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US-born archbishop dies at age 86

by Catholic News Service

NOTRE DAME, Ind. -- Retired Archbishop Charles A. Schleck, former assistant secretary of the Vatican Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples and president of the Supreme Council of the Pontifical Missionary Works, died July 12 at age 86.

He died at Holy Cross House, a health care facility for aged members of Congregation of Holy Cross on the edge of the campus of the University of Notre Dame, which is a Holy Cross institution.

A funeral Mass for Archbishop Schleck was to be celebrated July 18 at Sacred Heart Basilica at Notre Dame. Burial was to follow at Holy Cross Cemetery on the Notre Dame campus.

Born July 5, 1925, in Milwaukee, Charles Schleck joined the Holy Cross order in Indiana in 1943. He was ordained a priest in 1951.

He was an instructor in theology at Notre Dame for the academic year 1953-54, then a professor of dogmatic theology and spirituality at Holy Cross College in Washington from 1954 to 1961.

For the next two years, he was dean of studies at Holy Cross College in Rome and a visiting professor of theology at St. Mary's College in Notre Dame, and at the Notre Dame institute for local religious superiors.

In 1962, then-Father Schleck returned to Washington as a professor and dean of studies at the Holy Cross order's college, positions he held until 1968.

For the next four years, he worked as a consultant to various religious communities in California, giving retreats and talks on the renewal of religious life following the guidelines of the Second Vatican Council.

In 1969-70 and 1972-73, he was named by the Vatican to be an apostolic visitor, evaluating various religious communities.

In 1974, he joined the staff of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, which is responsible for the church's missionary territories. The U.S. priest first worked with religious orders that depended upon the congregation, then specialized in missionary activities in India.

From 1986 until his episcopal appointment by Pope John Paul II in 1995, he was undersecretary of the congregation, which also oversees the collection and disbursement of funds for the Society of the Propagation of the Faith, the Society of St. Peter the Apostle, the Holy Childhood Association and the Missionary Union.

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Upon his ordination as archbishop, he became the assistant secretary of the congregation, and president of the Supreme Council of the Pontifical Missionary Works.

Archbishop Schleck retired from active ministry in 2001. He returned to the United States in 2007, where he took up residence at Holy Cross House.

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