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Death Notice No. 19 (To all Unit Administrations):



The Province of the United States of America recommends to our fraternal prayers our dear brother, **CHARLES CUMMISKEY**, of the Marianist Residence Community, San Antonio, Texas, who died in the service of the Blessed Virgin Mary on September 9, 2015 in San Antonio, Texas, USA, at the age of 91 with 74 years of religious profession.

Brother Charles was a professor of chemistry and administrator who served at St. Mary's University in San Antonio, Texas, for 57 years. He is remembered for his devotion to the Blessed Mother and his commitment to his students.

Charles Joseph Cummiskey was born February 12, 1924, in St. Louis, Missouri. He and a brother, John, were the children of Sarah (Hickey) and Charles Cummiskey.

Brother Charles attended William Cullen McBride High School in St. Louis, where he first encountered members of the Society of Mary. He joined the postulate at Maryhurst in Kirkwood, Missouri, at age 15. In a note to the chancellor of the Archdiocese of St. Louis, Brother Charles' parish priest called Charles "an excellent young man." "I tried to get him for the secular clergy, but he wanted a 'higher life,'" the priest wrote.

Brother Charles entered the novitiate in 1940, and was a member of the group who moved with the novitiate from Kirkwood to Galesville, Wisconsin. He professed first vows at Galesville August 25, 1941. He attended the University of Dayton, where, in an accelerated wartime program, he earned a bachelor's degree in education in 1943.

In his early ministry, he taught at Holy Redeemer High School in Detroit, Michigan, and at Southside Catholic (now St. Mary's) High School in St. Louis. He professed perpetual vows on July 18, 1945, in Galesville. He then was appointed prefect of postulants at Maryhurst, and taught there from 1945 – 1946 and again from 1947 – 1952. He was in St. Boniface, Manitoba, Canada, from 1946 – 1947, teaching at Provencher School.

Over the summers, Bro. Charles was at work on a master's degree in secondary science, which he received from Northwestern University in 1952. He went on to the University of Notre Dame, where he was granted a doctorate in inorganic chemistry in 1956.

Brother Charles began his ministry at St. Mary's University in San Antonio, Texas, in 1955. It would be his life's work; he remained at the university as a professor and administrator for the next 57 years.

During his tenure, he was primarily a professor of chemistry, guiding thousands of students and helping develop countless future scientists. He was chairman of the chemistry department from 1957 – 1966. He served as a vice president and dean of faculties from 1966 – 1975. He was acting university president for a portion of 1975. For many years, he was responsible for compiling and

publishing the university undergraduate and graduate catalogs. He also mentored Christian Life Communities and moderated student chapters of the American Chemical Society. His articles appeared in scholarly publications such as the *Journal of Inorganic and Nuclear Chemistry*.

For the Society of Mary, Brother Charles served as community subdirector and was an elected Provincial Chapter delegate. He was chosen to be a Province representative at General Chapters. He was a member of the Marianist Writers Guild.

He continued his service at the university until May 2012; he was 88 at the time.

In comments on St. Mary's University Facebook page following his death, a number of former students noted that Brother Charles had taught multiple generations of their families.

"Brother Cummiskey taught math to my dad at Southside High School in St. Louis, and he taught both my brother and me organic chemistry at St. Mary's in the early '80s," wrote Chris DeMoor. "He was a great teacher ... I can still remember him telling me one time, 'Remember, you know more than you think you know.' That really helped me get through that exam!" she wrote.

In recognition of his "outstanding and exceptional contributions to academic pursuits," Brother Charles was inducted into the Academy of St. Mary's University in 1979. He was named "Professor Emeritus" in 2012.

"Brother Charles exuded everything that is special about being a Brother of Mary," said Melba Fisher, formerly an assistant to the president at St. Mary's. "Working with him at St. Mary's University gave me a sense of gratitude for his authentic and deep devotion to Mary. We had an inside joke which I'll now treasure even more. In answering the phone in the president's office, I'd end with, 'Melba speaking.' He would answer, 'this is Brother Charles speaking.' He used to tease that we had the same last name: Brother Charles Speaking and Melba Speaking."

"Brother Charles will be missed," said Brother Earl Leistikow, a longtime colleague who spoke about Brother Charles' eagerness to share his Marianist calling. "He was very proud of his experiences in the Society of Mary. He was nearly always present at events on campus that concerned Marianist involvement in the university."

Mari Leal knew Brother Charles from her time as a St. Mary's student and staff member. She wrote on Facebook: "I remember Brother Cummiskey for his wide smiles and his joy and wonderment for his discipline. RIP, Brother. Now you can conduct all the experiments you desire."

May he rest in peace.