



The Reverend Canon Edward Nils Blatz

August 12, 1940 – December 8, 2024

Nothing that is worth doing can be achieved in a lifetime; therefore we must be saved by hope. Nothing which is true or beautiful or good makes complete sense in any immediate context of history; therefore we must be saved by faith. Nothing we do, however virtuous, can be accomplished alone; therefore we are saved by love.

~ Reinhold Niebuhr

It is with deep sorrow that we announce the passing of Reverend Canon Edward Nils Blatz, known to all as "Nils," who peacefully left us on December 8, 2024, at the age of 84. A devoted priest, husband, father, and friend, Nils will be remembered for his unwavering faith, infectious humor and the warmth he brought to everyone fortunate enough to cross his path.

Born on August 12, 1940, Nils grew up in Freeport, New York with a strong sense of community and service. A gifted athlete, he graduated from Bowdoin College in 1962, where he still holds the record for most assists (8) in a single varsity lacrosse game—a fact he eagerly shared with anyone he thought might appreciate it. Nils' spirited sense of humor and knack for mischief were evident even in his college days, where he left behind a legendary legacy of pranks in collaboration with (and sometimes at the expense of) his Chi Psi fraternity brothers.

After earning his Master of Divinity degree from General Theological Seminary in 1965, Nils was ordained to the priesthood in December 1965 by Bishop Jonathan Goodhue Sherman. His ministry, spanning several decades, in the Diocese of Pennsylvania and the Diocese of Long Island, touched countless lives. At Saint David's in Wayne, Pennsylvania, Trinity Church in Roslyn, New York, Grace Church in Brooklyn Heights, New York and as Vicar at Church of the Redeemer in Mattituck, New York, Nils was known for his welcoming compassionate leadership and his ability to create caring, communities where all were appreciated.

Nils' faith was rooted in both the Gospels and his enduring love for family. He and his beloved wife, Leslie Dickenson Blatz, married on August 25, 1962, and shared 62 years of marriage filled with mutual respect, deep affection, and a shared commitment to each other and their children. They deeply adored their grandchildren Christopher, Henry, Tilley, Audrey, and Payntar.

An avid swimmer and sailor, Nils could be found body surfing waves at Jones Beach (Field 6 precisely) or gliding across the water on his Hobie Cat. These were his moments to indulge his free spirit and deep connection to nature. His colorful sail would often be seen on the waters of Lake George, Hempstead Harbor and the Great South Bay. A lifelong reader, he found inspiration in the works of theologians, counting Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Reinhold Niebuhr, and Schubert Ogden among his favorites. Herman Melville's Moby Dick was a work never far from his heart and thoughts. His sermons, typically infused with insights from his readings, were thought-provoking and filled with wit and wisdom.

Nils approached life with a unique blend of grace, and purpose. Through his inspiring sermons, kindness toward others, steadfast moral principles and his unwavering support of family and friends, Nils left an enduring impact on all who knew him. His legacy of love, service, and laughter will continue to inspire everyone he touched.

He is survived by his wife, Leslie; his children, Andrew, Amy (Doug Warden), Daniel (Jessica King); his cherished grandchildren; his sisters, Anne Holland and Liz Holland, and their families. He was predeceased by his parents, Irving Hanson Blatz and Elizabeth Holland Blatz, and his beloved daughter, Lisa Anne Blatz - his only equal in mischief and humor.

A memorial service will be held on January 11th at 11:00 a.m. at Grace's Saint Paul's on-the-Hill Campus, 49 Ganung Drive, Ossining, New York where friends, family, and the community are invited to celebrate Nils' life and the profound impact he had on all of us. In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations be made to [Camp de Wolfe](#), in Wading River, New York or [Community Mainstreaming Associates](#), in Westbury, New York honoring his lifelong dedication to service and compassion.

Nils' legacy of joy, humility, and love will live on in our hearts forever.

