

**CURIA GENERALIZIA MARIANISTI**  
Via Latina 22 - 00179 Roma, Italia  
Tel. (39-06) 704 75 892 - Fax (39-06) 700 0406  
E-mail: [gensecsm@smcuria.it](mailto:gensecsm@smcuria.it)

March 8, 2018

**Death Notice No. 6 (To all Unit Administrations):**



The Province of the United States of America recommends to our fraternal prayers our dear brother, **FRANCIS NAKAGAWA**, priest, who died in the service of the Blessed Virgin Mary on February 24, 2018 in Cupertino, California, USA, at the age of 90 with 69 years of religious profession.

Father Francis was a teacher and pastor who spent many years serving the Church in Japan. He was much loved by the Japanese Catholic community in Hawaii.

Francis Tasuku Nakagawa was born on September 23, 1927, in Wailuku, Maui, Hawaii. He was one of eight children in the family of Ichimoshin and Tsuchiyo (Kirimota) Nakagawa, who were Japanese immigrants to the U.S. territory of Hawaii.

Young Francis attended public school through grade three, after which he transferred to St. Anthony School, a historic Maui school staffed by the Society of Mary since 1883. This move would begin paving the path for the rest of his life.

St. Anthony School provided Francis' introduction to Catholicism, which he embraced wholeheartedly. He became Catholic at age 14. He was active in the student body at St. Anthony, serving as editor of the school newspaper and president of the student body. He graduated from St. Anthony in 1945 and spent more than a year working at the school office and library while guiding his non-Catholic parents toward acceptance of his call to religious life.

Francis entered the Marianist novitiate in Beacon, New York, in early 1947 and professed first vows there on March 14, 1948. In his request for profession of first vows, Francis wrote, "It was the Brothers of Mary that won my conversion in 1942. And it was the edifying family life of the Brothers that interested me in the life of a Marianist. Perhaps by taking the three vows of religion I will be able to repay the Society for the graces it has merited for me."

Brother Francis attended the University of Dayton, earning a bachelor's degree in education in 1951. He then returned to his native Hawaii, where he taught at St. Louis College (now Saint Louis School) in Honolulu until mid-1954. He professed perpetual vows on June 22, 1952, in Honolulu.

As the next step on his life journey, Brother Francis entered the Marianist International Seminary in Fribourg, Switzerland, where he was ordained on July 14, 1957. He then moved to Rome, where he lived at the Marianist General Administration while continuing graduate studies. He was awarded the degree of doctor of sacred theology in June of 1959, about two months before his native Hawaii became the 50<sup>th</sup> state of the United States.

For the next four years, Father Francis was a teacher and chaplain at Chaminade College (now Chaminade University).

In 1964, Father Francis answered a call to serve with the Marianists in his ancestral homeland. He moved to Japan, where he was a teacher, chaplain and community director at St. Joseph International School in Yokohama. In the early 1970s, he moved to Tokyo, where he taught at Morning Star School.

Father Francis returned to the United States in 1982, taught for a time at St. Anthony School, and then was engaged in a renewal period in Steubenville, Ohio, and in San Antonio, Texas. In 1986, Father Francis returned to Hawaii, where he served as an assistant pastor at parishes in Honolulu, Oahu and Maui.

For 25 years beginning in 1990, Father Francis ministered to Japanese-speaking Catholics in Honolulu. He celebrated Sunday Mass, administered sacraments, taught a Bible class and guided various religious and cultural activities throughout the year. "Father Nakagawa made sure no one felt left out by speaking the only language many of us could understand," wrote Michido Wada, a member of the Japanese Catholic Community of Hawaii. "While he was not given any official title, he truly was an ambassador and became an important bridge connecting many faithful in America with those in Japan."

In mid-2015, with health concerns related to his advancing years, Father Francis moved to the Marianist Community in Cupertino.

Father Robert Hughes lived with Father Francis in Cupertino. "Father Francis had a brilliant mind, a gentle and quiet spirit, and a very warm heart," said Father Robert. "But above everything else his greatest joy was his enthusiastic devotion to our Blessed Mother."

Father Francis would have celebrated 70 years of religious profession later this year.

May he rest in peace.