

**CURIA GENERALIZIA MARIANISTI**  
**Via Latina 22 - 00179 Roma, Italia**  
**Tel. (39-06) 704 75 892 - Fax (39-06) 700 0406**  
**E-mail: [gensecsm@smcuria.it](mailto:gensecsm@smcuria.it)**

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



The Province of the United States of America recommends to our fraternal prayers our dear brother, **GEORGE ONIDA**, priest, of the Cupertino Marianist Community (Cupertino, California), who died in the service of the Blessed Virgin Mary on February 14, 2016 in Cupertino, California, USA, at the age of 76 with 34 years of religious profession.

Father George served as a pastor at parishes in the eastern United States and in Peru. He was strongly committed to Hispanic ministry.

George Francis Onida was born on October 13, 1939, in New York City, New York. He was one of four sons in the Italian immigrant family of Rafaelo and Pasqualena (Rossi) Onida. George attended St. Martin of Tours School in the Bronx and entered the postulate shortly before his 15<sup>th</sup> birthday. He graduated from Marianist Preparatory in Beacon, New York, in 1956. He discontinued his Marianist formation in 1958.

George earned a bachelor's degree from Manhattan College in 1961 and spent the next four years as a "Papal Volunteer for Latin America," teaching in Bogotá, Colombia. Over the following years, he remained connected to the Society of Mary, teaching at two Marianist schools: Colegio San José in San Juan, Puerto Rico (1965 – 1966; 1973 – 1975) and at Chaminade High School in Mineola, New York (1966 – 1973).

He earned a master's degree in Spanish from St. John's University in Jamaica, New York, in 1971, and a master's degree in education from Loyola University in Baltimore, Maryland, in 1979. He taught at the Taft School in Watertown, Connecticut, from 1975 – 1978.

In 1979, a few days before his 40<sup>th</sup> birthday, George entered the novitiate at Baltimore, Maryland. He professed first vows on September 12, 1981, in Douglaston, New York. Brother George returned to teaching at Colegio San José from 1981 – 1983, and professed perpetual vows on September 8, 1984.

Father George entered the seminary at St. Michael's College in Toronto, Ontario, Canada. He earned a master's of divinity degree and was ordained on May 31, 1986, in Douglaston.

In the first stage of his priestly ministry, Father George was assistant pastor at Misión Noell in Villalba, Puerto Rico, from 1986 – 1991. He then moved to the then-Province of Peru, where he was assistant pastor at a parish in Callao from 1991 – 1996.

Doris Piazza met Fr. George years later, but she said his time in South America had a large impact on him. "He fell in love with the culture," she said. At her parish, St. Joseph Catholic Community in Eldersburg, Maryland, she said Fr. George showed great love for the Hispanics members. "He really felt that Hispanics in the United States are now the pillar of the church."

Father George returned to Misión Noell in Puerto Rico as pastor, serving there for five years. In 2001, he became associate pastor at St. Brigid Parish in Westbury, New York. He remained in that post until 2004, and then served in Hispanic ministry at the San Juan Diego Marianist Community in Charlotte, North Carolina.

From 2007 – 2010, Father George was associate pastor at St. Peter of Alcantara Church in Port Washington, New York, with a primary responsibility of ministering to the parish's Spanish-speaking members.

Father George joined the Marianist community in Eldersburg, Maryland, in 2010, and served at St. Joseph Catholic Community. Brother Michael Chiuri lived with him. "Father George's Italian roots and his adoption of Hispanic culture made relationships and caring for others very important to him," Brother Michael said. "I remember fondly when we would have gatherings at the house and parishioners would gather around him. The brothers chided him that he 'was holding court.' I learned a lot about treasuring relationships from him."

Father George moved to the Marianist Community in Cupertino, California, in 2013, so that health issues could be addressed more effectively.

"George Onida was a warm, passionate man whose Marianist heart was always with the poor," said Brother Stephen Glodek, who was Father George's Provincial for many years. "George's fondness for his years as pastor in Misión Noell in Puerto Rico and his years in Peru and Colombia were testimony to where his treasure was."

May he rest in peace.