



Society of Mary - Compañía de María - Société de Marie
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May 30, 2022

Biography of Death Notice N. 17

The Province of France and the District of Ivory Coast recommend to our fraternal prayers our dear brother, **N'dri Aka FERDINAN**, of the Collège Notre-Dame d'Afrique Community of Abidjan, Ivory Coast, who died in the service of the Blessed Virgin Mary on May 23, 2022, in Abidjan, Ivory Coast, at the age of 50 with 14 years of religious profession.

N'Dri Aka Ferdinan was born on December 11, 1971 in Bongouanou, Ivory Coast. He was the fourth boy in a large family. He attended the public school of his village. At the age of 22, after some difficulties at school, he joined the soccer club of Blohorn, Abidjan, Ivory Coast. A year later, he stopped his soccer career and started to learn the trade of a tailor. At the same time, as he began his initiation into the Christian life in the parish of Saint Laurent de Yopougon, Abidjan. It was in that parish that he received his baptism and first communion and then his confirmation two years later. At the end of his Christian initiation, he became deeply involved in his parish in the animation of catechesis and

especially with the young Marianist fraternities, CLM.

After finishing his baccalaureate, he met Fr. Rosaire Côté, then master of the Marianist novices in Abidjan. He nourished the desire to give himself to God in the Society of Mary. He began to frequent the Marianist religious while pursuing his studies. In 2005, after graduating with a degree in business communications, he applied for admission to the pre-novitiate and then a year later to the novitiate.

In 2007, he professed his first vows in the Society of Mary. He went to study at the Centre Lassallien Africain, CELAF Institute to complete his religious formation and to learn about pedagogy. After his graduation, he was assigned in September 2009 to the Marianist Collège Notre Dame d'Afrique for one year, then to the Marianist Collège Saint Jean Bosco for three years. During these four years, he took Spanish courses at the University of Abidjan and obtained a Master's degree. In 2012, he was again assigned to Collège Notre Dame d'Afrique. There he began a mission as a Spanish teacher, catechetical animator, educator and counselor of young students. He maintained good relations with his colleagues and did not hesitate to make his soccer skills available to them during games organized by the school's employee association. At the parish, he also gave catechism classes and took advantage of the opportunity to do pastoral outreach by visiting his catechumens. He was often confronted with difficult situations, so much so that his superior gave him this advice before he was admitted to his final vows: "You are sensitive to the poor around you and there are many of them. You must continue to develop a spirit of compassion, knowing how to discern what help to give and not hesitate, as you have written, to talk to your community director."

In 2015, he professed his perpetual vows in the Society of Mary, in the parish of Notre Dame d'Afrique in Biétry, Abidjan.

A year later, his superiors entrusted him with the direction of the Collège Notre Dame d'Afrique. Ferdinan communicated to his colleagues and students, his hard work and discipline. With the support of his fellow community members and collaborators, he tried to maintain the legacy of his predecessors who had made it a school of excellence in Côte d'Ivoire. Unfortunately, two years later, Ferdinan felt physically diminished. He could no longer play sports the way he wanted to. Extensive health examinations revealed a congenital kidney failure.

Courageously, he did not let his suffering show and continued to give himself with joy, rigor, and resolution to his mission.

In February 2018, he had the joy of receiving a kidney transplant. Unfortunately, this joy lasted for a short time. His body had rejected the new kidney. He became practically deaf and lost the use of one eye. He stopped his mission as teacher and director of the college and started again with the dialysis. Taking care of his own health and leading his brothers in prayer became his new mission. It was difficult to accept, but whenever he could, he did not hesitate to join his brothers in chapel or at the table. He worked hard to accept his new disabilities.

On Monday, May 22, 2022, in the evening, the community had to take him to the hospital. Two hours later, he returned to the One he loved so much. He was 50 years old. Blessed be the name of God!

What should we remember about Bro. N'Dri Aka Ferdinan? Here is an excerpt from his letter requesting renewal of vows in 2011. He wrote: "I would like to thank God in a special way for his imprint in my life because all this allows me to understand and affirm: "everything I experienced, Lord, I now recognize, spoke to me only about you. Everything I live today, I live with you. »

May he rest in peace!
