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Death Notice No. 6 (To all Unit Administrations):



The Province of the United States of America recommends to our fraternal prayers our dear brother, **RICHARD (DICK) OLSEN**, of the St. Clair Marianist Community (Cleveland), who died in the service of the Blessed Virgin Mary on February 22, 2014 in Dayton, Ohio, USA, at the age of 76 with 55 years of religious profession.

Bro. Dick began his ministry as a teacher and spent 22 years working in Africa. In the second half of his career, he ministered as a massage therapist, providing a healing touch to the seriously ill.

Richard John Olsen was born on August 18, 1937, in Cleveland, Ohio. He was the younger of two sons in the family of Estelle (Wolinski) and Anthony Olsen. Bro. Dick attended Cathedral Latin School in Cleveland.

He entered the novitiate at Marcy, New York, where he professed first vows on September 8, 1958. Bro. Dick received a bachelor's degree in education in 1960 from the University of Dayton.

Bro. Dick professed perpetual vows on August 15, 1962, in Beacon, New York, while he was working as a counselor at St. John's Home in Brooklyn, New York. He remained at St. John's Home through 1964. He then served one year each as a teacher at St. James High School in Chester, Pennsylvania, and North Catholic High School in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. He earned a master's degree in education from St. John's University in Jamaica, New York, in 1965.

Bro. Dick's ministry took a significant turn in 1966, when he was assigned to teach at St. John's Secondary School in Fugar, Nigeria. At the time, the country was in a state of upheaval, and Bro. Dick noted in a 1967 letter that "international travel" was easy because Nigeria changed names repeatedly in the space of a few months. He lived in four different countries without relocating.

Because of the ongoing civil war, Bro. Dick was transferred to Zambia in 1968. He spent the next 20 years at Matero Boys' Secondary School in Lusaka. Except for a short stint as headmaster, he spent his time in the classroom teaching mechanical drawing, a topic for which he had great passion. He noted that his students progressed to rank first in the nation in that field. "Dick was a renown mechanical drawing expert in Zambia," Bro. Skip Matthews said. "He was a wonderful teacher. Very well-respected."

Bro. Dick returned to the United States in 1988 and immersed himself in a new ministry, which he called "as exciting as teaching." He became a licensed massage therapist and served the critically ill, in particular those with HIV and AIDS. At the time, these patients were social outcasts – untouchables in the eyes of many. Living in San Francisco, Bro. Dick gave an estimated 10,000 massages over the course of 20 years. He wrote: "More happens than either the client or I can explain. It is truly something God has entrusted me to give to others."

Bro. Dick returned to his home state of Ohio in 2011, where he continued a busy lifestyle. "Dick was a very determined Marianist brother," said Fr. Ted Cassidy, who lived with him in Cleveland.

“He cooked tasty and healthy meals. He executed the renovation of our community house with care for details and modest changes, keeping expenses down. He was a great reader and a lover of classical music. He tutored at our St. Aloysius Grade School. He was a fine person to live with,” Fr. Ted said.

“Bro. Dick was the heart of Jesus for so many, but especially for the least and the marginalized: from the classroom, to his work in Africa, to his many years caring for persons with AIDS in California. May he now feel the embrace of our loving God, an embrace he provided to so many,” Bro. Steve Glodek said.

May he rest in peace.