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Death Notice No. 21 (To all Unit Administrations):



The Province of the United States of America recommends to our fraternal prayers our dear brother, **DAVID CONRAD**, of the Marianist Residence, San Antonio, Texas, USA, who died in the service of the Blessed Virgin Mary on August 28, 2016 in San Antonio, Texas, USA, at the age of 86 with 67 years of religious profession.

Brother Dave was a quiet, dedicated working brother who spent 17 years in ministry in Africa, with nearly all of that time in war-torn Nigeria.

David Louis Conrad was born on August 24, 1930, in Canton, Ohio. He was one of five sons in the family of Edward and Clara (Siffrin) Conrad. He attended grade school at St. Benedict and later, St. John parish schools. Inspired by a Marianist who gave a vocation talk at his school, Dave entered the postulate at Mount Saint John in Dayton, Ohio, upon completing elementary school. His goal from the very beginning was to serve the Blessed Mother and the Society of Mary as a working brother.

Young Dave entered the novitiate at Mount Saint John in 1948. He professed first vows at Marianist Preparatory in Beacon, New York, on August 23, 1949. In his early years, he worked in the gardens and orchards of Mount Saint John. He professed perpetual vows on August 15, 1953 at the University of Dayton. From 1955 – 1958, he served at St. Anne's Retreat House at Mount Saint John, helping set up for retreats.

From 1958 - 1962, Brother Dave ministered at the Marianist formation communities in Beacon and Marcy, New York, where he developed carpentry, cabinet-making and remodeling skills on the job. During 1963, he made a second novitiate at Glencoe (now Eureka), Missouri.

The following year, 1964, marked a major turning point in Brother Dave's life. He accepted an assignment to Thika, Kenya, where the Marianists had recently assumed operations of Mang'u High School. Brother Dave supervised maintenance workers at the school and was business manager for his community.

Brother Dave remained in Kenya through part of 1966, when he moved to Ekpoma, Nigeria, where a Marianist postulate had opened just a year before. He assisted with construction of the new facility while working in general maintenance and serving as a buyer for the community.

It may seem like Brother Dave would have led a quiet life of manual service in Ekpoma, but the reality must have been dramatically different. In August of 1967, troops from the secessionist country of Biafra invaded the area where Ekpoma lies. The formation community was forced to escape to Asaba, about 113 km (70 miles) away. Many of the postulants and novices fled, returning to their home villages. One month later, fighting forced the Marianists and their remaining students

to move again. During this time, the brand-new formation center in Ekpoma was used as a military camp for federal (Nigerian) troops.

Brother Dave and his fellow Marianists were able to return to Ekpoma later that fall. He would likely have been busy repairing the damage done by the fighting and the occupying troops. Tragedy struck the community in 1968, when Brother Roman Wicinski went missing on a trip to a neighboring town. "Dave was one of the party that found Roman's body behind the post office in Ogwashi-Uku," said Father Richard Loehrlein, who also was serving in Africa at that time. Brother Roman was found handcuffed and shot at close range. The situation was never fully resolved, and there are many theories of how he may have gotten caught between warring factions.

Nigeria remained embroiled in civil war until January 1970. Brother Dave remained there through 1981. His file lists his time there simply in the role of "worker/business manager."

Brother Dave returned to the United States and to the familiar grounds of Mount Saint John, where he worked in maintenance at the Bergamo Retreat Center from 1982 – 1990. Brother Jack Somerville served with Brother Dave during this time. "Dave was a wonderful guy to work with," said Brother Jack. "He was especially good at coming up with creative ways to solve problems, mostly from his days in Africa when he had to do much with few resources."

Now almost 60, Brother Dave moved to Trenton, New Jersey, where he managed a thrift store for a Catholic community service agency called Martin House. He served in that role for five years. Brother Dave's next assignment took him to Portage, Michigan, where he provided maintenance at St. Catherine of Siena, a parish long served by the Marianists. He remained there until 1999.

As he entered his sixth decade of Marianist ministry, Brother Dave moved to the Marcella Road Marianist Community in Cleveland, Ohio. "Brother Dave was a prayerful, quiet, hardworking working brother," said Brother Jack Dempsey, who lived with him at the time. "Dave would rise early to shovel snow in the winter, and he tenderly cared for the flower gardens, mowed the lawn and raked the leaves. He was a superb groundskeeper."

In 2009, at age 79, Brother Dave moved to the Marianist Residence in San Antonio. "Dave was a man of few words, but his smile spoke volumes," said Father Bertrand Buby, who had served as his provincial. "He prided himself on being a working brother, and he contributed a great deal to the communities and workplaces wherever he was."

May he rest in peace.