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Father Dowling author dies

by Heidi Schlumpf

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At the risk of making this blog a obituary column, I'll share the death of Ralph McInerny, best known as the author of the Father Dowling mysteries that were made into a television series in the late 1980s and early '90s.

McInerny died Jan. 29 at the age of 80, reported the Zenit news agency.

Those familiar with his popular books (he also wrote under several pen names, including "Monica Quill") might not have known he was the co-founder with Michael Novak of the conservative Catholic journal *Crisis* magazine (now online as Inside Catholic).

He had retired last year as a professor of philosophy and Medieval Studies at the University of Notre Dame, where he had been director of the Jacques Maritain Center from 1979 to 2006. He also was outspoken in opposing President Barack Obama's appearance at last year's Notre Dame commencement.

I was a fan of his fiction, even though I didn't share many of his views on Catholic matters. But not too many people can combine a scholarly career as an Aquinas expert with popular success as a mystery writer.

May he rest in peace. Amen.

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