



# Archdiocese of Detroit NEWS

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## Regarding the deaths of Father Repsys and his nephew...

According to the Macomb County Sheriff, Father Ricardas Repsys (*REP-shees*), the 59-year-old administrator of Divine Providence Lithuanian Parish in Southfield, and his 13-year-old nephew, Tautvydas Skudas (*TOUT-vee-dus SKOO-dus*), both drowned while boating July 28 on Lake Saint Clair. The police report stated that Father was on the lake with his two nephews, who were visiting from Lithuania, and a fourth person. When Tautvydas encountered trouble swimming, Father dove into the water to help, but neither of them were able to make it back to the boat.

Archbishop Allen H. Vigneron, leader of the Detroit area's 1.4 million Catholics, made the following comment regarding Father's death: *"The sudden loss of Father Repsys is a great tragedy, as is the loss of his young nephew, Tautvydas Skudas. I certainly offer my sincerest condolences to and prayers for all of their family members and friends, as well as all of the people of Divine Providence Parish. I hope it is some comfort during this very difficult time that the last act of Father Repsys was a heroic one. And now we commend the victims and all who mourn their losses to the God of compassion and mercy."*

Monsignor John P. Zenz, episcopal vicar for the northwest region of the Detroit Archdiocese and pastor of Holy Name Parish in Birmingham, added the following: *"Father Repsys was a dedicated, compassionate and generous priest who loved the Lord and His people – those in his native land of Lithuania and those he was serving in America. Father Repsys had a huge heart and a firm faith and trust in the Lord. I remember him telling me stories of the risks and dangers and loneliness he endured during the early years of his priestly ministry while taking the train to minister to Lithuanians in Siberia; these were the darkest days of Communism."*

*"It is not surprising that Father Repsys would die literally trying to save a drowning person; he was truly Christ-like."*

*"I know the Lithuanian community and our Detroit presbyterate will miss him. He had truly made a home with us here in the Archdiocese of Detroit."*

Father Repsys, 59, was born in Kaunas, Lithuania in 1950 and ordained a priest for the Marian Fathers of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary religious order in 1981. He later became a priest for the Archdiocese of Kaunas. At the request of his archbishop in Lithuania, Father Repsys came to the United States and began ministry to the Detroit area's Lithuanian Catholics. He has been serving as administrator of Divine Providence Parish in Southfield since April 2004. He was granted permanent legal residency in the United States in March of 2008.

A digital image of Father Repsys is available at [www.AODcommunications.org](http://www.AODcommunications.org).

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