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Death Notice No. 27 (To all Unit Administrations):



The Province of France recommends to our fraternal prayers our dear brother, **FRANÇOIS PETITJEAN**, priest of the Marianist Community of Issenheim (France), who died in the service of the Blessed Virgin Mary on August 20, 2011 in Issenheim, France, at the age of 90 with 73 years of religious profession.

Father François Petitjean was born on November 27, 1920, in Longeville-les-Saint-Avoid in Moselle. He was the youngest of a family of six children. His father was a wheelwright and his mother belonged to the tertiaries of St. Francis. She had been deported during World War II because one of her sons had hidden from the Nazis.

François was very impressed by Brother Alphonse Loos, our « recruiter » of that era. He felt himself called by the Lord and attended Mass almost every morning before going to classes. And so he went to the postulate in Antony, where he remained from 1933 to 1936.

François made his novitiate at Saint-Rémy-Signeulx (Belgium) and professed his first vows on September 12, 1937. World War II broke out while he was a scholastic at Rèves. After an epic evacuation, he pursued his scholastic studies at La Rochelle until 1941, when he became a teacher at Beauvoir-sur-Mer. The following year, he continued the same mission in Nancy, at the Saint Vincent/Saint François School, where he stayed until 1946. Then he was assigned to Ste Marie de Monceau in Paris as a proctor for a year, before departing for the seminary in Fribourg, where he remained until 1951. He was ordained priest on July 23, 1950, in Fribourg by Bishop Taguchi.

After his seminary, he became chaplain and teacher in the postulate in Kerriou, where he taught at the third level (age 14). He found that he was not up to teaching at that level and confided as much to his superiors, but because of a lack of other personnel he had to continue with it....

After that very trying year, he returned to La Rochelle until 1954 and then went to Colmar until 1957. From there he left for Tunis, where he continued as a teacher. From his first letters to the Provincial, he dreamed of being a priest and missionary, so in 1958 he was named chaplain and teacher in Bangui at the Collège des Rapides, where he remained until 1962. After two years at Institut Stanislas in Cannes, he returned to Tunis where he taught

history, geography and natural sciences in the middle school until 1979. During that long period he was moderator of the Legion of Mary and of small groups of Christians in Tunis and the surrounding areas.

As deafness became a handicap for him, he asked his superiors to allow him to return to France for a period of renewal. François was then sent to Rêves, where he continued his ministry until 1990, and then in Fiac. In 1996 he joined the community of Saint Hippolyte.

During these last years his health declined. After having been hospitalized several times, he had moved to the medical care center at Issenheim, and it was there that he left us for the Father last August 20.

We will always remember François for his good nature and his kind words.

May he be welcomed by the Virgin Mary, whom he served all his life.