



Society of Mary - Compañía de María - Soci t  de Marie
Via Latina 22, 00179 Roma



October 11, 2021

Biography of Death Notice N. 22

The Province of France and the District of Ivory Coast recommend to our fraternal prayers our dear brother, **Philibert MEICHEL**, of the College Notre-Dame d' Afrique community, Abidjan, Ivory Coast, who died in the service of the Blessed Virgin on September 27, 2021, in Abidjan, Ivory Coast, at the age of 89 with 72 years of Religious Profession.

Philibert was born on January 23, 1932 in Mulhouse, Alsace, France. His father's name was Fran ois and his mother name was Louise Hoffmann. At the age of 17, he made his first vows in the Society of Mary on September 12 after a year of novitiate in Antony, France. On October 26, 1958 he pronounced his perpetual vows in the Society of Mary at R quista.

In 1951, Brother Philibert completed his secondary studies and was sent to take his first steps in teaching at the Coll ge St Etienne in Strasbourg, on the French-German border.

Very quickly, his desire for the African missions developed, He began his missionary work in 1960, in Bangui, at the Coll ge des Rapides (a Marianist

establishment whose director was Fr. Henri Palvadeau. Fr. Palvadeau would later become the second Marianist director of the Collège Notre Dame d'Afrique).

The African mission, for Brother Philibert, led him to Brazzaville where he began teaching at the Collège Chaminade. There, he encouraged vocations among the youngest who were in the first cycle of secondary school. It was there that Brother Philibert developed an interest in working in a boarding school.

Brother Philibert arrived in the Ivory Coast, at the Collège Notre Dame d'Afrique, in 1966. He was one of the Marianist pioneers who took over after the departure of the Assumptionist Fathers who had been there since 1957. Notre Dame d'Afrique is the mission where Philibert would stay until his death.

Through the teaching of mathematics and French, Brother Philibert made a strong impression on the students in the middle school. He devoted himself to the education of young people in the boarding school.

At the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the CNDA, he was made Commander in the Order of Merit of National Education of Côte d'Ivoire.

Philibert remains forever, a brother marked by a life faithful to God. His regularity and punctuality at prayer testify to this. He was a man with a spirit of order. He liked to see things tidy and organized. We can say that he lived a cloistered life at Notre Dame d' Afrique College, as he rarely left the school grounds.

Bro. Patrice Comoe made a documentary in 2005 in which he asked Bro. Philibert the following question; "*What is your point of view concerning Marianist vocations in the Ivory Coast ?*" He said this:

"There are indeed vocations and I hope that there are some who will enter into teaching and education. You see, it would be a pity that after my departure, which will surely happen one day, that there will be no more Marianists in the whole boarding school of the College Notre Dame d' Afrique.»

Suffering from Alzheimer's disease for more than a decade, he died on September 27, 2021, in Abidjan, at the age of 89, with 72 years of religious profession.

May he rest in peace and intercede for vocations in Africa.