

CURIA GENERALIZIA MARIANISTI
Via Latina 22 - 00179 Roma, Italia
Tel. (39-06) 704 75 892 - Fax (39-06) 700 0406
E-mail: gensecsm@smcuria.it

September 18, 2012

Death Notice No. 20 (To all Unit Administrations):



The Province of the United States of America, recommends to our fraternal prayers our dear brother, **JOSEPH SPEHAR** who died in the service of the Blessed Virgin Mary on September 10, 2012 in Cincinnati, Ohio, USA, at the age of 85 with 68 years of religious profession.

Joseph Michael Spehar was born on February 21, 1927, in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, to Stephen and Mary (Pavlesio) Spehar. He had one brother and one sister. Joe was impressed with the Marianists while attending North Catholic High School in Pittsburgh and entered the postulate in 1942. He entered the novitiate the following year and professed first vows on August 22, 1944.

After earning a bachelor's degree from the University of Dayton in 1947, Bro. Joe taught at the now-closed Cathedral Latin School in Cleveland, Ohio, until 1960. While serving there, he professed perpetual vows as a Marianist brother on August 17, 1950, in Dayton, Ohio. Bro. Joe taught mathematics courses and coached the speech and debate team. After earning a master's degree in mathematics from The Ohio State University in 1958, Bro. Joe served as assistant principal of Cathedral Latin.

"My years at Cathedral Latin were most memorable," Bro. Joe said in 2004. "It was truly a wonderful, peaceful family-filled place with talented, caring and joyful brothers. They instilled a similar spirit in the student body."

In 1960, Bro. Joe became director and founding principal of Chaminade High School (now Chaminade-Madonna College Preparatory) in Hollywood, Florida. He returned to Ohio in 1963, serving at St. Joseph High School (now Villa Angela-St. Joseph High School) in Cleveland and Chaminade High School (now Chaminade Julianne Catholic High School) in Dayton until 1970. Between 1971 and 1986, Bro. Joe served at Covington High School in Covington, Kentucky, and Purcell High School (now Purcell Marian High School) in Cincinnati, Ohio.

When Bro. Joe retired from teaching in 1986, his interest in prayer groups led him to co-found the Lighthouse Community with Sr. Christine Edwards. Lighthouse serves lay people in the Cincinnati area through healing and evangelization. Sr. Christine had known Bro. Joe since the 1970s.

"He had a gentle encouragement for people learning to walk in the Holy Spirit," Sr. Christine said. "He was a very prayerful man."

Bro. Joe was a man who knew something about everything, Sr. Christine said. “People would ask him all sorts of questions, but he never made anyone feel beneath him,” she said. Sr. Christine also recalled how Bro. Joe fulfilled his duties at Lighthouse until his death, even though he felt very ill.

“We had a Mass just a few days before Bro. Joe passed away,” Sr. Christine said. “The auxiliary bishop attended and after only a few minutes with Bro. Joe, he commented what a holy man Bro. Joe was.”

Bro. Jim Brown said Bro. Joe had the gift of being aware when the Holy Spirit was working in a person’s life, and he could often describe to that person how it was happening.

“He knew how to accompany people in their spiritual lives and entrust them to the Lord’s care and healing,” said Provincial Fr. Martin Solma.

May he rest in peace.