



Gerald F Stanley

November 23, 1937 - May 22, 2026

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Gerald Francis Stanley, who spent decades as a priest, pastor, professor and then a term as mayor of Yachats, passed away May 22, 2026, at Samaritan Pacific Communities Hospital in Newport. He was 88.

Gerald was born in San Francisco on Nov. 23, 1937, to George and Marie (Henesy) Stanley.

As with many Irish Catholic boys, Gerald began the pathway to priesthood and in 1951, started high school seminary in Mountain View, Calif. with seminary education at St. Patrick's Seminary and University in Menlo Park. He also studied at Catholic University of America in Washington D.C., St. Mary's Seminary and University in Baltimore and St. Louis University, earning a master's degree in Theology.

Ordained in 1963 for the Archdiocese of San Francisco, Gerald was one of a small number of priests who sat in vigil over President John F. Kennedy that fall, as he lay in state. As a professor, Gerald shared his wealth of knowledge by teaching at St. Thomas Seminary in Kenmore, Wash.; Evergreen University in Olympia; Seminario Mayor in Guatemala City, Guatemala; St. Mary's Seminary in Baltimore; and Seminario Mayor in Manizales, Colombia.

He was a member of the Society of St. Sulpice from 1965-1978, and served on the faculties of seminaries in Seattle, San Francisco, Baltimore, Guatemala City, Guatemala, and Manizales, Colombia. Gerald was fluent in Spanish and he treasured any opportunity to spend time with Spanish-speaking acquaintances.

In addition to being priest, pastor, and professor, Gerald became a chaplain at Seattle Children's Hospital in 1978 and then was director of Catholic Hospital's team ministry from 1979-83 counseling priests and nuns. He was the pastor at the All Saints Parish in Puyallup, Wash. from 1983-86 and then St. Edward's Parish in Seattle from 1986 to 1995.

He was on the frontline serving AIDS victims as a counselor and mentor during the height of the epidemic and began his lifelong support of the mentally ill. As part of that service, he also worked at the Western State Hospital.

And then, 23 years ago when he was 65 and looking for a nice, quiet place for his retirement, he found Yachats.

Gerald never met a person he didn't love, and they – for the most part – loved him. His only labels for people were that they were “a fine fellow” or a “delightful lady.” He volunteered at the drop of a hat, and then kept giving for years and years. He served the Yachats Chamber of Commerce at its visitor center for 13 years, thrilled that he could meet people from around the world, and speak Spanish with those likewise able. He didn't just say, oh yes, I have been to (their city). He would then go on to describe the event center downtown, or that lovely little bodega at the intersection with all the statues.

Gerald was active in the Yachats Lions Club as a board member, helped transition the monthly Lunch Bunch meals to the club, and worked in the club's thrift store.

With his training and experience in working with the mentally ill in Washington, he was an excellent fit for the Lincoln County Mental Health Advisory Committee, volunteering there for many years. More recently, he had been working on the Highway 101 Pollinator Project.

He was elected mayor of Yachats in 2016, serving a two-year term from 2017-19. He had been attending council meetings for years, so he was well-versed in ongoing issues and projects when he took office. During his tenure, he established “Coffee with the Mayor” weekly opportunities to meet with residents on a casual basis.

Gerald had strong, informed, intelligent opinions and positions when it came

to his love of God and his admiration for Jesus. He attended St. Anthony Catholic Church in Waldport on Saturday afternoons and Yachats Community Presbyterian Church on Sunday mornings. His friends in Waldport tended to call him "Gerry", as many of his Washington friends do. In Yachats, he was always "Gerald" or "Mayor", or sometimes, jokingly, "Mayor Father Gerald", in honor of his service as a priest and a community leader.

Gerald is survived by his brother, George Stanley of Vancouver, British Columbia, as well as hundreds of "fine fellows and delightful ladies" who will never forget how he helped and supported them.

A funeral mass will be held at 9 a.m. Friday, June 12, at St. Anthony Catholic Church, 685 N.E. Broadway St., Waldport, with a memorial service on Sunday, June 14 at Yachats Community Presbyterian Church, 360 W, 7th St., Yachats, during the 10am sermon.

Upcoming Events

Funeral Mass

JUN 12. 9:00 AM (PT)

St. Anthony's Catholic Church
685 NE Broadway St,
Waldport, OR 97394

Memorial Service

JUN 14. 10:00 AM (PT)

Yachats Community Presbyterian
360 W 7th St,
Yachats, OR 97498