

Life Story of Father Kram of Shiner

Charles Kram was born September 30, 1929, to Charles and Emma Zander Kram in Shiner, Texas, and was reared on the family's farm as a normal, active healthy boy who had a good sense of humor and a desire to learn as much as he could about everything. He attended local schools until graduation in 1946 and then enrolled at St. John's Seminary in San Antonio. In May of 1952 he was ordained a sub deacon, but within a few weeks he was stricken with paralytic polio that left him paralyzed from the neck down. He spent many months in an iron lung.

Later he was taken to a rehabilitation center where he spent many more months learning to use the usual devices for feeding himself and for writing, etc., and to control a battery operated wheelchair that was operated by Charles pushing a ball covered stem with his chin. He also learned to hold a stick in his mouth to type and to operate his ham radio and to turn pages of books. He slept in a rocking bed that helped to keep his lungs clear and make his breathing easier. Later Charles returned to the family's farm and to the care of his parents until his mother's

health forced her to go into the rest home. Then his father single-handedly cared for him. Any hope of ordination to the priesthood seemed impossible.

But, perhaps by Divine Intervention, in 1975 Archbishop Francis Fury decided that Charles could be ordained so he could more effectively continue his ministry of giving advice, encouragement and spiritual direction to visitors as well as to people from all over the world via his ham radio. He was ordained a deacon and the following day, December 5, 1975, Father Charles Kram was ordained to priesthood at the age of 46 and approximately 23 and a half years after the onset of polio and almost total paralysis. He celebrated his first Mass the next day.

Father Charles returned home with his father who continued to care for his son, and the son readily accepted his condition as the Will of God for him. Except for celebrating Mass with assistance, life was much like it had been before when his days were spent in meditation, prayer, practicing great patience, and using his ham radio until 1977 when his father died in a tragic accident and Father Charles was moved

to Huth Memorial Hospital in Yoakum, Texas, and became the chaplain. This opened up a whole new world for his ministry and he found great joy in being able to visit and to console, to counsel, and bring his special sense of hope and peace to everyone who came into the hospital as a patient, their families or even guests. With assistance, he celebrated daily Mass when he was strong enough even though he was subject to infections, pain and great difficulty in breathing. He never complained or felt sorry for himself but proved that his weakness was actually his strength.

Father Charles Kram died on August 13, 2000, at the age of 70, having spent 47 of those years as a quadriplegic and totally dependent, but whose greatest joy was being able to help everyone he could as his way to give glory to God. So if you have any problems, please ask Father Kram to help you now. If you are blessed to have had a special relationship or have received any favors from Father Kram, please contact:

The Association for the Canonization of Father Kram; c/o SS Cyril & Methodius Catholic Church; 306 S. Avenue F; Shiner, TX 77984-8208; (361) 594-3836, phone; (361) 594-2850, fax.

Reprinted from Father Kram prayer card.