

MATTHEW FRANKLIN KOHMESCHER WAS BORN ON THE FIRST DAY OF OCTOBER IN 1921 IN NORWOOD, OHIO – A SUBURB OF CINCINNATI - TO THERESA AND LOUIS KOHMESCHER. HIS FAMILY CONSISTED OF THREE SISTERS.....MARGARET, I.E. MARGARET WALSH, WHOM WE ARE VERY PLEASE TO WELCOME HERE THIS EVENING AND THANK HER FOR COMING.....

HIS OTHER SISTERS WERE LORETTA KAELIN AND BETTY WEHRMAN BOTH OF WHOM ARE DECEASED.....

HE HAD TWO BROTHERS, DAVID, WHO IS DECEASED AND NORMAN WHO IS CONFINED TO A NURSING HOME IN GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN.....

MATT ATTENDED PURCELL HIGH SCHOOL WHERE HE BECAME INTERESTED IN THE MARIANISTS.....

HE ENTERED THE SOCIETY OF MARY AND PROFESSED FIRST VOWS ON AUGUST 14, 1938 AND PROFESSED FINAL VOWS ON AUGUST 15, 1943.

SINCE WORLD WAR II WAS STILL IN ITS FINAL DAYS HE BEGAN HIS SEMINARY IN AUGUST OF 1945 IN ST. MEINRAD IN INDIANA BUT THE NEXT YEAR WENT TO FRIBOURG, SWITZERLAND WHERE HE FINISHED THE SEMINARY AND WAS ORDAINED ON JULY 18, 1948.....

AFTER ORDINATION HE REMAINED IN FRIBOURG AND IN 1950 RECEIVED A DOCTOR OF SACRED THEOLOGY DEGREE WITH HIS THESIS ON THE VOW OF STABILITY IN THE SOCIETY OF MARY....

WHEN HE RETURNED TO THE STATES HE WAS CHAPLAIN FOR THE POSTULANTS AT MT. ST. JOHN.....

IN THE 1950'S HE ALSO TAUGHT AT ST. JOSEPH'S IN CLEVELAND IN ITS EARLY YEARS OF EXISTENCE AND AT CHAMINADE HIGH SCHOOL HERE IN DAYTON...

FROM 1954 TO 1959 HE WAS MASTER OF SCHOLASTICS AT MT. ST. JOHN....

IN OTHERS WORDS, HE WAS IN CHARGE OF THE YOUNG MARIANISTS IN TRAINING AND ATTENDING UD.....HE WAS ONLY IN HIS 30'S

SOMEHOW, ALSO IN THE 50'S, I IMAGINE DURING THE SUMMERS, HE WAS ABLE TO RECEIVE HIS MASTERS IN EDUCATION FROM WESTERN RESERVE UNIVERSITY IN CLEVELAND....

IN 1959, WHILE TEACHING AT CHAMINADE HIGH SCHOOL, HERE IN DAYTON.....DURING THE DAY

MATT BEGAN HIS CAREER AT THE UNIVERSITY OF DAYTON BY TEACHING THEOLOGY PART TIME AT NITE

A CAREER WHICH WOULD END UP SPANNING SIX DECADES.....AND MORE THAN FORTY-FIVE YEARS.....

BESIDES TEACHING THEOLOGY, HIS TIME AT UD INCLUDED A BRIEF STINT AS AN ASSISTANT DEAN OF ARTS AND SCIENCES AND CHAIR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES FOR OVER TWO DECADES – HE HELPED TO NAVIGATE THE DEPARTMENT THROUGH THE TURBULENT POST-VATICAN YEARS 1962 TO 1983....THAT TURBULENCE WAS REFLECTED IN THE THREE DIFFERENT NAMES FOR THE DEPARTMENT DURING THOSE YEARS....

HE WAS NAMED DISTINGUISHED SERVICE PROFESSOR IN 1990...

HE WAS THE NATIONAL PRESIDENT OF THE COLLEGE THEOLOGY SOCIETY....

HE PUBLISHED TWO BOOKS....

CATHOLICISM TODAY IN 1980, WHICH SOLD WELL OVER 100,000 COPIES AND WAS A LEADING TEXT FOR INTRODUCTORY COURSES ON CATHOLICISM

AND GOOD MORALITY IS LIKE....IN 1987

HE WAS NAMED DISTINGUISHED SERVICE PROFESSOR IN 1990

AFTER HIS RETIREMENT IN 1992 FROM THE UD FACULTY....HE

CONTINUED HIS SERVICE AT UD....PRIMARILY IN CAMPUS MINISTRY,

ESPECIALLY AT FOUNDERS HALL, WHERE HE WAS KNOWN AS THE

GRANDFATHER TO FOUNDERS HALL...

.AND HE WAS ALSO VERY ACTIVE IN ADMISSIONS IN HOSTING

PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS AND FAMILIES IN HIS LATTER YEARS....

ONE OF MY COLLEAGUES AT MIAMI VALLEY CAME UP TO ME YESTERDAY

AND ASKED IF I KNEW THE MARIANIST WHO DIED....

HE HAD SEEN HIS FACE ON TV AND RECOGNIZED HIM...

AND SAID WHAT A GREAT GUY HE WAS.....

OVER 6 YRS. AGO WHEN RON WAS BEGINNING HIS GRADUATE PROGRAM

HERE AT UD....EVIDENTLY HE WAS LOST ON CAMPUS.....

MATT NOTICED IT AND CAME UP TO HIM AND SAID, "YOU LOOK LIKE

YOUR LOST" AND HELPED HIM GET TO WHERE HE WANTED TO GO....

THAT WAS MATTBEING OF SERVICE AND ANEXCELLENT HOST FOR

THE UNIVERSITY.....

***HIS MINISTRY IN RECENT YEARS ALSO INCLUDED HELPING OUT AT OUR
LADY OF MERCY PARISH AND HOLY ANGELS PARISH, AS WELL AS YOUTH
RETREATS AT BERGAMO.....***

LAST SATURDAY, I VISITED MATT A FEW HOURS BEFORE HE DIED....

***HE WAS IN A COMA-LIKE STATE.....AND HAD BEEN FOR SEVERAL
DAYS....***

.UNDER RESPITE CARE WITH HOSPICE OF DAYTON AT MERCY-SIENA.....

WITHOUT NUTRITION AND HYDRATION....

***I REMARKED HOW STRIKING IT WAS THAT HE HAD GONE FIVE DAYS
UNDER THOSE CONDITONS....***

THE HOSPICE NURSE SAID.... “HE HAS A STRONG HEART”

***AND WE CAN SAY, BASED ON HIS LIFE AND HIS SERVICE AND THIS
TURNOUT.....HE NOT ONLY HAD A STRONG HEART.....***

HE HAD A BIG HEART....

MAY HE RIP