

Lt. Rev. Joseph Verbis Lafleur

January 25, 1912 - September 7, 1944

Fr. Lafleur was a man of great compassion and understanding, a man of bravery and courage eager to give all for his God and his country, was to distinguish himself many times during the horrid days of the Second World War.

As a prisoner of the Japanese he regularly gave his own food and clothing to Americans in the prison hospital. He even insisted on posing as a laborer to go on a detail with 750 other prisoners so that they would have a chaplain with them. Many times he risked his own life to rescue or see to the needs of others.

Later in the war, while aboard a sinking prisoner of war ship, he was last seen persuading his men to leave the hold of the vessel before he did, blessed them and helped them up the ladder to possible safety.

Fr. Kennedy, a fellow P.O.W. related numerous conversions to Catholicism by Chaplain Lafleur, some of which he did not know of as they occurred after his death. His devotion to the men was such as to win the acclaim of many who were of other faiths.

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Lt. Rev. Joseph Verbis Lafleur

Diocese of Lafayette, LA

Priest - Soldier

Date of Baptism • February 27, 1912

Date of Ordination • April 2, 1938

St. John the Evangelist Catholic Church

First Solemn Mass • April 5, 1938

St. Landry Catholic Church, Opelousas, LA

