

Remembrance of Father Thomas Hogan, SM

Marianist Center – Cupertino, Calif.

Monday, April 5, 2010

Once again we gather as a community
to remember one of our recently deceased fellow Brothers.
It is a special occasion for us to thank God
for what God has done for him and through him
and to pray confidently for the grace of eternal rest.
Father Tom Hogan will be remembered in our Necrology
as having died in Cupertino on March 28, 2010.
He was, as you know, in his 93rd year
his 73rd year as a Marianist,
his sixth year as a member of our community (the first years at Villa Saint Joseph)

Ever since 1994 I have been privileged
to live with many of my fellow-Brothers in their last years here in Cupertino.
As I pass by their pictures on the hall leading to our dining room,
a glance is sufficient to bring back many memories.
The pictures recall not only our years together here,
but I knew most of these men in their prime, some from my first days in Hawaii.
I often reflect on what a gift it is to know someone early in life
and to experience what it means to age with grace.
Tom was not an easy man to know.
But I remember meeting him
as we both began a new phase in our lives in Honolulu in 1947.
And I came to know him well in the first years of what is now Chaminade University.
He was a serious, hard working teacher – but the chief trait that comes to mind
was that he was a strong competitor.
That characterized his youth; it undoubtedly sustained him in his final years.

Before inviting you to add other remembrances of Tom,
I want to share with you two other tributes – both of which are included
in the official Marianist biographical sketch that is being read throughout the Society.
Both are from former students...

From Guatemala, Brother Bill Farrell wrote:
(After commenting on Tom's passion for sunbathing)
"He was a strong person who knew his mind and a good community man.
He was a good priest. I am a better person for having known him."

And from the southland, Father Ted Ley stated
that he considered the course Tom taught on theodicy as one of his all time favorites.
"I believe we learned theodicy well,
but we also learned about the thinking of Thomas Aquinas,
how to reason, how to problem solve."

Then, before inviting the community to add other remembrances of Tom to enrich our prayer of thanksgiving I told them that Brother Bob Wade was with us in spirit as he continued to recuperate well from surgery at O'Connor Hospital. Bob had two comments – one that one time when he and Tom were at the same table, Tom told him to keep quiet! I told Bob that Tom wasn't the first to do that, and certainly not the last! Bob's other remark was that he had the nurses take him to Tom's room as he was on his way to the doctor's office – he greeted Tom on his birthday and was gratified to find Tom smiling.

A summary of other remembrances:

A stern director, but dedicated and hard working. As Director and Chaplain of the Maui community, as a dedicated priest he celebrated mass for and with the community every day. During his years in Honolulu, he found new life – and was friendly and relaxed - at our beach home in Punaluu. He was always characterized as serious and quiet. In his later years he showed great patience.

Father Jim Imhof, who is especially devoted to caring for those confined to their rooms, recalled how he prayed with Father Tom when bringing him communion. We learned that Father Tom made a side trip during his sabbatical year in Rome in order to visit his brother's grave in Normandy. Father Larry Mann gave Father Tom the title "The Marianist Golfer" first as a player then as a spectator and wondered how he handled the Tiger Woods scandal. Father Larry also mentioned that Father Tom followed him as pastor of Holy Family parish in Honolulu.

Introduction and homily at the Mass of Christian Burial, April 6, 2010

In calling Father Thomas Hogan to Himself,
 God has called us together to celebrate this great act of hope.
 We place our complete confidence in the words of Jesus:
"I am the Resurrection.
Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live."
 We are gathered here this evening
 to proclaim our belief that by death,
 life is changed, not taken away.
 This is our great hope.
 I always find it heartening to realize
 that so many in our worldwide Marianist Family
 are united with us in the celebration of this eucharist
 which transcends time and space.
 Now, in union with all who are with us
 in thought and prayer and love, let us pray...
 Almighty and gracious God, you who are compassion and love,
 grant to Father Thomas Hogan
 the grace to experience the resurrection for which we all hope.
 And grant to all of us the grace to find strength in our faith
 as we pray confidently for his entrance into eternal life.
 We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Last week, on the eve of the Triduum –
 - the most holy days of remembering
 Our Lord's passion, death and resurrection -
 we celebrated Father Tom's birthday,
 thanking God for giving Tom life – long life!
 Most of us who greeted him that day,
 found him weak, but peaceful and appreciative.
 This evening, as we continue the celebration of Easter,
 we marvel at the gift of eternal life
 that Jesus promised all who believe in him –
 and Tom certainly believed in our Risen Savior.
 Our opening hymn undoubtedly reflects
 a dominant thought in Tom's last days:
If we die with the Lord, we shall live with the Lord.

Ever since my father died in Easter Week many years ago
 I have always considered it a special grace
 to be able to celebrate the passing from this life to the next
 in the midst of the Easter celebration of the resurrection of Jesus.
 I am grateful to those who helped plan this liturgy
 that we stayed with the readings offered us for Tuesday of Easter Week.
 All that we heard this evening
 emphasizes the simple but wonderful reality of Easter: Christ lives!
 We heard a selection from Peter's words spoken on the first Pentecost Sunday,
 words that inspire and encourage and challenge:
 a call to a continual openness to change, a call to make an exciting new beginning.
 Peter's words were not just for the people of his day - but for us here and now.
 As Peter said so forcefully, this promise of the Spirit is for you!

After singing Alleluia, we turned to one of the most remarkable scenes in John's gospel.
 Let's identify with Mary Magdalene as we reflect on this scene.
 Mary Magdalene did not recognize the angels as angels.
 But do we recognize the angels God sends into our lives?
 Mary Magdalene didn't recognize Christ
 even when Jesus spoke to her and questioned her.
 But do we recognize Jesus speaking to us?
 Why did Mary fail to recognize the angels and Jesus?
 Why do we fail to recognize the ways God is at work in our lives?
 One possible explanation is that Mary Magdalene was so taken up with her grief,
 that her tears blinded her.
 It is certainly true that when we are turned in on ourselves, nursing our own hurts,
 we often fail to note the signs of God's presence in our lives.

One of the gifts God gave Tom were many years of quiet as he aged gracefully.
 His greatest delights were peaceful silence and glorious nature.
 He loved the beauty of Hawaii and California, both the Southland and the Bay Area.
 We will never know many of the thoughts that went through his mind
 in the years he lived with us,
 but as I said yesterday, Tom was a great competitor in his youth,
 and he certainly did not lose that spirit as he aged gracefully before our eyes.

He is the only Marianist I know who was placed under hospice care,
only to be taken off hospice care because he stayed strong longer than expected.
It was only in his last days that he was placed again under hospice care
to ease his passing from this world to the next.
I believe the great gift that God offered Tom in his last years
was the awareness of Christ's personal love.
It is Christ who always takes the initiative.
Our role is to see and hear and then respond with all our heart.
I profoundly believe that this is what happened in Tom's life as he prepared calmly
for his inevitable passing from this life to the next.
Let us hope and pray
that when God finally came to take Tom from this life,
he was able to see clearly at last our Risen Savior,
just as Mary Magdalene finally recognized Jesus
when he called her by name.

At the end of the mass, Father Jack Russi identified our guests and invited all to
continue the remembrance of Father Tom Hogan with an Irish wake, Cupertino style.
Then we sang Brother Howard's "May God Hold You" and the Salve Regina.

Stephen Tutas, SM

Remembrance of Fr. Tom Hogan

Fr. Tom Hogan was born on March 25, 1918, in Cleveland, Ohio, to Thomas and Margaret McCaffrey Hogan. He was baptized at St. Francis de Sales Church in McKees Rocks, Penn., on April 14, 1918, and confirmed at Christ the King Church in Cleveland, Ohio, on December 14, 1930. He is a 1936 alumnus of Cathedral Latin High School. He is survived by a younger brother.

Tom entered the novitiate at Mount Saint John on August 14, 1936. He professed first vows at Mount Saint John on August 15, 1937, and perpetual vows on August 19, 1942.

Tom completed his undergraduate work at the University of Dayton with a bachelor's degree in education in 1940. Tom was awarded a master's degree in political science from the University of Pittsburgh in 1944. Thirty years later Tom completed his course work and dissertation on a second master's degree, this time in theology, from the University of San Francisco in 1973.

Following his studies at the scholasticate in Dayton, he began his teaching ministry at North Catholic High School in Pittsburgh in August 1940. Tom taught there until he entered the seminary at St. Meinrad's in June of 1944. As part of the last class of Marianists to study at St. Meinrad's he was ordained to the priesthood on June 11, 1946. At the conclusion of his seminary studies a year later he was assigned to teach at Saint Louis High School in Honolulu in 1947.

Tom became the director and principal of St. Joseph's High School in Hilo, Hawai'i, in 1948. His next assignment brought him to St. Joseph High School in Alameda, California, also as director and principal. He completed two terms at St. Joseph's.

He then began a very long stay in Hawai'i, first at Saint Louis High School in 1956 and at Chaminade College the following year. The first of many parish assignments began in 1962 at Holy Family Parish in Honolulu. Two years later he returned to Chaminade College and remained there until 1981 when he was granted a renewal year in Rome, Italy. Tom returned to Hawai'i as the pastor of Holy Family Parish in Honolulu.

In 1986 he became the assistant pastor at St. Anthony's on Maui until 1999 when he retired to the West Hills Community.

Due to health issues he was welcomed as a Villa St. Joseph community member on February 5, 2005.

I began teaching in 1958 at Saint Louis High School. Frequently some of us would leave the campus on a Friday afternoon on the red bus of Saint Louis High School for Punaluu, on the windward side of the island. The driver was Bro. John Sayer who had sort of a lead foot. His driving was uneventful until we got to the old Pali Road. The brothers rented a beach home in Punaluu from the diocese and many community members took advantage of it away from the rigors of community life for a more relaxing timetable. Tom was one of the golfers on the Kahuku golf course; others golfers included Bucky Dotzler, Justin Loughran and a Bill Maguire, a close friend of the brothers. I think on occasion even John O'Donnell joined them.

One of the Tom Hogan stories occurred when at a student body assembly he introduced Fr. Bob Mackey as Fr. Chaminade of Mackey College.

We thank God for Tom's life and ministries in the Society and pray for his eternal rest.

Bro. Stanley Murakami, SM