



Society of Mary - Compañía de María - Société de Marie
Via Latina 22, 00179 Roma



September 23, 2021

Biography of Death Notice N. 21

The Province of France recommends to our fraternal prayers our dear brother **Morand FOECHTERLE**, of the Institut Sainte-Marie community, Saint Hippolyte, France, who died in the service of the Blessed Virgin Mary on September 8, 2021 in Marignane, France, at the age of 84, with 64 years of religious profession.

Morand Foechterlé was born on June 21, 1937, in the village of Baltzenheim, located in the plain of Alsace, along the Rhine River. He was born into a family of farmers. His father was also a commercial fisherman. Odile and Gustave, his parents, gave birth to three other boys and a girl.

As an altar boy, Morand was moved by the testimony of a Capuchin missionary in Madagascar. This Capuchin was also a native of Baltzenheim. Led by the Lord's call, he entered the postulate of Saint-Hippolyte located, like Baltzenheim, in the Haut-Rhin. After that, he went to Antony to prepare for the baccalaureate. He was then 19 years old and felt ready to answer the Lord's call. He asked to enter the novitiate at La-Tour-de-Sçay and made his first vows on September 11, 1957. Morand went to the scholasticate in Fribourg where he deepened his religious knowledge and opened himself to scholastic philosophy for three years.

In 1960, he was sent temporarily to Art-sur-Meurthe, while waiting to do his two years of military service. He then joined the Fiac community where he taught, while preparing a degree in modern literature in Toulouse. He obtained this degree in 1967. It was during this period that he made his perpetual vows on December 29, 1963, in Saint-Hippolyte.

From 1968 to 1976, he returned to Alsace and taught in the school of Saint-André de Colmar. Morand was the professor of French, German and religion. Later he became an assistant principal, with responsibility for the first cycle.

Morand was ready for greater responsibilities, so he took a year of training at the Institut Supérieur de Promotion de l'Enseignement Catholique in Angers to become a school principal.

Morand went to Brittany in 1977, to the school of Sainte-Croix de Quimperlé. After a year of teaching and being assistant principal, he took over from Fr. Brelot as principal of the school, while keeping some teaching hours.

After 13 years in Quimperlé, Morand kept a secret desire in his heart: he wanted to be a missionary in sub-Saharan Africa and offered himself for the mission. To his great surprise, he was sent in 1990 to Tunis, halfway to his dream mission. There he was the assistant financial administrator and French teacher helping Mr. Veyret, who for 6 months had to assume the responsibilities of Principal and financial administrator simultaneously. Morand maintained a very strong memory of their weekly trips to the wholesale market, leaving at 4 a.m. He continued this work in the finance office under the direction of Brother Pierre Christophe, SM.

The St. Mary's Institute of Tunis, still known today as: "Les Maristes", became, after independence, the "Free Secondary School." The students at this school are almost 100% Muslim. At short notice in 2000, Morand succeeded Pierre Christophe when the school was in the process of absorbing the Inter-College, a nearby school. He eventually became the principal of an establishment that contained both primary and secondary schools. The total enrollment of the school consisted of more than 1000 students. At the same time, he was involved in the writing of the Collective Agreement of Private Schools in Tunisia.

Morand took on these tasks until the day he turned 70, at which time, in accordance

with Tunisian law, he had to retire from his job. He had a strong desire to assist his successors, first Father Mario (Salesian), then Brother Bertrand Bougé, SM, until the departure of the community in September 2016. As Principal, Morand authorized the creation of a bilingual Documentation and Information Center, the introduction of computers from the 8th grade onward, and the creation of the Cours Préparatoire (first year of primary school) classes. The mission continues today under the direction of the Salesians of Don Bosco who have taken over the management of the school.

Freed from the burden of management, Brother Morand began to realize more fully his missionary dream. He had already invested a great amount of time and energy in this dream by his active participation in the JCAT (African Christian Youth in Tunisia), which brings together young sub-Saharan Africans who are far from their families and in search of God. He prepared many of these young people to receive baptism or other sacraments. Every week, he gave tours of the cathedral and answered questions from Tunisians, which led to some very rich exchanges. At the same time, he continued to give service to the institution by working in the finance office.

Crossing the Mediterranean again to land in Saint-Victoret near Marseille in 2016, Morand had the desire to live the Gospel ever more deeply. As he said in an interview with the newspaper "L'Alsace": "For me, living has always preceded speaking. "At Saint-Victoret, he continued to listen, welcome and talk about God, especially with the Muslims he met there.

Brother Morand had recently participated in the national meeting of the Marianist Family at Notre Dame du Laus, near Gap. Here he had the opportunity to give a magnificent testimony of his experience in Tunisia involving his encounter of different cultures in the Muslim world. All of the participants were touched by the simple and profound words that conveyed the idea of meeting others in respect, listening and dialogue that builds relationships.

With the closing of the community of Saint-Victoret, Morand was to join the community of Saint-Hippolyte at the beginning of September 2021. Very tired and suffering from Covid, he collapsed during the Sunday Mass on August 25 while he was still at St. Victoret. In a few days, he felt that his end was approaching. Accompanied by the parish priest of St Victoret, Father Jeremiah, he made a beautiful spiritual journey during his last days. He gradually moved beyond spiritual warfare, where he asked the question: "But why am I going through all this? What is the meaning of what is happening to me?" He found a deep serenity and fell asleep in peace on the morning

of September 8, the feast of the Nativity of the Virgin Mary, a symbol of Morand's love for the Mother of God.
