

Fr. Joseph Fitzmyer, SJ, professor of Biblical studies, sacred scripture and Semitic languages, dies at 96



Rev. Joseph A. Fitzmyer, SJ, was born in Philadelphia, Pa. on November 4, 1920. He graduated from St. Joseph's High School in Philadelphia and entered the Society of Jesus at the Novitiate of St. Isaac Jogues in Wernersville, Pa. in 1938. He received both his Bachelor's and master's degrees from West Baden College in Indiana, which was an affiliate of Loyola University Chicago. He went on to earn his Ph.D. in Semitic Languages from Johns Hopkins University and his Licentiate of Sacred Theology from the Pontifical Biblical Institute in Rome. He was ordained to the priesthood on August 15, 1951.

As a Jesuit scholastic, Fr. Fitzmyer taught German at Gonzaga High School in Washington, DC. He spent a year in 1957 co-editing the Qumran scrolls at the American School of Oriental Research in Jerusalem. He then taught New Testament and Biblical Greek for nine years at Woodstock College in Maryland. After a brief visiting professorship at Yale Divinity School, he spent two years as a professor of Semitic Languages at the University of Chicago.

In 1971, Fr. Fitzmyer became a professor of Theology at Fordham University while also serving for six years as the editor of the *Journal of Biblical Literature* in Washington, DC. He was a professor of New Testament Studies for two years at Weston Jesuit School of Theology in Cambridge, Ma. before serving as a professor of Biblical Studies at Catholic University until 1986 when he left for two years to teach Theology at Boston College. He returned to Catholic University in 1989 as a professor emeritus of Biblical Studies where he remained for the next 22 years.

In 2011, Fr. Fitzmyer moved to Manresa Hall in Philadelphia, praying for the Church and the Society of Jesus. He died on December 24, 2016 at the age of 96.