

November 15, 2007

Death Notice No. 30 (To all Unit Administrations):



The Province of the United States of America, recommends to our fraternal prayers our dear brother, **EDMUND RHODES**, priest, who died in the service of the Blessed Virgin Mary on November 3, 2007 in Dayton, Ohio, in the 98th year of his age and the 79th year of his religious profession.

Fr. Rhodes was born in Randolph, Ohio, on July 19, 1910, to Louis and Anna (Michel) Rhodes. He grew up in Suffield, Ohio, and was taught by Notre Dame Sisters at St. Joseph Parish. As a youngster, Fr. Rhodes was drawn to religious life but decided to pursue commercial studies after eighth grade. During that year, however, a classmate gave him a letter that would change his life. The letter, from a postulant at Mount St. John in Dayton, described the daily life of a postulant and the work of the brothers and priests of the Society of Mary. A few days shy of his 15th birthday, Fr. Rhodes entered the postulate for the Society of Mary at Mount St. John in Dayton. He professed first vows in 1929 and perpetual vows in 1932 at Mount St. John and was ordained in Fribourg, Switzerland, in 1941.

Fr. Rhodes education includes a bachelor's degree in philosophy from the University of Dayton in 1932, a licentiate in sacred theology (S.T.L.) from Catholic University in Washington, D.C., with an emphasis in philosophy, and graduate work at Lateran Law School in Rome and the University of Louvain in Belgium.

His ministry as an educator spanned over 50 years and began in 1930 at Immaculate Conception School in Washington, D.C. Other teaching assignments followed at Chaminade High School in Mineola, N.Y. (1931-1933), St. John the Baptist in Philadelphia (1933-1935), Cathedral Latin School in Cleveland (1935-1936) and the Marianist scholasticate in Cleveland (1936-1938). After seminary studies in Fribourg (1938-1941) and a year of studies in Washington, D.C. (1941-1942), Fr. Rhodes taught at Trinity College in Sioux City, Iowa (1942-1943), Mount St. John (1943-1946) and St. John the Baptist High School in Philadelphia (1946-1947).

In 1947, Fr. Rhodes began what would become 36 years of ministry at the University of Dayton. At UD, he served as a philosophy professor (1947 to 1983) and was chair of the philosophy department from 1951 to 1964. Fr. Rhodes also served as assistant dean and dean of the college of arts and sciences at UD from 1953 to 1958.

Fr. Rhodes shifted his focus to pastoral work in 1983, assisting at Resurrection Parish and serving as chaplain to the Marianist community in Tempe, Ariz. (1983-1984), St. Aloysius Parish in Cleveland (1984-1988), and Nativity Parish in Hollywood, Fla., where he served as associate pastor (1988-1990).

“Fr. Ed was the closest to a Renaissance man that I ever met,” said Fr. Thomas Stanley. “He excelled in multiple fields, teaching theology, philosophy and history. He knew music and was a concert pianist. He also dabbled in math and studied calculus while I was with him in Hollywood.”

Fr. Rhodes retired from active ministry in 1990 and spent a year with the Marianist community in Hollywood, Fla., before entering the retirement community at the Franciscan at St. Leonard healthcare center in Centerville, Ohio. In 2003, Fr. Rhodes moved to the Mercy Siena healthcare center in Dayton.

In his later years, Fr. Rhodes kept busy with prayers, daily Mass and reading and translating documents into Latin. He also enjoyed solving math equations. "He always had a kind smile and never complained of his ills," said Bro. Joe Kamis.

Fr. Rhodes once said, "I cherish the visits and fraternal support of fellow Marianists, relatives, friends and former students. Many are grateful for the genuine Christian life and adherence to Mary we tried to instil in their hearts and minds. Mary is my life, and I am her child and brother of Jesus, her Son."

May he rest in Peace!