

# Phillip Berrigan



**PRIEST**

**WWII VETERAN**

**ANTI-WAR ACTIVIST**

Born in Two Harbors, Minnesota, Philip Berrigan (1923 - 2002) was a priest who devoted his career to anti-war activism. After graduating from high school, Berrigan worked cleaning trains and as a semi-professional baseball player. Drafted into combat duty in 1943, Berrigan was deeply affected by his exposure to the war.

Upon his return, Berrigan joined the Society of St. Joseph, a Catholic religious society devoted to aiding African-Americans suffering from the history of slavery and segregation. He was ordained as a priest in 1955, though he would later marry and leave the priesthood.

His most famous action was the Cantonsville Nine protest, during which homemade napalm was used to ignite hundreds of draft cards. Sentenced to a three-year prison term, Berrigan attended the Freedom Seder while on bail and awaiting the results of an appeal. After the U.S. Supreme Court rejected the appeal, Berrigan went into hiding for twelve days and was subsequently rearrested.

Berrigan, along with his brother Daniel, later established the Plowshares movement, which coordinated attacks on weapons facilities. Berrigan would spend 11 years in prison for his actions challenging militarization.