

The Marianist Province of the United States of America recommends to our fraternal prayers our dear brother, **ROBERT MASSA**, who died in the service of the Blessed Virgin Mary on January 31, 2007, in San Antonio, Texas, in the 79th year of his age and the 58th year of his religious profession.

Bro. Bob was born on September 15, 1928, in St. Louis to Paul and Leonida (Vaccaro) Massa. He attended elementary school at Christ the King and New Cathedral Parish schools and graduated from McBride High School in St. Louis in 1946. After graduation, Bro. Bob served 18 months in the United States Army. He achieved the rank of corporal and was stationed as a company administrative clerk with B Troop 12th Calvary stationed in Japan. His duties included the preparation, processing and initiation of various forms, records and correspondence for his troop. Bro. Bob's military awards include a World War II Victory Medal and an Army of Occupation Medal for Japan. He was honorably discharged from military service in 1948.

It was during his time in the military that Bro. Bob discerned his call to religious life and to the Society of Mary. In 1948, he entered the novitiate at Marynook in Galesville, Wisconsin, professing first vows in 1949. His scholasticate years were spent in three places: Maryhurst in St. Louis, 1949; Mount St. John in Dayton, Ohio, 1950; and St. Mary's University in San Antonio, 1951. While in San Antonio, Bro. Bob received a bachelor's degree in history from St. Mary's University in 1952. In 1954, he professed final vows at Marynook.

Bro. Bob began a 37-year teaching career in 1952 at his alma mater, McBride High School in St. Louis, where he taught history, reading and English. From 1955 to 1958, Bro. Bob taught at Don Bosco High School in Milwaukee. For the next 13 years (1958 to 1971), he taught at St. Michael's High School in Chicago. In 1962, Bro. Bob earned a master's degree in American history from Saint Louis University. In 1971, he returned to St. Louis to teach at Chaminade College Preparatory and retired from teaching in 1989.

Bro. Bob moderated several extracurricular school activities, including speech clubs, school newspapers, cheerleading and prom committees. He also worked in intramural sports and served as athletic director.

"He was a very meticulous teacher, and was nicknamed 'Dove' for his soft-spoken demeanor in class," said Fr. Tim Dwyer, who lived with Bro. Bob in Chicago. "He used a soft voice to help the rambunctious students settle down."

In 1989, Bro. Bob began a second career as host for adult retreats at the Marianist Retreat & Conference Center in Eureka, Missouri. He retired from his ministry at the retreat center in October 2005. After being diagnosed with brain tumors in November 2006, Bro. Bob moved to

the Marianist healthcare center in San Antonio for treatment.

“He was a very dedicated, behind-the-scenes kind of person at the retreat center,” said longtime friend Fr. Joe Uvietta. “He was very devoted and always present and available to visitors.”

Annette Stamm, who coordinated numerous retreats at the retreat center and worked with Bro. Bob, said that he was a stickler for rules, but he did so to assure that her retreats would be perfect. “Anything we needed, he made sure we had. He always left his number and said I could call him at any hour if there was a problem. He was a true joy, and we will miss him.”

Bro. Joe Barrett, who visited Bro. Bob regularly during the last months of his life, witnessed this firsthand as watched Bro. Bob cope with terminal illness. Bro. Joe said he and Bro. Bob prayed a Hail Mary together an hour before he died. “He was an inspiration,” said Bro. Joe.

May he rest in peace.