



Fr. Gerald Leibenguth, O.S.B.
Monk of Glastonbury Abbey in Hingham, MA
July 4, 1940 – December 26, 2020

When Fr. Gerald turned 80 last July Fourth, his birthday, the monks had a cookout and he had a wonderful time! He had been moving about with the aid of a walker, but later that night he fell and was moved to a healthcare facility. It was there that he quietly slipped away the morning after Christmas from Covid-19.

Melvyn Leibenguth was born in Wayland, New York on July 4, 1940 to Gerald and Thelma Leibenguth. His early life was spent in the Rochester, New York area, where he said he was often teased for his birthday and his deeply colored, very bright red hair. There's some irony in that; he was partially color blind. He attended Boston College and St. Basil's School of Theology in Toronto.

Gerald was a seeker. Working in a meat plant, living at the YMCA, employed at a psychiatric hospital as an orderly, seeking God in churches (not always Catholic) and revival tents, he was always searching for what God needed him to do. After years of searching for meaning in his life, he felt called to the priesthood, so he came to Glastonbury Abbey's Latin School in 1963 to learn the Latin that was then required. Afterwards, he entered the community and was professed in 1965, taking the name Gerald after his father.

After ordination in 1972, Fr. Gerald worked with troubled young men at Pilgrim Center, a residential facility where he spent happy years, commuting daily from the monastery. His other interests included CB radio, photography, guitar and horseback riding. He loved assisting in local parishes.

Monastic communities treasure their 'characters!' Such was Fr. Gerald. Willing, eager, maybe a little off-base but always there. He wanted to help, ready to jump into the project of the moment. More recently, he'd come down the hall with his walker, looking in to ask, "You need anything?"

Arriving in the heavenly courts the day after Christmas, he joins his parents and his sister Rita Rochelo. He is survived by his 10 "brothers" (his fellow Benedictine monks of

Glastonbury Abbey) and by his niece Cheri Erbin and nephew John David Erbin and their families, as well as by the Abbey's large Extended Community.

Fr. Gerald was buried in the monks' cemetery on December 31st on the grounds of Glastonbury Abbey. Please come visit and sit awhile with him. In lieu of flowers, he would want you to spread kindness, like he always did, and to ask folks: "You need anything?"