

December 31, 2007

Death Notice No. 41 (To all Unit Administrations):



The Province of the France, recommends to our fraternal prayers our dear brother, **HENRI ORDINAIRE**, who died in the service of the Blessed Virgin Mary on December 24, 2007 in Plessis-Robinson, France, in the 84th year of his age and the 67th year of his religious profession.

Bro. Henri ORDINAIRE was born on March 16, 1924, at Montrond (Doubs). He entered the postulate at La Tour de Sçay on September 7, 1937. He made his novitiate at Antony from November 4, 1940 to November 21, 1941. With perpetual vows, he made his final commitment on July 31, 1947, at Fribourg, Switzerland.

After his perpetual vows, he was assigned to Villa St. Jean in Fribourg, where he was put in charge of the wine cellar. His stay in Switzerland ended in '69 when he was assigned to Sainte Marie in Antony as sacristan and in charge of wine.

What can we remember about Bro. Henri Ordinaire?

He was the prototype of the working brother, exemplary in his category. From the country and especially from the Jura, he was gifted with extra-“ordinary” good common sense which gave him a particularly winning personality. In his various assignments, Henri had lived many years with the Swiss, Americans and, in the end, with Parisians. He was able to accommodate himself easily to each way of living and to each culture.

His accent betrayed his origin. He came from an area where mountains fraternized with high plateaus, where spacious pasture lands were limited by country borders, where the climate is easily made up of record cold and heat. Henry also came from a country where the cheese – in this case, Comté -- is sampled by cutting off large slices. He benefited from a closely knit and supportive family. His family gave him their whole affection, so he liked to be with his family at every vacation time.

He loved to work at his own rhythm and in silence. He was a man of prayer and undoubtedly very intimate with God but this did not necessarily appear openly. For many years, Henri carried out his duties as purveyor of wine, bread and flowers with grace and dedication.

He was a great sommelier. Every generation of young religious appreciated him at Villa St Jean. He knew how to find volunteers to help him put the wine he ordered from Spain into bottles. Several brothers could tell very “colourful” stories about this work.

His second activity was the distribution of bread to the pupils. This activity caused him many difficulties. Unable to handle the waste of bread by the students, he had to resign from this activity, to be true to himself.

Another function in which he excelled was the upkeep of flowers and green plants. He talked to his flowers and plants in the wide corridors at Ste. Marie and St. Jean. But the main activity of his

professional life was being sacristan at Fribourg and Antony from October '69 on. How many hours spent in the sacristy preparing chapels and ceremonies calling for several priestly vestments, with the whole string of servers and numerous priests! His sacristy was a place of order and silence. Meticulous in his affairs, Henri kept a certain discipline in and around the chapel. The damage caused by flood waters in 2006 made him quite unhappy. His work as full-time sacristan was never done haphazardly. Pastoral and liturgical teams gladly accepted Henri's advice. The sacristy was his element and he watched jealously over the carrying out of the different offices. To serve the altar was for him to serve the church almost like a deacon's vocation.

Henri was loved by everyone; he was mischievous and humorous. He was always full of attention for his fellow brothers. For several years, the community had invited him to take spend time at Avène. What spicy reflections from the brothers at the end of each three-week session!

His strong interior life was evident. Throughout his entire life he was committed to the Society of Mary and to Mary, our mother. Henri led a simple life and knew how to keep it that way, despite the fact that he was always surrounded by teachers!