



Society of Mary - Compañía de María - Société de Marie
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May 4, 2022

Biography of Death Notice N. 11

The Province of France recommends to our fraternal prayers our dear brother, **Marcel BOISSELIER** priest, of the Marianist community of Madeleine, Bordeaux, France, who died in the service of the Blessed Virgin Mary on April 4, 2022 in Bordeaux, France, at the age of 89 with 69 years of religious profession.

Marcel Boisselier was born on January 23, 1933, in the village of Le Pallet, located in the wine region southeast of Nantes. Within a few years, his family moved to the nearby village of Clisson.

As a student at the School of the Immaculate Conception, run by the Marianists, he loved the atmosphere created by one of the brothers who was teaching him. This brother would regularly take out his violin and have the students sing along with him.

The enthusiastic young boy left for the postulate of Kerriou in Finistère where he

stayed for 4 years, from 1945 to 1949. He then entered the postulate in Antony, south of Paris, before going to the novitiate in La Tour de Sçay. He professed his first vows on November 18, 1952.

As a scholastic, he continued his studies in Bordeaux, La Rochelle and Belfort before returning to Brittany in 1955, where he became a teacher in Saint-Thégonnec.

The war was already raging in Algeria when he left to do his military service from November 1957 to February 1960. Here are a few thoughts concerning Marcel from one of the military chaplains: "He is an excellent religious, pious, dedicated, and possessing good common sense. In the small and isolated village where he was located, Marcel was able to fulfill his task well. He gave himself with ardor to the task of teacher-educator. He enjoyed great success in this role."

Upon his return from military service, he entered the international Marianist seminary Regina Mundi, in Fribourg, Switzerland. His ordination took place on April 3, 1965, in the same city.

For three years, he was the Chaplain for the young religious in formation in Antony. In 1968, he became the chaplain at the Institution Sainte-Marie in Belfort. He organized many camps, including abroad, introduced the Eucharistic Youth Movement in the school, and fostered many contacts with his joviality and good laugh.

In 1980, Marcel faced a personal challenge when the provincial invited him to leave this place where he was succeeding so well in order to go to Congo-Brazzaville. During a retreat in Châteauneuf-de-Galaure, he met Marthe Robin for a few brief minutes and told her of his distress. She said to him: "It will be the grace of your life." Indeed, Marcel lived this time in Africa as a grace from the Lord. He worked first in the bush, about a hundred kilometers from Brazzaville, at the mission of Voka. However, this isolated place did not suit him; he always needed to have people around him. In 1982, he was appointed to the parish of Notre-Dame d'Afrique in Abidjan, on the grounds of the Marianist school of the same name. He brought his big heart, his laughter and his good will, which touched the hearts of many people. The Marianist community formed a good missionary team. For several years, he was the director of this community. He found himself alone as a priest and, at the same time, he encountered health

problems. Meanwhile, the Marianists had just accepted the mission of the Marian shrine in Abidjan. The decision was made in 1996 to leave the parish of Notre-Dame d'Afrique and to entrust it to the diocese.

At this time, Marcel was able to find a cargo ship to return quietly to France for a sabbatical year. In his own words, this sabbatical turned into a "pleasant year". He participated in the life of the community of the Institution Sainte-Marie d'Antony and took courses at the Cathedral School of Paris. On December 3, 1996, Marcel escaped, by a quarter of an hour, the terrorist attack at the Port-Royal Regional Express Railway station. This time of intellectual and spiritual renewal and the exchange with the participants in these courses gave Marcel renewed impetus to leave for another mission in Abidjan. This time he went to the Marian Shrine. He joined this community on October 15, 1997. The position of Rector was not an easy one and tensions undermined it. He asked to return permanently to France. At the same time, he wanted the Marianists to continue the mission at the Marian Shrine. In a letter to the Provincial, he wrote the following prayer: "Virgin Mary, help us to stay in your house of the Marian Shrine and to make you better known and loved through our humble participation in this mission! Pray for us because our work is very fragile."

After waiting several years, despite his attachment to Africa and the Africans, he left this continent for good in 2002. He said goodbye to the shrine he often called "Martial" instead of Marian (with, of course, a great burst of laughter!).

Marcel went to live and work in Antony. He was known for his well-prepared homilies.

However, a surprise awaited him. The Province opened a new community near Marseille, in Saint-Victoret. The Marianists had taken over this house from a community of Marist Brothers in 2005. A simple presence quickly became a true missionary commitment in the parish. He became, according to his expression: "an assistant pastor".

As Marcel aged, he was losing his energy. However, he still wished to serve but in a new mission, according to his strengths. He was appointed to the Chapelle de la Madeleine in Bordeaux in 2016 but was unable to adjust to the new environment. The beginnings were difficult; he no longer had people he knew around him. He had to rebuild links, rebuild a network. Moreover, the handicap

of his deafness played tricks on him and locked him little by little into his own world. Nevertheless, he continued his work by creating a small group of people dedicated to reading and discussing. In this way, he performed a service for these people.

After several health crises surfaced, he entered the Fontaudun EHPAD (health care facility) on March 15. Marcel left for the Lord and the Virgin Mary on April 4. Thank you Marcel for your laughter, your faith, your shared joy, and the many contacts with friends whom you met along the way. May you now rest in the eternal joy of the Lord whom you have served so well.
