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Death Notice No. 7 (To all Unit Administrations):



The Province of the United States of America recommends to our fraternal prayers our dear brother, **JAMES BILLO**, of the San Antonio Marianist Residence community, who died in the service of the Blessed Virgin Mary on January 13, 2011, in San Antonio, Texas, USA, at the age of 85 with 36 years of religious profession.

James was born to Eugene and Annie (Maddux) Billo on February 2, 1925, in Texas City, Texas, and had one older sister. Jim did not grow up Catholic and was active in the Methodist church.

After graduating from Central High School in 1942, Jim entered Rice University in Houston, Texas, where he majored in mathematics and physics. While at Rice, Jim attended both Methodist and Lutheran church services every Sunday. After two years at Rice, Jim went to work for Pan American Oil in its chemical research laboratory until 1946.

From 1946 until 1948, Jim served as director of Youth Fellowship at First United Methodist Church in his hometown of Texas City. He also earned a bachelor's degree in religion and bible from Southwestern University in Georgetown, Texas. In 1948 Jim returned to Pan American, where he would stay until 1951. During this time, he earned a master's degree in religion and bible from the University of Houston.

Further studies took Jim to Columbia University in New York, where he received a master's degree in student personnel administration and guidance in 1951. He returned to Texas to serve as a caseworker at the Texas State School for Boys in Gatesville, Texas. In 1953 James was promoted to assistant superintendent and director of psychological services at the school, where he would serve until 1963.

Jim then moved to Lubbock, Texas, to study at Texas Tech University. He graduated with a Ph.D. in counseling and psychology in 1966 and moved west to New Mexico, where he would serve as the director of professional services for the New Mexico State School for Boys in Springer, New Mexico.

By the early 1970s, Jim wrote that he "hadn't been very well satisfied with the Methodist Church." Jim was always very spiritual and began to look into religious life and orders.

“I wanted to be in an environment where religious life was given first priority and the type of service would become a means of expressing that life,” Jim wrote.

After speaking extensively with a few Marianist brothers and priests, Jim decided to try out Marianist life and moved into the residence in East St. Louis, Illinois, in 1972. On his 48th birthday, February 2, 1973, Jim entered the Catholic Church. Later that year he entered the novitiate in Glencoe, Missouri.

On August 22, 1973, Bro. Jim professed first vows as a Marianist.

The next year Bro. Jim moved to San Antonio to serve at St. Mary’s University as an administrator and counselor, director of the counseling center and director of support services.

In 1984 he changed roles at St. Mary’s to become the coordinator and certification officer at the Veterans Affairs Office – a position he would hold for the next 24 years of his life. He retired in 2008.

Bro. Jerome Matz lived in an apartment with Bro. Jim for 22 years and lived in community with him before that. Bro. Jerome remembers his passion for cooking and classical music. He also remembers Bro. Jim’s philosophy on what it meant to be a good Christian.

“He believed true Christianity was shown in your daily interactions with others,” Bro. Jerome said. “He was very thoughtful of peoples’ birthdays, anniversaries, things like that.

“He was a very kind person, always wanting to help out,” Bro. Jerome said. “He loved his family. He was fiercely loyal to his friends, family and fellow brothers.”

Bro. Jim will be missed by his Marianist brothers.

May he rest in peace.