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Death Notice No. 28 (To all Unit Administrations):



The Province of the United States of America recommends to our fraternal prayers our dear brother, **JAMES IMHOF**, priest of the Cupertino Marianist community, who died in the service of the Blessed Virgin Mary on October 5, 2011, in Cupertino, California, USA, at the age of 90 with 71 years of religious profession.

Fr. James lived an extraordinary life. He grew up on the East Coast, was ordained in Europe, served in Africa and Puerto Rico, and spent his retirement on the West Coast. Along the way he educated and ministered to thousands, heard confessions in 10 languages and learned about the landscapes and native birds in each region he served.

James Alexander Imhof, who went by Jim, was born on July 17, 1921, in Brooklyn, New York, to Anthony and Mary (Hyatt) Imhof. He had two brothers and one sister. Early in life, James and his brother developed a passion for birdwatching that would continue their entire lives.

In 1935 James entered the postulate in Beacon, New York, and moved to the novitiate at Mount St. John in Dayton, Ohio, four years later. He professed first vows in 1940 and earned a bachelor's degree from the University of Dayton in 1943. Shortly after, he was assigned to serve as a teacher at Trinity High School in Sioux City, Iowa, where he would stay until 1947. While there, he returned to Dayton to profess perpetual vows in 1944. After Trinity, Jim moved to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, where he taught for two years at St. John the Baptist High School.

Jim crossed the Atlantic in 1948 to attend the Regina Mundi Seminary in Fribourg, Switzerland. Fr. Jim was ordained a priest on July 22, 1951. Between 1952 and 1960, Fr. Jim served at Purcell Marian in Cincinnati, Ohio, Misión Noell in Puerto Rico and St. Joseph High School in Cleveland, Ohio.

Fr. Jim set off for an adventure and challenge in 1961 when he began serving as a teacher in Malawi and Zambia. He was considered an excellent teacher and chaplain during his time in Africa and was proud of the fact while at Nkhata Bay Secondary School in Malawi, 23 of his 25 students passed the Cambridge Overseas Exam. The opportunity to serve in Africa opened up a new world of birdwatching for Fr. Jim. While in Malawi, the number of birds Fr. Jim identified in his lifetime passed 200.

In 1969, Fr. Jim returned to Puerto Rico, an island he called the “Paradise of the Atlantic.” He served as a teacher at Colégio San Jose until 1981. While there, he learned Spanish, founded a club for people interested in radio, and, of course, birdwatched.

Between 1981 and 1984, Fr. Jim returned to Africa to teach at Matero Boys Secondary School in Zambia. Fr. Jim then served as a pastor at Misión Noell in Puerto Rico until 1998.

Bro. Francisco González said Fr. Jim loved his time in the mountains of Puerto Rico at Misión Noell, and the people loved his friendly attitude. Fr. Jim worked hard to become fluent in Spanish so he could give homilies in his parishioners’ native language.

Fr. Jim served in Florida before arriving at the Cupertino Marianist Community in 2003. Grace Pancipanci, director of nursing at the community, recalls Fr. Jim as a friendly man who was rarely seen without binoculars and a camera. Even in the last years of his life, Fr. Jim was still an avid birdwatcher. When he became too sick to leave the residence, he would stare out his window, hoping to spot a bird. Fr. Jim called northern California a paradise for birdwatchers.

Bro. James Christiana said Fr. Jim was the first person to talk to him after he moved to Cupertino. He said Fr. Jim had a heightened sense of devotion to Mary and would always keep a rosary near him. Bro James was with Fr. Jim, praying the rosary, when he passed away.

May he rest in peace.