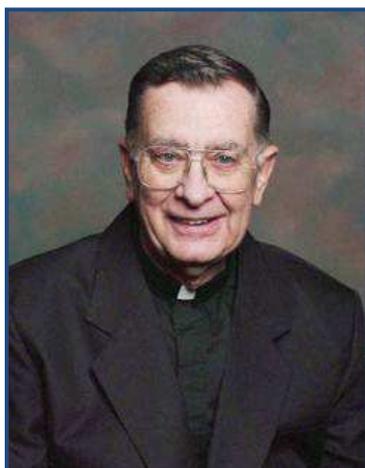


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October 11, 2012

**Death Notice No. 24 (To all Unit Administrations):**



The Province of the United States of America, recommends to our fraternal prayers our dear brother, **WILLIAM O'CONNELL**, priest of the Cupertino Marianist Community, who died in the service of the Blessed Virgin Mary on October 1, 2012 in Cupertino, California, USA, at the age of 85 with 66 years of religious profession.

William Arthur O'Connell was born May 27, 1927, in Oakland, California, to Lawrence and Marguerite (McNamara) O'Connell. He had one sibling, an older brother, Lawrence Jr. While attending St. Joseph's High School in Alameda, California, he decided to join the Society of Mary under the inspiration of Brothers Peter Maier and Herman Keck.

When applying for admittance into the Society of Mary as an 18-year-old in 1945, Bill wrote: "The Society will not only fulfill the yearning to teach which I have always had, but will help me serve God in the best manner."

He entered the Marianist novitiate in Beacon, New York, in August 1945. A year later, when asking permission for temporary vows, he wrote that "if it were possible, and God willing, I would take the vows in August, forever." Brother Bill professed first vows in Beacon on September 1, 1946, and spent the next three years at the scholasticate at Maryhurst in Kirkwood, Missouri and Mount Saint John in Dayton, Ohio.

Brother Bill received a bachelor's degree in education at the University of Dayton in 1949. After teaching for one year at St. James School in San Francisco, he served for several years at his alma mater, St. Joseph's. He professed perpetual vows in June 1951 in Santa Cruz, California. In 1952, Brother Bill traveled across the Atlantic via the "SS United States" to attend the Marianist International Seminary in Fribourg, Switzerland. He was ordained in July 1956.

Beginning in 1957, Father Bill ministered in education for 25 years.

For nine years he served at three schools in California as a teacher, chaplain, counselor and moderator of the yearbook and Mothers Club: one year at Archbishop Riordan High School in San Francisco; one year at Junipero Serra High School in Gardena, California; and seven years at Chaminade High School in Los Angeles and Canoga Park. He earned a master's degree in education from the University of Portland in 1963.

In 1966 Father Bill began many years as an educator in Honolulu at Saint Louis School. After ministering as a chaplain and guidance director, he served as principal for 12 years. He said his tenure

at the school was his most rewarding. “I experienced trust from my staff and students and matured as an educator and especially as a Marianist.”

Father Bill’s ministry changed from education to parish work in 1982 when he was appointed pastor of St. Anthony’s Parish in Wailuku, Maui. He returned to California in 1985 where he served as principal of Riordan High School for seven years. Father Tim Kenney was assistant principal.

“I learned much about leadership and working with people under Bill. He taught me the value of kindness and humility. He taught me the value of choosing your battles,” said Father Tim. “No matter where he was, he often said, ‘It is good for us to be here,’ quoted from the Gospel of Matthew. And he would add: ‘... and to recognize the presence of God with us.’”

From 1993 to 1996, Father Bill served as chaplain for the Newman Center at the University of California at Santa Cruz. He returned to Honolulu in 1996 as director of the Marianist Hall Community. The late Father Jack Russi, provincial of the former Province of the Pacific, wrote to Father Bill in 1999: “The members (of your community) are very complimentary of your leadership. They mentioned their satisfaction with the spiritual dimension of the community and how solicitous you are in meeting individual needs and concerns.” He retired in 2005 to the Marianist Cupertino Community in California.

“Bill O’Connell was an optimist, a man of prayer, a man of action, a Marianist deeply committed to high school ministry and to youth,” said Father Tim. “He was a Son of Mary who valued the importance of evangelization and working to get young people connected with God.”

“Bill always made community a priority,” said Brother Bill Bolts, who lived with Father Bill. “He was down-to-earth, a real brothers’ priest.”

Reflecting on his 60th profession of vows in 2006, Father Bill wrote: “Being a Marianist has been my whole life, no matter what I did.”

May he rest in peace.