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Death Notice No. 21 (To all Unit Administrations):



The Province of the United States of America recommends to our fraternal prayers our dear brother, **JOHN RUSSI**, priest of the Cupertino Marianist community, who died in the service of the Blessed Virgin Mary on June 20, 2011, in Cupertino, California, USA, at the age of 71 with 52 years of religious profession.

John Joseph Russi, who went by Jack, was born on October 27, 1939, in San Francisco, California, to Frank and Catherine (Carroll) Russi. He had one brother and one sister.

Jack attended St. Cecilia grade school and then Archbishop Riordan High School, where he met the Marianist brothers and priests.

Bro. John Haster was in the same graduating class as Jack and they were good friends. Their families were close as well, and Bro. John remembers swimming and water skiing with Jack on the Russian River in northern California, where Bro. John's uncle had a residence.

One day, the friends were talking about plans for college when Jack brought up an alternative idea.

“Jack said, ‘Why don't we try out the Marianists?’ So that's what we did,” Bro. John said.

Jack entered the novitiate after graduation and professed first vows on August 15, 1958. He then began his collegiate studies at St. Mary's College in Moraga, California, and completed his bachelor's degree in philosophy at Chaminade University in Hawai'i in 1962.

With a passion for education, Jack began a long career as a Catholic educator, spending the school year as a teacher at his alma mater, Archbishop Riordan. Jack professed his perpetual vows as a Marianist on June 21, 1963, and set off for the Regina Mundi Seminary in Fribourg, Switzerland. Fr. Jack was ordained as a priest on August 26, 1967, at St. Cecilia Church in San Francisco.

Fr. Jack spent the next 11 years serving as a teacher, counselor, chaplain and president at Archbishop Mitty High School in San Jose, California. He earned a master's degree in counseling from the University of San Francisco in 1977.

From 1978 until 1985, Fr. Jack served as the Assistant for Religious Life at the Provincial Office for the former Marianist Province of the Pacific. He then returned to Archbishop Mitty to serve as principal for three years. The football field at Archbishop Mitty is named in honor of Fr. Jack, as is a scholarship at the school.

In 1988, Fr. Jack was named principal of Saint Louis School in Honolulu, where he would spend the next nine years. Bro. Tom Jalbert was the campus minister at Saint Louis while Fr. Jack was principal. They first met at a Province retreat in the 1970s and Bro. Tom recalls how Fr. Jack once kindly visited Bro. Tom's mother in the hospital while she was very ill. Bro. Tom also recalls what an excellent listener Fr. Jack was and how he was sensitive to the issues faced by students who had trouble at home.

"I will miss him," Bro. Tom said. "He was a very genuine person."

While celebrating his silver jubilee as a priest in 1992, Fr. Jack remarked, "Never have 25 years zipped by so fast. And I'd gladly do it again."

As a leader and a man of integrity, it surprised none when Fr. Jack was appointed provincial of the former Marianist Province of the Pacific in 1997, a role in which he would serve until the four American provinces merged in 2002 to form the new Marianist Province of the United States. Fr. Jack's leadership was vital during the transition.

After his term as provincial, Fr. Jack took a sabbatical year at the Vatican II Institute in Menlo Park, California. Fr. Jack then returned to Archbishop Riordan, where he would spend five years as a counselor and chaplain. He left for one final stint at Archbishop Mitty in 2008 to serve as a chaplain. While serving at the school, Fr. Jack moved to the Cupertino Marianist Community, where he would spend the remainder of his life.

"Even in his last days, when we tried to limit the visitors, Jack said, 'No, anyone can come see me,'" Bro. John said. "He loved people."

May he rest in peace.