Joseph Cashman was born on May 12, 1934 in Owatonna, Minnesota. He was ordained a priest of the Diocese of Winona on May 31, 1960. Joseph Cashman served at the following parishes throughout his tenure:

- June 13, 1960 - Cathedral of the Sacred Heart, Winona, MN
- August 20, 1963 - Saint John, Rochester, MN
- August 20, 1963 - Lourdes High School, Rochester, MN
- July 1, 1967 - Loyola High School, Mankato, MN
- July 1, 1967 - Saint Joseph, Good Thunder, MN
- June 24, 1970 - Lourdes High School, Rochester, MN
- June 24, 1970 - Saint Margaret, Mantorville, MN
- July 1, 1977 - Saint John the Baptist, Mankato, MN
- July 2, 1985 - Saint Mary, Caledonia, MN
- September 2014 – Decree of Laicization

Joseph Cashman took a leave of absence from active ministry in January 30, 1992. In 1986 it came to the attention of the Diocese of Winona that he had had inappropriate sexual contact with a male seminarian (adult). Later, it also came to the attention of the Diocese of Winona that Joseph Cashman had been accused of sexual approaches made to several minor males prior to 1986 and then became aware of actual sexual contacts with minor students. He was sent to the St. Luke Institute for an assessment and treatment in January of 1992, just prior to the suspension of his ministerial privileges.