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THE HISTORIC

# SACRED HEART CATHOLIC CHURCH

*The Mother Church of Black Catholics in the Archdiocese of Detroit*

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DETROIT, Mich. — Sacred Heart Roman Catholic Church announces the passing of their longtime, beloved pastor **Fr. Norman P. Thomas** on Sunday, February 26, 2023.

Rev. Norman P. Thomas born December 18, 1930 in Highland Park, Michigan. He attended Willard Public School and Madonna Catholic Grade School, graduated from Detroit's Sacred Heart Seminary High School and College and St. Johns Theological Seminary in Plymouth, Michigan. Fr. Thomas received his Masters Degree in Social Work at Wayne State University in 1965.

Fr. Thomas was ordained a Catholic priest in 1955. He has served as Associate Pastor in Wyandotte, Pontiac, and Hazel Park. In 1965, he became the Director of the Urban Parish Apostolate which coordinated efforts of Central City Parishes.

Right after the riots of 1967, Fr. Thomas had envisioned more from the Church for the people of God. During this time he co-founded a breakfast group of priest that prayed and worked to create change and bring healing to a city that had been separated by racism. The breakfast group would eventually become the Detroit Catholic Pastoral Alliance.

In 1968 Fr. Thomas began a unprecedented 54 year ministry at Sacred Heart Church, as their pastor. In 2007 his ministry grew when he was appointed Pastor of St. Elizabeth Catholic Church as well.

Fr. Thomas was the Chairperson of the Eastern Market Task Force, and for many years served as Chairperson of the Detroit Catholic Pastoral Alliance, and the Chairperson of the Urban Parish Coalition. He was a member of the Interfaith Committee for Workers Issues, Board Member of Wayne County Catholic Social Services, Board Member of Sacred Heart/St. Elizabeth and Chene Providence Community Development Corporations, Chairperson of the Sweat-free World Campaign, and 2005 Urban League Distinguished Warrior Award.

Final arrangements are available [here](#):

*Fr. Norman P. Thomas, Pastor*

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