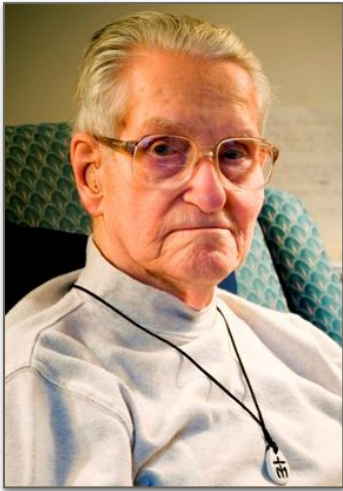


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August 7, 2012

**Death Notice No. 14 (To all Unit Administrations):**



The Province of the United States of America, recommends to our fraternal prayers our dear brother, **FRANCIS DEIBEL** of the Mercy Siena Marianist Community, Dayton, Ohio, who died in the service of the Blessed Virgin Mary on July 30, 2012 in Dayton, Ohio, USA, at the age of 103 with 85 years of religious profession.

Bro. Frank led a long life dedicated to others and to Mary. While serving in Marianist high schools and universities for over 70 years, he touched the lives of thousands of students. Even in the late stages of his life, he kept in touch with friends and made new ones. At the time of his death, Bro. Frank was reported to be the oldest vowed male religious in the United States.

“The Good Lord has blessed me with 102 years of life,” Bro. Frank said in 2010. “I’m not sure why he has gifted me with this longevity, but someone told me recently that I have lived this long so that I can be an inspiration to others. If that is the case, I’m happy to do so.”

Francis Aloysius Deibel was born on August 13, 1908, in Columbus, Ohio, to Joseph and Marie (Schmelzer) Deibel. He was one of five children. When he was in 7th grade, a Marianist brother came to his school to speak about vocations. Bro. Frank was impressed and entered the Marianists’ postulate in Dayton, Ohio, in 1922.

“I thought I was in heaven, I was so glad to be there,” Bro. Frank told the Dayton Daily News and The Catholic Telegraph in 2011. “The first night (at the postulate) we had benediction. It was so beautiful.”

Bro. Frank professed first vows on August 15, 1926, and professed perpetual vows five years later on August 10, 1931, in Dayton. During this time, Bro. Frank earned a bachelor’s degree from the University of Dayton and served in Marianist schools in Ohio.

Between 1930 and 1954, Bro. Frank was a teacher and librarian at Hamilton Catholic High School in Hamilton, Ohio, Purcell High School in Cincinnati, and Cathedral Latin School and St. Joseph High School in Cleveland. Bro. Frank taught English, Latin and religion courses. In 1943, he earned a degree in library science from Western Reserve (now Case Western Reserve) in Cleveland.

“I feel my best days were when I was in high schools teaching,” Bro. Frank said in 1996. “I felt I was doing something worthwhile.”

With the exception of a year teaching in Australia, Bro. Frank served at University of Dayton libraries from 1954 until 2001. Bro. Frank enjoyed his work because he was able to interact with students. He kept in touch with many of them after they graduated.

“Bro. Frank exuded Marianist hospitality,” Bro. Ray Fitz said. “He had the ability to meet people and immediately make them feel welcome.”

Nadia Smith met Bro. Frank through a friend and kept in touch with him for many years.

“I will miss his sweetness, thoughtfulness and prayerful willingness,” Nadia said. “I know he prayed for me and my family while he was here. He’s still praying for me now in heaven.”

Bro. Frank retired to the Mercy Siena Gardens Community in Dayton in 2001. He stayed active through walks to Mass and daily prayer. He also spent a few hours a day on a computer, emailing friends. Fr. Tom Thompson marveled at Bro. Frank’s interest in others, saying he had dozens of people he would call or email on their birthdays. He had many visitors, including students from UD. Patrick and Kathy Hylta began visiting Bro. Frank when they were students and Bro. Frank was a guest of honor at their wedding in 2011.

“He was an extremely special part of our lives,” Kathy told the Dayton Daily News. “He shared emails and jokes and always had a prayer card or sentimental thought to pass on. He was an amazing individual who was a role model to me.”

Bro. Frank also kept in touch with his family, including five nieces and nephews, 21 great nieces and nephews, 38 great-great nieces and nephews, and six great-great-great nieces and nephews.

Bro. Frank said in 2010, “If there is one thing I have learned in this life, it is that God knows what He is doing. He loves us and He takes care of us.”

May he rest in peace.