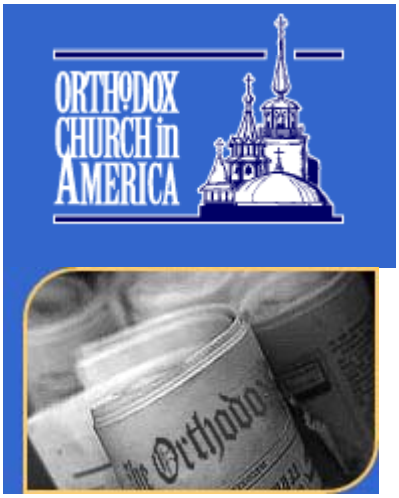

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In Memoriam: The Rev. David Kirk

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NEW YORK, NY [OCA Communications] -- Funeral services for the Rev. David Kirk, 7 to Saint Sergius of Radonezh Chapel, Syosset, NY, will be celebrated at Saint Nichola Cathedral, 15 East 97 Street, New York City, at 11:00 a.m. on Tuesday, May 29, 200

Father David fell asleep in the Lord of heart failure early Wednesday morning at Emm community he formed in 1965 to feed the hungry and to assist those in need.

Visitation will be held at the Peter Jarema Funeral Home, 129 East 7 Street, New Yor May 28.

Born in Louisville, MS in 1935, Father David was ordained to the diaconate and priest Catholic Church in 1963. On March 30, 2004, he was canonically received into the Or America and attached to Saint Sergius Chapel.

According to Dr. Albert J. Raboteau, a member of the Emmaus House Board, Father interest in interracial justice. As editor of his high school newspaper in Mobile, AL, he attending the local black high school to investigate first hand the inequities of segrega junior year at the University of Alabama, Arthurine Lucy's attempt to integrate the sch violence. He joined with several other students to shield her as she moved about cam correspondence with William Faulkner during that same year elicited a letter -- later pu the famous author's views on segregation.

Drawn to Catholicism by the example of a Catholic campus chaplain who supported ir the Melkite Catholic Church before graduation. After teaching in Alabama public scho civil rights activism, he moved to New York City and began working with Dorothy Day Worker House on the Bowery. Feeling the call to priesthood, he traveled to Rome and Beda College. After his ordination to the priesthood, he returned to Birmingham, wher rights demonstrations, met and was jailed with Martin Luther King, Jr., and preached f Sixteenth Street Baptist Church, one week before four little girls were killed by a bomb basement.

Returning to New York City, Father David planned to start a house of hospitality on th was advised by Dorothy Day to go to Harlem. Following the example of the Emmaus r Paris by Abbe Pierre, he decided that it was not enough to feed the poor; it was crucia with the skills to help themselves. Emmaus House, in his vision, was not a shelter, bu poor living together and working together to help those in need. True empowerment o realized, meant that Emmaus would be run by the poor. Emmaus eventually develope for hospitality, served full meals to others daily, and sent out vans to deliver food to th streets. Over the decades, Emmaus became involved in a series of social justice activ advocacy programs for housing, legal services, and AIDS assistance. Another commu with 90 people, Emmaus Inns, was established as a model of scattered site housing. War Era, Father David was arrested in non-violent protests against the war and again

Over the last few years, Father David's health deteriorated due to kidney failure. Due health, Emmaus House became smaller, but it still serves the poor through its food pa day-to-day operations run by the poor and the formerly homeless themselves.

Father David is survived by two sisters, Mary Barrell of Metairie, LA, and Barbara Pac and five nieces and four nephews.

May Father David's memory be eternal!