

The Province of the United States of America recommends to our fraternal prayers our dear brother, **PAUL NOVOSAL**, of the Marianist Residence community in San Antonio, Texas, who died in the service of the Blessed Virgin Mary on May 24, 2009, in San Antonio in the 91st year of his age and the 72nd year of his religious profession.

Paul was born in St. Louis on Oct. 5, 1918, the youngest of three children of Paul and Eva (Pavlastic) Novosal. He was referred to as “the little boy with curly hair and big eyes.” After graduation from St. George grade school in Gardenville, Mo., where he was taught by the Precious Blood Sisters, he enrolled at Cathedral Latin High School in St. Louis. After his sophomore year, Paul transferred to Southside Catholic (now St. Mary’s High School) in St. Louis and graduated in 1936.

During his years at Southside Catholic, Paul admired several of the Marianist brothers who were his teachers. His mentor, Bro. James Powers, SM, encouraged him to join the order. Paul entered the novitiate of the Society of Mary in 1936 at Maryhurst in Kirkwood, Missouri. He professed first vows in 1937 and perpetual vows in 1941 at Maryhurst.

Bro. Paul earned a bachelor’s degree in education in 1940 from the University of Dayton. He also completed a bachelor’s degree in library science from Our Lady of the Lake College in San Antonio, where he was the only male student on campus. When he received his diploma in 1941, it read: “She is awarded...”

Bro. Paul began his career as a teacher in 1940 with a short stint at Holy Redeemer School in Detroit, followed by five years at Central Catholic High School in San Antonio. In addition to teaching English and religion, Bro. Paul was the school librarian, moderated sodality, and coached basketball, boxing and tennis. He and other younger brothers at Central Catholic were known to work late nights, Saturdays and holidays scrubbing, painting and doing maintenance work around the community. Bro. Paul also was a central figure in recruiting vocations.

During summers, he taught school and was a camp counselor at TECABOCA in Mountain Home, Texas. From 1946 to 1947, Bro. Paul spent a year teaching high school at McBride in St. Louis and St. Joseph in Victoria, Texas, before embarking on what would become over 60 years on the campus at St. Mary’s University in San Antonio.

He began at St. Mary’s in 1947 as a librarian and English instructor. Bro. Paul was the driving force behind a new library built on campus in 1948. Crews of faculty members, religious brothers, and St. Mary’s and Central Catholic High School students dug foundations, cut steel and poured concrete through the hot summer months to create the library.

Fr. Joe Uvietta was a student of Bro. Paul’s and worked with him at Central Catholic and St. Mary’s. “He was always considerate and helpful to the student workers and his assistants. Paul was very conscientious about his work. He made sure materials were properly stored and cared for so all could use.”

In 1958, Bro. Paul was appointed director of libraries, associate professor of English and a member of the University Academic Council. He earned a master's degree in English in 1966 from St. Mary's and oversaw the construction of another library, the Louis J. Blume Library, which opened on campus in 1968.

The late Bro. James Gray, SM, who worked with Bro. Paul at St. Mary's, summarized him as a man who "worked quietly without furor and built steadily, with unswerving progress, strong works of excellent quality and enduring effect."

In his spare time, Bro. Paul did archival work for the former St. Louis Province. In 1973, when the archives moved to the academic library on the St. Mary's campus, he became a full-time archivist. In this role, Bro. Paul collected and organized Marianist materials and conducted research to build detailed historical records. His research work took him to Hawai'i, Rome, Croatia, California and states in the Midwest and on the East Coast. He served in this capacity 35 years, retiring from the archives in 2008.

Bro. Paul was the historical resource person for university staff members and those needing photos or facts verified for publications or events. He also served as a spiritual advisor to the staff. Bro. Paul belonged to a number of archival organizations and participated in meetings and workshops. In 1990, the Texas Catholic Historical Society honored him with the Lawrence J. Fitzsimon Award for pastoral service and professional excellence in archival work.

Luis Sandoval, a member of the St. Mary's University community, described Bro. Paul as a "shining example of what it meant to embody the Marianist spirit. He was a loving man who walked around campus, smiling, friendly and always ready for a conversation. He will be missed."

May he rest in peace.

