hungry and the mourning and the sick and the persecuted. Our world is better for his time among us.

Mon Pere, our brother, your spirit, like those of all who struggle for justice for others, lives on. Presente!

By Bill Quigley. Bill represented Pere Jean-Juste many times in Haiti along with the Bureau des Avocats Internationaux in Port au Prince and the Institute for Justice & Democracy in Haiti

Order of Service

Master of Ceremony: Marline Bastien/

Pallbearers: Yves Jean-Juste, Kernst Jean-Juste, Josue Jean-Juste, Roossely Delica,

Honorary Pallbearers:

Random Pics





Random pics





Surviving members of the family:

Leonite Jean-Juste (**sister**)

Ovide Jean-Juste (**brother**)

Isabelle Jean-Juste (**sister, deceased**)

Mr. and Mrs. Gabriel St. Hilaire and Yvette Jean-Juste St. Hilaire (**sister**)

Mr. and Mrs. Roosevelt Delica and Franciane Jean-Juste Delica (**sister**)

Mr. and Mrs. Yves Jean-Juste (**brother**) and Marie Cynthia Coicou Jean-Juste

Mr. and Mrs. Kernst Jean-Juste (**brother**) and Kerene Toussaint Jean-Juste

Mr. and Mrs. Josue Jean-Juste (**brother**) and Yves Berline Jean Jean-Juste

Nephew: Mr. and Mrs. Jean-Claude Nerjuste and Elsie Vitaye Nerjuste; Jean-Saintode Nerjuste; Mr. and Mrs. Charlot Nerjuste and Berangere Forture Nerjuste; Guy William Nerjuste; Njera St. Hilaire; Mr. and Mrs. Roossely Delica and J'Nelle Lesile Delica; Matthew Jean-Juste; Michael Jean-Juste; Ernst Jean-Juste; Philip Jean-Juste; Jose Jean-Juste; David Jean-Juste

Niece and grand-niece: Fayola Delica; Suzanne Delica; Claudena Nerjuste; Rodemarthe Nerjuste

And extended family far and near

Special Thanks

Notre Dame d'Haiti Catholic Church
The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Miami FL
Veye Yo
The Haiti Solidarity Committee
Fanm Ayisyen Nan Miami, Inc

Jackson Memorial Hospital/Jackson North Hospital

Sylvester Cancer Center

All MDs, nurses, and other medical personnel in caring for him during his various hospitalizations

Friends and Families

All the organizations that participated/supported in his 30 years of service

Emmanuel Funeral Home

City of Miami