

One killed at funeral of Fr. Jean-Juste in Haiti

Catholic News Service | Jun. 19, 2009



Haitians carrying the coffin of Fr. Gerard Jean-Juste during his funeral procession in Port-au-Prince June 18. (CNS photo/Felix Evens, Reuters)

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti -- One of the thousands of mourners for Fr. Gerard Jean-Juste died June 18 following the Haitian priest's funeral in Port-au-Prince.

Jean-Juste, a Port-au-Prince archdiocesan priest, died in a Miami hospital May 27 at age 62. A passionate advocate for the impoverished in Haiti and for Haitian refugees in the United States, he had lived in the U.S. since the 1970s and founded the Haitian Refugee Center in Miami.

Although some news reports quoted eyewitnesses as saying the unidentified man who died after the funeral was killed by gunfire from U.N. peacekeeping forces, a statement from the U.N. mission to Haiti said the peacekeepers "categorically deny the allegations."

Sophie Boutaud de la Combe, a spokeswoman for the mission, told the Reuters news agency that U.N. soldiers fired about five shots into the air to disperse a crowd that was throwing rocks at them.

Following the funeral Mass at the Port-au-Prince cathedral, an estimated 2,000 people processed with the coffin to the presidential palace to show their displeasure with the policies of President Rene Preval. Jean-Juste had been a longtime supporter of former President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, who was forced from office and has been in exile since 2004.

The body of Jean-Juste was taken to his rural home town of Cavaillon, where he was buried next to his mother.

Read the NCR obituary [Haitian activist priest Jean-Juste dies at 62](#) [1] and a remembrance by Fr. John Dear: ['My rosary is my only weapon'](#) [2]

Links:

[1] <http://ncronline.org/node/13331>

[2] <http://ncronline.org/node/13569>