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Death Notice No. 13 (To all Unit Administrations):



The Province of the United States of America, recommends to our fraternal prayers our dear brother, **NORBERT STURM**, of the Mercy Siena Woods Community (Dayton), who died in the service of the Blessed Virgin Mary on September 11, 2009 in Dayton, Ohio, USA, in the 92nd year of his age and the 73rd year of his religious profession.

Norbert was born in Baltimore, Maryland, on October 1, 1917, to Hubert and Elizabeth (Stallo) Sturm. As a sixth grade student at St. James in Baltimore, he already felt a calling to religious life. His feelings intensified as his eighth grade teacher, Bro. Joseph Buettner, told stories of his life as a Marianist. In 1932, when Norbert learned a schoolmate was entering the Marianist postulate in Beacon, New York, he eagerly joined him.

Bro. Norbert professed first vows in 1937 at Mount Saint John in Dayton and perpetual vows in 1941 at Saint Louis College in Honolulu.

He earned a bachelor's degree in education in 1940 from the University of Dayton. Bro. Norbert later earned a master's degree in English (1951, Ohio State University), a master's degree in English education (1955, Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland) and a doctorate in English (1961, Case Western Reserve).

Bro. Norbert was a teacher for almost 60 years. He began his career in 1940 at Chaminade High School in Dayton. At the end of the school year, Bro. Norbert was sent to Hilo, Hawai'i, to teach at St. Mary's School. During his three year tenure, he also served as librarian and athletic director. In 1946, Bro. Norbert was assigned to Saint Louis College (now Saint Louis School) in Honolulu, where he taught German, English, algebra and world history.

Bro. Norbert returned to Ohio in 1946 and taught eight years at Chaminade High School in Dayton (1946-1954) and six years at Cathedral Latin School in Cleveland. While teaching in Cleveland, he worked on his doctorate at Case Western Reserve.

From 1960 to 1972, Bro. Norbert served as an English literature professor at the University of Dayton. A funeral he attended for missionary Bro. John Bertone, SM, impressed him so much that he volunteered for work in the African missions.

Bro. Norbert spent the next 28 years of his life in Eastern Africa. "There was no television, movies, libraries—nothing," said Bro. Norbert. "There was prayer, reading and correcting papers." He taught

English to village children at Chaminade Secondary School in Karonga, Malawi, for 18 years. He described the work as grueling but satisfying, because the students were eager to learn.

“Bro. Norb always had a smile and words to encourage the students,” said Bro. Will Holloway, who taught English with Bro. Norbert in Karonga. “He wouldn't let them get down on themselves when they did poorly on an exam. He had a way of convincing students that they could do anything...if they didn't give up.

“Bro. Norb always saw the good in people. I don't think I ever heard him say anything negative about anyone. It was great to live with him and he added a lot of joy and fun to our community. We miss him.”

Bro. Norbert directed the drama department at Chaminade Secondary and his students won the national championship three times. He was proud that a number of Chaminade graduates went on to college and held prominent positions in Malawi.

Bro. Bill Schlossser, who also lived with Bro. Norbert in Karonga, admired his community spirit. “Bro. Norb was quiet and effective in helping us be a community of prayer,” said Bro. Bill. “He was especially good at helping us chant the psalms in morning and evening prayer.”

In 1990, Bro. Norbert retired from full-time teaching at Chaminade and began work at the Marianist scholasticate in Nairobi, Kenya. He served as a tutor and helped prepare the scholastics for exams.

“I found him to be one of the most serviceable and unassuming religious I've ever known,” said Fr. Martin Solma, who lived with Bro. Norbert in Nairobi. “For me, he was a wonderful example of aging with grace. Even when diminished, he was concerned and interested in things in Africa.”

Bro. Norbert returned to the U.S. in 2000 and joined the Marianist community in his hometown of Baltimore. Bro. Charles Johnson, who was the community director, recalls Bro. Norbert arriving at the community with one bag. “He lived simply and had no use for material things,” said Bro. Charles. “Bro. Norb was a class act and a gentleman.”

In Baltimore, Bro. Norbert served at My Brother's Keeper soup kitchen until 2002, when his deteriorating health brought him back to Dayton to the Alumni Hall community on the campus of UD.

“He always made time for others,” said Bro. Joe Kamis. “He had a very gentle manner with people and one could tell that he practiced the Chaminadian saying ‘the essential is the interior.’ His soft smile was a sure sign of pure hospitality as he was constantly open and welcoming to new people.”

Reflecting on his many years as a Marianist, Bro. Norbert said, “What I find good about the Marianist life is that everywhere I go, I find good men—charitable, generous and kind men, who are willing to put forth any amount of effort.”