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Death Notice No. 31 (To all Unit Administrations):



The Marianist Province of the United States recommends to our fraternal prayers our dear brother, **LEONARD RUDY**, of the Marianist Residence (San Antonio, Texas), who died in the service of the Blessed Virgin Mary on December 13, 2015, in San Antonio, Texas, USA, at the age of 81 with 63 years of religious profession.

Brother Len was a high school teacher and principal who spent 16 years in ministry in Peru. He is remembered for his dry humor and his devotion to his students and friends.

Leonard Francis Rudy was born April 30, 1934, in East St. Louis, Illinois. He was the youngest of seven children in the family of Kast and Johanna (Roman) Rudy, who were Lithuanian immigrants.

Brother Len attended Immaculate Conception School and Central Catholic High School, both in East St. Louis. He was impressed by the Marianists at Central Catholic, and he entered the novitiate at Marynook in Galesville, Wisconsin. He professed first vows there a year later, on August 15, 1952.

Brother Len earned a bachelor's degree in social studies from St. Mary's University in San Antonio, Texas, in 1955. In his early ministry, he taught at St. Joseph High School in Victoria, Texas (1955 – 1956), Central Catholic High in San Antonio (1956 – 1958), and William Cullen McBride High School in St. Louis, Missouri (1958 – 1959). He professed perpetual vows at Marynook on July 14, 1957.

In 1959, Brother Leonard's prayer was answered, and he was sent to teach at Colegio Santa María in Lima, Peru. He knew no Spanish at the time. He remained in Lima for five years before returning to the United States to teach at Don Bosco High School in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, for two years – 1965 to 1967. He completed additional college coursework in theology during this time.

Brother Len returned to Lima in 1967, where he was named principal of the Santa María junior high. He became principal of Colegio Santa María in 1971. He amassed many friends among students and families at the school.

"I was one of his students at Colegio Santa María," wrote Rick Ramsey on Facebook. "He was a terrific principal. All the students have fond memories of him, even the ones he disciplined while grinning that big grin of his."

Another Colegio Santa María alumnus, Diego Samanez, wrote, "Brother Rudy gave me the best lessons in discipline and punctuality. If all mischievous kids would have teachers like him, the world would have more good men."

In 1973, Brother Len was named superior of the Marianist community at Santa María Reina Parish, also in Lima. He remained in that post until 1976.

After a total of 16 years in Lima, Brother Len came back to the United States, in part to be nearer to his aging parents. He served nearly two years (1976 – 1978) as assistant novice master at the novitiate in Glencoe, Missouri. He then was tapped to be senior dorm prefect at Chaminade College Preparatory School in St. Louis. He later wrote: “they were four very hard years but at the same time among the most rewarding I have experienced, serving as a surrogate parent.”

Brother Len moved to another St. Louis school, St. John Vianney High School, in 1981, where he served as assistant principal and dean of discipline for three years. During the summers, Brother Len took classes at the University of San Francisco. He earned a master’s degree in secondary school administration in 1984, at age 50.

For the following eight years, Brother Len was principal at Central Catholic High School in San Antonio. He called this tenure “one of the most exciting and gratifying experiences that I’ve had.”

Brother Jerry Sullivan, whose ministry path crossed with Brother Len’s several times, said Brother Len built strong friendships wherever he went. “Len invested time in people. He listened to them. He came to know them and their families,” Brother Jerry said. “He was much loved.”

Following a sabbatical in 1992 during which he studied at Boston College, Brother Len became a subdirector for the community at Matignon High School in Cambridge, Massachusetts. He also served as the school’s comptroller and regular substitute teacher. “(Brother Len) is a wise and loving presence in our school,” wrote the Matignon assistant principal in a letter to the Marianist Provincial. “His commitment to community enriches faculty and staff.”

Brother Len returned to St. Louis in August 1994 to serve as the director of the Curé of Ars Community at St. John Vianney High School, where he also taught religion. He continued in these ministries until 2000, when he suffered a severe heart attack. He spent nearly six months recuperating, and then returned to Vianney and taught from 2001 – 2004.

Now age 70, Brother Len retired from the classroom. He remained active, assisting in Vianney’s administrative offices and also providing pastoral care to patients at nearby St. Joseph Hospital.

One of Brother Len’s favorite volunteer roles was as an assistant to the Vianney swim team. He called himself the team’s “waterboy.”

“I was touched at how much he loved the swim team and how much the boys loved him,” said Vianney teacher and swim team coach Bill Alexander. “Kids just gravitated to him; he knew how to relate to them.”

During the school day at Vianney, Brother Len and the Marianist community’s dog, Gracie, were familiar figures in the school’s halls. “Len would come into my classroom to talk to the boys,” said Bill Alexander. “His presence showed the boys what being ‘Marianist’ is all about.”

May he rest in peace.