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Death Notice No. 17 (To all Unit Administrations):



The Province of the United States of America, recommends to our fraternal prayers our dear brother, **JORGE da SILVA**, priest, who died in the service of the Blessed Virgin Mary on November 20, 2009 in Cupertino, California, USA, in the 83rd year of his age and the 61st year of his religious profession.

Jorge was born in Yokohama, Japan, on April 15, 1927, to Ernesto Isidoro da Silva and Anna Florentina Guterres da Silva, Portuguese Catholics who immigrated to Japan. His elementary and high school years were spent under the supervision of the Marianist brothers at St. Joseph's College in Yokohama. "The gem of my Marian vocation was sown in my heart by the edifying example of the devoted and consecrated service given by our valiant missionary brothers in Japan," Jorge wrote.

As a teenager, he was a member of the Sodality of the Blessed Virgin and the Servers' Guild and attended Mass daily. During his second year of high school, Jorge was invited by Bro. Francis Tribull, SM, to consider religious life as a Marianist. He was eager to join, and his parents consented on the condition that he first finish high school.

Jorge's plans were shattered when World War II began. The Marianist brothers in Japan were interned and then repatriated to the U.S. His entry into religious life was on hold, and for five years he served as an office clerk with the U.S. Army Occupation Forces in Japan.

In 1946, the Marianists returned to Japan to find Jorge unwavering in his commitment to religious life. With the brothers' help, Jorge requested admission into the Society of Mary. It was an unlikely request coming from Japan at the time, but his faith and friends helped secure passage to the U.S. In 1947, Jorge entered the novitiate of the Society of Mary at Beacon, New York. He professed first vows in 1949 at Beacon and perpetual vows in 1952 in Dayton.

Fr. Jorge received a bachelor's degree in education in 1952 from the University of Dayton and a master's degree in guidance in 1964 from Loyola University of Los Angeles.

He began his career in 1952 as a teacher at Chaminade High School in Mineola, New York. At Chaminade he coached tennis and riflery. In 1953, Fr. Jorge began a 13-year assignment at Junipero Serra High School in Gardena, California. There he served as a teacher, counselor, vice principal and principal.

From 1966 to 1970, Fr. Jorge was assigned to the Marianist community at Archbishop Mitty High School in San Jose, California. During this time, a reoccurring spinal ailment was diagnosed as a tumor and resulted in paralysis of his lower extremities.

Despite his physical handicap, Fr. Jorge was focused on fulfilling his call to the priesthood. In 1970, he entered the program at the Marianist seminary in St. Louis. Fr. Jorge was ordained in 1971 in Gardena, California.

For the next four years, he served as a spiritual director at the Marianist seminary in St. Louis. Fr. Jim Fitz, assistant provincial of the Marianist Province of the United States, was a seminarian while Fr. Jorge was on staff there. "Jorge was a strong religious presence and an insightful spiritual director," said Fr. Jim. "He helped many Marianist religious grow in their spiritual life and vocational discernment." For many years, Fr. Jorge preached the opening year retreat for the novices.

From 1974 to 1990, as a member of the Archbishop Mitty Marianist community in San Jose, Fr. Jorge worked as a spiritual director for religious and lay people, facilitated retreats and helped organize the Lay Family of Mary, a group of Lay Marianists. He also instituted the "The Mitty Mass," a liturgy organized to attract students to Sunday Mass, which also was popular with parents.

For the last 20 years, he resided in Los Gatos, California, and assisted at St. Mary parish as a counselor and spiritual director and organized Lay Marianist activities. Until recently, Fr. Jorge taught two scripture classes and presided at Friday morning Eucharist at St. Mary and Sunday evening at St. Thomas of Canterbury in San Jose. He often received parishioners in his home for reconciliation, counseling and direction.

Fr. Jim Tobin, a friend of Fr. Jorge's for 40 years, admired his spirituality. "Mary was very real to Jorge," said Fr. Jim. "He had a deep, trusting relationship with our Lady. He loved life and lived it to the fullest. Jorge had many friends and shared his love of Jesus and Mary with all of them."

Fr. Jorge was an avid gardener and tended to a variety of vegetables, including tomatoes, peppers and figs. He loved the waters of the Maui beaches. His friend Fr. Cris Janson remembers swimming in the Pacific Ocean with Jorge. "It was the one time when he could get out of his chair and stretch those legs. The waters were very healing to him."

Fr. Jim Fitz compares Fr. Jorge to the title of a book, "The Wounded Healer" by Fr. Henri Nouwen. "He was paralyzed from the waist down but never let his paralysis take away his zest for life," said Fr. Jim. "He accepted his 'wound' and continued to work as a powerful minister of the Gospel. I believe his power as a spiritual director arose from his own life struggle. He could authentically challenge you because he was someone who had met the challenge."

May he rest in peace.