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Death Notice No. 27 (To all Unit Administrations):



The Province of the United States of America recommends to our fraternal prayers our dear brother, **PAUL LANDOLFI**, priest, of the Marianist community of Mineola, New York, USA, who died in the service of the Blessed Virgin Mary on November 16, 2017 in Queens Village, New York, USA, at the age of 90 with 73 years of religious profession.

Father Paul was a teacher, chaplain and spiritual director. He spent nearly his entire life in the company of Marianists, having grown up in an orphanage run by the Society of Mary.

Paul Joseph Landolfi was born on December 17, 1926, in Brooklyn, New York. His Italian-born parents, Joseph and Theresa (Prata) Landolfi had three sons and a daughter. Paul's mother died when he was just 5, and his father placed little Paul in an orphanage, St. John's Home for Boys, with the hope of bringing him home when he was financially able. Sadly, the father died when Paul was barely 11. At about that time, the Brothers of Mary assumed charge of the orphanage, which was in Rockaway Park, New York.

Young Paul attended elementary school at St. John's Home and was sent to a public junior high school. But he was greatly attracted to the life of the Marianists, and he entered the postulate at Mount Saint John in Dayton, Ohio, in 1942, at age 14. He continued on to the novitiate and, a year later, professed first vows on August 20, 1944.

Brother Paul earned a bachelor's degree in education from the University of Dayton in 1947. He spent his early years as a teacher at Covington Catholic High School in Covington, Kentucky, and at Chaminade High School (now Chaminade Julianne Catholic High) in Dayton. He professed perpetual vows on August 17, 1950.

In 1952, Brother Paul entered the Marianist seminary in Fribourg, Switzerland. He earned a degree in theology and was ordained on July 17, 1955, in Fribourg.

For the following three years (1956-1959), Father Paul ministered as a teacher and chaplain at Hamilton Catholic High School in Hamilton, Ohio. He then assumed a similar role at St. James High School in Chester, Pennsylvania, eventually became the principal, and served there until 1965.

"I taught good, but often mischievous pupils," Father Paul later wrote. "One day after an eraser flew past my head, the older brothers showed me how to keep my eye on the students, even when writing on the blackboard."

Despite these typical challenges, Father Paul maintained a tender demeanor. "I never heard a harsh word from him. He was very open, gentle and extremely kind," said Brother Ray Kane, who lived with Father Paul for many years. "He never did an unkind act. He was a good example of one who practiced all the beatitudes."

As the next step in his ministry, Father Paul served in the Office of Religious Life and as chaplain at the novitiate for the New York Province, which had been established only a few years earlier. During this time, he also earned a master's degree in administration from Villanova University in 1966.

In 1968, Father Paul returned to his boyhood residence of St. John's Home to serve as chaplain. Over the intervening years, the mission of St. John's had evolved. Its residents were now more typically described as "abused and neglected" or "troubled." Still, Father Paul was happy to be able to serve as he had once been served.

Always an educator, Father Paul was also a learner. He earned a second master's degree – this one in pastoral counseling – from New York Theological University in 1972.

Father Paul ministered briefly as a teacher and chaplain at Colegio San José in San Juan, Puerto Rico, from 1974-1975. He then was called to Chester, Pennsylvania, where he was director of the Marianist Spiritual Renewal Center. In this role, Father Paul designed and provided programs of religious instruction, was a spiritual director, formed Lay Marianists and led retreats. During this time, he also conducted seminars on death and dying, grieving, adolescence, and depression.

Tony Fitzgerald and his wife Jean met Father Paul in 1986 when they were seeking to deepen their Lay Marianist commitment. "Father Paul was a gentle guide, warm and welcoming in the Marianist way. He was a scholar of Mary and was instrumental in helping us grow in our Marianist commitment," Tony said. "Paul had an infectious smile. He was always engaging and he demonstrated a genuine, simple joy."

Father Paul remained at the center in Pennsylvania for two decades.

Now in his late 70s, Father Paul was again called to serve at St. John's Home in 1994. He was moderator of the alumni association and a member of its board of trustees. He also served as director of the Marianist Community at the facility.

When the Marianists withdrew from St. John's Home in 2012, Father Paul, now nearly 85, remained eager to serve. "I am ready to go wherever you think I can best be of service," he wrote in an email to Father Martin Solma, U.S. provincial. His email outlined a number of organizations with which he was then involved. These included serving on boards of trustees, being a moderator for various Marianist Family groups, working with the Rockaway Catholic-Jewish Council, and serving in a number of roles in the local diocese.

In his final years, Father Paul lived with dear friends of the Marianist Province of Meribah and was a familiar face at Chaminade High School in Mineola, New York.

"Father Paul never missed a step, or a moment to share with those he encountered. His bursting-with-life attitude was infectious, engaging people into action, thought and prayer!" said Elaine Weaver, a Chaminade parent. She called him "a most gentle, genuine, generous, God-loving, Marianist holy soul."

Father Paul served as the U.S. Province liaison to the postulator general for Marianist causes for many years. He was a regular, thoughtful contributor to the electronic newsletter "FamilyOnline" until mid-2016.

Brother Tim Driscoll, provincial of the Province of Meribah, noted that Father Paul was a Marianist missionary even to the final days of his life. "Paul had asked that the notes for the course he was teaching to our novices be brought to his room at the (health care) residence so that he could prepare for his next lesson," said Brother Tim. "Paul was a great Marianist and a great priest from the cradle of the novitiate to the grave."

"Pellegrino Landolfi was Paul's baptismal name," noted longtime friend Brother Tom Trager. "Pellegrino means pilgrim, and what a beautiful pilgrim he was!" Brother Tom wrote. "His journey is over, and it was wonderful to have him as a companion on ours."

May he rest in peace.