



Dr. James E. Bergman DMus

January 5, 1945 - September 27, 2024

Dr. James Edward Bergman

James Edward Bergman, a.k.a. “Doc”, born January 5th, 1945 in Sparta, Wisconsin to Dorothy Mae Bushek and Otho Odin Bergman. First born of two children, younger brother Mark. Jim attended St Patrick’s grade school in Sparta before the family moved to La Crosse, Wisconsin in 1955. Jim graduated from Blessed Sacrament grade school in 1959 and Aquinas High School in 1963. Following high school, Jim entered the novitiate of the Brothers of Holy Cross.

Jim attended college at St Edwards University in Austin, Texas. Following graduation and teaching assignments at St Charles in Milwaukee and St Thomas Moore in Clinton, Michigan as a Holy Cross Brother, Jim decided not to take his final vows, rather leaving the Brotherhood and beginning a life-long career that encompassed teaching and music.

His first job was in 1971 at Divine Child in Dearborn, Michigan establishing himself as a parish music director and teacher of young people in the formation of religion and music. As time went by, Jim became well known for the annual school musicals that he directed. In 1985 he relocated to Chicago, having been recruited by Fr Rich Yanos, to St Celestine’s and then later to St Eugene’s where Jim continued his life-long dedication of developing applied music skills within young people, many of whom still are in communication with him to this day after 53 years of precious memories. In all, Jim directed more than 40 Broadway musicals with the young people of each parish he served. Jim’s musicals were simply magical.

During all of this, Jim received his Doctor of Music degree from Northwestern University in 1991. Therefore the nickname heard so often ...“Doc”. He then taught at DePaul University for a period of time.

Jim became a dog owner in 1989. He loved Golden Retrievers and had 8 beautiful dogs, Rusty, Sonny, Woody Whitey, Dusty, Charley, Jimmy and Jamey.

Jim retired from formal church ministry duties in 2015 but continued giving music lessons and “pinch hitting” for local church organists until his health began diminishing.

In his 80th year on September 27th, 2024, Jim passed peacefully in his sleep to be with his Lord and Savior ...with his ever faithful Kathy and Anthony’s mom Debbie at his bedside. Jim’s spirit will always be with those who remember him.

Survivors

Jim is survived by his loving family that includes: his “soul mate” Kathy and “son” Anthony Woldeit. Both Kathy and Anthony have been Jim’s Chicago based family for many years ...lovingly providing my brother with companionship, care and counsel.

One brother Mark and his wife Patti. Two nephews and two nieces: his Godson Joseph Bergman and his wife Kaycee, Matthew Bergman and his wife Katie, Ann Lent and her husband Jamie and Jennifer Hoernke and her husband Tim. Two great-nephews: Xefrem Bergman and Garrett Hoernke. And 7 great-nieces: Xoe Bergman Alvarez, Ashlyn Murphy, Allyson Lent, Emily Lent, Emma Hoernke and Emmylou Bergman.

One beloved cousin, Judith Johanson who Jim always depended upon for family history. Jim and I called Judy frequently with ancestry questions.

One two year old Golden Retriever, Jamey, that Jim dearly loved.

And countless dear friends ...

Previous Events

Lie in State

OCT 5. 9:30 AM - 11:30 AM (CT)

St Eugene Catholic Church
7958 w Foster Ave
Chicago, IL 60656

Funeral Mass

OCT 5. 11:30 AM (CT)

St Eugene Catholic Church
7958 w Foster Ave
Chicago, IL 60656

Tribute Wall

LG

“ Dearest Anthony and Kathy and all family members and friends of Dr. Bergman,
We were so sorry to learn of Dr. Bergman's passing. He was such a joyful, positive influence in the lives of all those who were fortunate to have known him. He truly was God's own presence in this world through his music and his faith. Of course, little can ever be said to alleviate the loss that is felt. An Eskimo proverb though goes “Perhaps they are not stars in the sky, but rather openings where our loved ones shine down to let us know they are happy.” I'm certain he is shining down on each of you!
Laura Gryfinski & my Dad and Mom
Michael & Carol

Laura Gryfinski - October 06, 2024 at 08:37 PM

SL

“ Condolences to Anthony who was like a son to Dr. James Bergman. Doc will be greatly missed. I got to work with Dr. James Bergman when I was doing backstage work for St. Louise Players in LaGrange Park. He was an excellent man. I even remember one year we didnt have enough actors and there was one more role for Carousel that he had to cast. He got me out from backstage to do that role. Thanks for all you have done. You will be greatly missed Doc.

Steven Lifka - October 02, 2024 at 05:58 AM

KI

“ Heaven now has what will be the best musical talent it has ever been blessed with. God has shared you long enough with us. It's His turn. All our love and prayers to our Brother Jim, his family and all he has touched throughout his life. The Kingsbury families.

Kingsbury - September 28, 2024 at 06:19 PM

LT

Wonderful fellow teacher at Divine Child. RIP Jim

Leo Tallieu - September 28, 2024 at 10:08 PM

MZ

Great teacher! I had him for religion class and music lessons on the church organ. And "jug" (only one time!). May he rest in peace.

Maureen Embach Zack - September 29, 2024 at 01:10 PM

FP

Brother Jim as my family referred to him...He was my Daughters ... Organ Teacher, when he came to Divine Child, Dearborn, MI...

*Rest in peace dear friend,
Filomena Ponzi*

Filomena Ponzi - October 02, 2024 at 07:45 PM

AS

The music created by Dr. James Bergman, along with all of the choir members and other occasional musicians, at St. Eugene's Parish was always beautiful, professional and spiritual, and I'm certain that this was the case at all of the other Parishes and schools that were also blessed with his presence.

Andy Scelsi - October 02, 2024 at 11:11 PM

TA

Dr. Bergman - a true Musicians Musician. My parents, Matt & Evelyn Galas and brother Christopher were parishioners of St Celestine's Parish, Elmwood Park, when Jim was their Director. He got my brother Christopher involved with musical theatre asking him to play the part of "Officer Krupke" from West Side Story. My dad who was a cartoonist helped with some of the publicity for that show. Even though Jim moved on to St. Eugene's I asked him to be guest organist at my mom's funeral back in 2002. A true gentle-man, loving spirit, and a gift to all who heard his music. Rest in peace, dear fellow musician. You truly were a gift from God. Therese Galas Anello

Therese Anello - October 04, 2024 at 02:07 PM