



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



**July 27, 2022.**

### **Biography of Death Notice N. 20**

The Region of France recommends to our fraternal prayers our dear brother **Roger GEYSSE**, priest, who resided at the Saint Amans Retreat House in Rodez, France. He died in the service of the Blessed Virgin Mary on June 28, 2022 in Rodez, France, at the age of 99 with 81 years of religious profession.

Roger was born at the foot of the Lacaune Mountains in southern France, in the extreme southeast of the department of Aveyron, in the commune of Mélagues, on January 6, 1923.

The Marianist boarding school Saint-Thomas de Brusque (Sainte-Marie before 1903), which had just reopened its doors, welcomed young Roger. Unfortunately, due to a lack of personnel, the establishment had to be closed in 1934. However, the young Roger was touched by the education he received from the Marianists. A year later, he entered the postulate in Montauban.

His vocation was growing and the southerner, despite the rumors of war and the fear that was beginning to grip him as he passed through Paris, left his family for the novitiate located in Luxembourg-Belgium at Saint-Remy-Signeulx. He made his promises as a novice on September 11, 1939. The proximity of the Luxembourg and German borders made the situation dangerous and forced the superiors to move the novitiate to Rèves (Belgium) in February 1940. On May 10, 1940, the war broke out with the first bombings in the region. On May 15, the decision was made: Everyone must leave that city. Then began an epic journey where scholastics and novices miraculously escaped death after a German plane bombed and strafed the coal train that was carrying them (no one was injured). A few days later, the novices arrived safe in Paris, on rue de Monceau, before leaving for Brittany where the novitiate would settle for a few months in Saint-Thégonnec. It was there that Roger made his first vows on September 12, 1940.

While the young Swiss religious of this group returned to their country, the others went to La Rochelle to continue their studies and prepare for the baccalaureate. Roger Geysse obtained his baccalaureate in Poitiers in 1943. It was then that he made his first stay at Sainte-Marie Grand-Lebrun: He wrote the following: "I continued my studies there and was part of the Class of 1944. I was in Grand-Lebrun when a German D.C.A. shell exploded in the dormitory. I was one of the religious who had the painful duty of preparing Pierre and Jacques for their funeral. Meanwhile Father Raoult accompanied François to the hospital. Two days later, François died due to the severity of his wounds. "

Mobilized in 1945-1946, Roger was sent to Germany as a member of the occupation troops. After that, he went to the Saint-Pierre school in Réalmont as a teacher. Roger professed his final vows in Réquista on August 3, 1947. The next year he began his formation at the International Marianist Seminary in Fribourg, Switzerland and was ordained a priest in that city by Bishop Charrière on July 20, 1952.

The young priest was sent to the Chaminade postulate, newly installed in Fiac near Toulouse, as a teacher and chaplain.

After fifteen years in Fiac (1953-1968), he received a new mission and returned to Grand-Lebrun: "When I came to meet Fr. Cazelles, the director, to find out

what my work would be, he told me in his direct manner: - I have a lot of teachers. I need a chaplain to start the new catechism classes. You are still young! It is up to you to organize the classes, starting with the catechesis of the 8th and 7th grades and next year you will continue in the 6th grade. I complied by saying: - I am a religious and a priest; I am ready to get started. “

"Already in 1970, there were parents who were beginning to be catechists, especially with the Sisters of the Cenacle. Richard (diocesan director of religious education and an Assumptionist) strongly urged me to form a group in Grand-Lebrun. In response to my reluctance to commit, he said: - Look everywhere and in your home too, in a few years there will not be enough priests and religious, so start to prepare new catechists. “

Baptism preparations, First Communions, Professions of Faith, Confirmations, Eucharistic Youth Movement, Scouts, cycling camps... Roger was very busy but he knew how to surround himself with many people to work with him, training them and making them responsible. He carefully informed himself of the different catechetical paths proposed and recognized by the Church in order to adapt to the changes.

During the profession of faith, the young people formed the luminous cross, which marked many of them: "It recalled the paschal mystery of Jesus who died and rose for us. As Christians, who confess our faith, we have to keep the lamp of our baptism lit. The flame taken from the Paschal candle by parents is passed on to the young people's candles and the parents step aside. The young people took responsibility for making this luminous cross and making their profession of faith. A Marian vigil allowed them to place their lives under the gaze of Mary by receiving a white rose. This flower was the symbol their dedication.”

In 2007, after 39 years of presence in Grand-Lebrun, Roger participated in the foundation of the community of the shrine of Verdélais as chaplain. Gradually, his health declined, although he was mentally very alert. Thus, in 2013 he joined the diocesan house of Saint-Amans in Rodez, where he found priests he had known in the past. He continued to form himself and to keep abreast of the life in the world and in the Church, in particular thanks to the KTO channel (Catholic television) with the rosary broadcast live from Lourdes.

Roger was a man of prayer, deeply rooted in the faith. As a true son of Fr.

Chaminade, he sowed the seeds of faith. Good servant, may he now be welcomed by his Lord and his Mother to whom he had given everything.

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