



Society of Mary - Compañía de María - Société de Marie
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June 28, 2022

Biography of Death Notice N. 19

The Area Community of Canada recommends to our fraternal prayers our dear brother **Normand AUDET**, of the Marianist Residence Community of Saint-Anselme, Quebec, Canada, who died in the service of the Blessed Virgin Mary on June 12, 2022, in Saint-Anselme, Quebec, Canada, at the age of 92 with 74 years of religious profession.

Joseph Paul Normand Audet was born in Holyoke, Massachusetts, USA, on September 16, 1929 to Napoleon Audet and Alice Boutin. Normand's father had gone to the United States in order to earn money and then return to Quebec to become a farm owner so that he could live on his own. During this stay in the American town of Holyoke, where he worked in a paper mill, he met the woman who became his wife and who, like him, worked in the same town. From their union were born four children: two boys and two girls. Normand was the eldest. He began his studies at the Precious Blood Parish Primary School in Holyoke run by the Sisters of St. Anne of Lachine, Quebec (Canadian Foundation). The

courses were given in two languages "in the morning in French, in the afternoon in English".

In 1937, once they had enough money, the family decided to return to Quebec where they purchased a farm in the parish of St-Gervais, Bellechasse, Quebec. This was his father's home parish. Normand then completed his primary education by attending the parish school.

In 1938, Brother Joseph Provencher was the first Marianist to arrive in St. Anselme, Quebec. He would visit the schools in order to recruit possible candidates for this new community. Normand entered the postulate in August 1944. There he was able to continue his studies. Normand was happy in this small group of young residents, and decided to continue his journey. He left Quebec in August 1946 and went to Marynook, Galesville, Wisconsin to begin his novitiate under the direction of the Novice Master, Fr. John Leies. He made his first profession of vows on August 15, 1947.

Upon his return to Canada, he continued his studies at Villa Chaminade, Levis, Quebec for one year, and then at the Institut Ste-Marie, Saint-Anselme (1948). He obtained a diploma of complementary education in 1950. In 1957, by going to summer school for several years he earned a diploma of higher education. In the meantime, he had returned to Marynook to make his perpetual vows on July 17, 1951. He was still an American citizen. It was not until April 3, 1952, that he obtained his Canadian citizenship.

From 1950 to 1952, he taught at the St-Anselme elementary school. From 1952 to 1957, he was assistant to the novice master at Villa Chaminade, which had become the novitiate. From 1957 to 1960, he was again a teacher but this time at the elementary school in St-David de l'Auberivière, Quebec, facing the majestic St-Lawrence River. This would be his last position as a teacher: a certain difficulty in obtaining good discipline in the classroom led the school administration to suggest that he choose another field of work.

Then began a period of 18 years (1960-1978) during which Brother Normand masterfully directed the kitchen team of the Institut Ste-Marie. The postulate, the scholasticate and the community were located here until 1972. Later this became a comprehensive secondary school for the surrounding parishes. Faced with this abundance of personnel and students, Brother Normand understood

that he was overwhelmed. This is what he wrote to the Provincial on December 20, 1977: "It's a little surprising but it's true, the further along I get in my job in the high school cafeteria, the more overwhelmed I feel. It seems to me that there is a need for new blood. I am, as they say, at the end of my rope. Cooking for my community is fine; I work for my church family. However, for the public, I always feel like I'm not up to the task, I'm not giving the performance that they expect..."

He went on to write: "The job offered at the parish, that of sacristan, could suit me and I believe I could meet the requirements needed to fulfill this job well." It must be said that the parish priest of St. Anselm was a Marianist since 1972. Brother Normand spent 10 years as sacristan (1978-1988). In addition to his work as sacristan, he was very active in the preparation of Sunday liturgies, in pre-baptismal and baptismal preparation, in the choir, in visiting the elderly and in visiting the sick.

In 1988, he was appointed to the Maison Chaminade, Lévis, Quebec where he stayed until 2017. He was involved in many aspects of the life in the house: reception, interior and exterior maintenance, preparation of meals, so much so that in 1989 he was able to write in the *Canadian Marianist*, the monthly magazine of the former Province of Canada, a small text entitled : **Always be ready for service**. "In the past, I've done a lot of outside work. I liked that. These numerous contacts helped me to better appreciate my religious life and to accept its demands. Now I have the chance to dedicate myself completely to the Marianist Family, to be more available to it. This is a great golden opportunity for me to show that I love her in a special way..."

He was also part of the Cursillo movement while he was sacristan at St. Anselme. Once in Levis, he continued to attend this church movement and could write in 1993: "For 21 years I have been involved in this movement. It is good to be present in the Church movements according to our availability. A way to check the Christian pulse of our environment. Participating in group activities broadens my scope and, through contact with individuals, I discover a variety of riches. Moreover, it stimulates me in my daily life and in my prayer. It also makes me appreciate my Marianist Community. In my own way, as Blessed Father Chaminade wanted, I try to be a ferment of the Gospel."

Normand was a deeply religious man and a great worker. His joyful simplicity perfectly corresponds to the definition that one could read in article 299 of our

former Constitutions: "Simplicity is the candid disposition of a soul that goes straight to its goal, with the certainty of reaching it. This amiable simplicity, so constantly practiced and so magnificently exalted by the divine Master, sometimes under his own name, sometimes in the person of the little ones and the humble, is the mark of the children of God."

In 2017, because of ongoing physical needs, he went to the infirmary of the Fathers of the Blessed Sacrament in Quebec City where he enjoyed a quiet and joyful life. However, upon the closing of this infirmary, he was transferred to Fleuribel, (Honfleur, Quebec) in 2019. He stayed there until his transfer to a long-term care home in St-Anselme in 2021. He was in this facility when he passed away on Holy Trinity Sunday. May he rest in peace!