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Death Notice No. 29 (To all Unit Administrations):



The Province of the United States of America recommends to our fraternal prayers our dear brother, **ARTHUR CHERRIER**, of the Marianist Residence Community (San Antonio), who died in the service of the Blessed Virgin Mary on December 20, 2013 in San Antonio, Texas, USA, at the age of 89 with 71 years of religious profession.

Bro. Art was a teacher and administrator who spent more than 35 years in ministry in Africa, first in the Republic of the Congo, and then in Ivory Coast. In retirement, he provided valued service to the Society of Mary as a translator.

Arthur Louis Cherrier was born on September 8, 1924, in Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin. He was one of four sons and a daughter in the family of Edith (LaBonne) and LeRoy Cherrier.

He attended grade school at St. Gabriel in his hometown. Following in the footsteps of his older brother, he entered the postulate at Maryhurst in Kirkwood, Missouri, in 1938. Bro. Art professed his first vows on August 15, 1942, in Galesville, Wisconsin. He earned a bachelor's degree in education in 1944 through an accelerated wartime program at the University of Dayton.

Bro. Art taught grade school in Victoria, Texas, for one year, and then spent another year teaching in Chicago. On July 1, 1946, Bro. Art professed his perpetual vows in Galesville. He returned to Missouri, teaching from 1947 to 1952 at DeAndreis High School, and from 1952 to 1959 at McBride High School, both in St. Louis. By taking summer classes, he earned a master's degree in education from Marquette University in 1959.

The new decade marked a significant turning point for Bro. Art, when he answered a call to teach English at Collège Chaminade in Brazzaville, Congo (now the Republic of the Congo). Political unrest disrupted the Marianists' work in the country, however, and in 1965, the school was taken over by the government. After a short time in France for study, Bro. Art returned to Africa, this time to the Ivory Coast.

For the next three decades, from 1966 to 1997, Bro. Art ministered at Collège Notre Dame d'Afrique in Abijan. In addition to teaching English, he drove the 50-passenger bus to sporting events and other activities. After a time, he became treasurer for the school, managing the accounting functions, and making daily trips to the market to buy food for the school's 150 boarding students. In a narrative he wrote for his 60th jubilee, Bro. Art described hiring porters and guards to help him with his marketing. These were valued services, but it was also a way to support local people struggling to feed themselves.

"At the Collège, Bro. Arthur did everything with a soft voice and a gentle smile," said Fr. Florian Royer-Chabot of the Region of Canada, who served there with him. "He was a friendly, simple soul."

Bro. Art was scheduled to return to the United States in late 1997. Four days before his planned departure, he contracted a serious case of malaria – his first in all his time in Africa. The illness delayed his departure by more than three months.

Upon his return, Bro. Art lived in St. Louis and volunteered at the Province office. “Bro. Art was funny, smart and humble,” said Ann Mueller, communications assistant at the office. “He lived the message Mary spoke at Cana: ‘Do whatever he tells you.’ He taught by his actions, all with a willing heart and great smile.”

During this time, Bro. Art also offered tremendous value to the North American Center for Marianist Studies by translating documents from French to English. After spending so much of his life in French-speaking Africa, the language was second nature to him.

He translated texts about William Joseph Chaminade and Marie Thérèse de Lamourous, and texts from events in early Marianist history. “We could always count on the quality and timeliness of Bro. Art’s work,” Carol Ramey, NACMS director, said. “His wit, his entertaining emails and his friendship made his contributions so much more than a working relationship.”

In 2009, Brother Art moved to the Marianist Residence in San Antonio, where he continued his translation work.

“Bro. Art was powerful witness to the joy of the gospel and the welcoming love of Mary to God and to others,” said Fr. Jim Fitz. “He was a wonderful example of what it means to age with grace. He preached the Gospel by his care, his humor, and his graciousness – and always with an impish twinkle in his eye.”

May he rest in peace.