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January 21, 2011

Death Notice No. 4 (To all Unit Administrations):



The Province of the United States of America, recommends to our fraternal prayers our dear brother, **JAMES ABEL**, Mercy Siena Woods Community (Dayton), who died in the service of the Blessed Virgin Mary on January 6, 2011 in Dayton, Ohio, USA, at the age of 78 with 60 years of religious profession.

James was born on February 15, 1932, in Chicago, Illinois, to Herbert and Ann (Pfeiffer) Abel. He had two brothers, John and Joseph.

Jim met the Marianists while attending St. Michael Central High School in Chicago. He entered the postulate in August 1947 at Mount Saint John in Dayton, Ohio. Two years later he entered the novitiate and took his first vows on September 8, 1950, in Marcy, New York.

Bro. Jim then attended the University of Dayton, where he graduated with a bachelor's degree in education in 1954. Jim began a long career of service as a teacher at St. Joseph High School in Cleveland, Ohio, where he served until 1956. He took his perpetual vows on August 15, 1956, at the University of Dayton.

Later in 1956, Bro. Jim moved to Chaminade High School in Mineola, New York, where he would serve for five years. From there, Bro. Jim ministered for three years at Purcell High School (now Purcell Marian High School) in Cincinnati as a teacher and business manager.

Bro. Jim served as a business manager in Marcy, New York, from 1965 until 1967, followed by a year each at Purcell High School and Chaminade High School in Dayton, Ohio.

From 1969 until 1977, Bro. Jim was a teacher and business manager at Purcell before serving two years as an assistant principal at Cathedral Latin High School in Cleveland.

Bro. James then spent the next 22 years of his ministry at Purcell Marian High, where he would serve as a teacher and community director from 1979 until 2001.

One colleague, teacher and Purcell Marian basketball coach Jim Stoll, admired Bro. Jim's work ethic.

“He totally gives himself for others, the epitome of religious life,” Stoll said in 1990. “He does more work in one hour than ten people do in a day.”

Bro. Jim taught business and economics courses, but also had an interest in drama and directed plays at the schools where he served. He coached track and field, cross country and basketball.

Michael Morehead graduated from Purcell High School in 1971 and helped Bro. Jim with the theater program until 1984. He said Bro. Jim made a lasting impact on his life when he was a student.

“I was a painfully shy, socially introverted soul when Abes came into my life, and his gentle, gruff demand for excellence caused me to come out of my shell,” Morehead said.

During some summer breaks, Bro. Jim helped on construction crews, building the dormitory at Governor’s Island in Ohio and the Chaminade novitiate chapel in Marcy, New York. On one of these trips, Bro. James suffered a major back injury that required surgery. It forced him to change his life and he was no longer able to run, which was one of his passions.

“I was jogging before it was a fad,” Bro. Jim said in 1990 profile of himself in *The Cincinnati Enquirer*. “From 1954 to 1964, I didn’t miss a morning. That’s what’s so frustrating now, that I can’t go out and run with the kids like I used to.”

Bro. Jim was in pain for many years and lived with severe arthritis. Bro. Mitch Schweickart said that Bro. Jim refused to give up or complain, and always greeted the world with a smile.

“He took his disabilities and turned them into compassion for students and anyone else he met,” Bro. Mitch said.

In retirement, Bro. Jim lived in Cincinnati and helped with a program that worked with inner-city youth. For Bro. Jim, it was always about the students.

“The kids ask me, ‘What’s a Brother?’ I tell them change that capital B to a small letter and that’s what I am,” Bro. Jim said in 1990. “A brother for them.”

Bro. Jim passed away in Dayton. He will be missed by his Marianist brothers.

May he rest in peace.