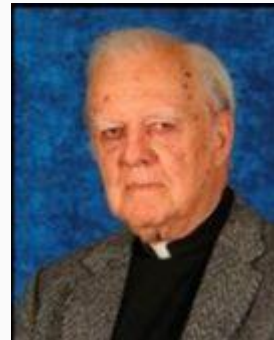




Society of Mary - Compañía de María - Société de Marie
Via Latina 22, 00179 Roma



September 25, 2020

Biography of Death Notice N. 26

The Province of the United States recommends to our fraternal prayers our dear brother, **James F. KUNES**, priest, of the Siena Woods Marianist Community of Dayton, Ohio, USA, who died in the service of the Blessed Virgin Mary on September 12, 2020, in Dayton, Ohio, at the age of 89 with 71 years of religious profession.

Father Jim was a teacher, chaplain, parish priest and creator of formational workshops who ministered at a variety of locations in the Midwest. He served the Society of Mary and the Church in active ministry for nearly 60 years.

James Frances Kunes was born on September 27, 1930, in Cleveland, Ohio. He was one of five children in the family of James and Ann (Soulek) Kunes. Young Jim was drawn to religious life even as a boy in grammar school. By the time he completed his freshman year under the tutelage of the Marianists at Cathedral Latin School in Cleveland, he was ready to enter the postulate. At the request of his parents, however, he remained at home to complete high school.

Jim entered the novitiate at Beacon, New York, in 1948, and professed first vows

there a year later, on August 23, 1949. He earned a bachelor's degree in education from the University of Dayton in 1952 and began teaching at Purcell High School in Cincinnati, that autumn. He professed perpetual vows on August 15, 1953, in Dayton.

Brother Jim remained at Purcell until 1957, when he departed for seminary studies at the University of Fribourg in Switzerland. He earned a STB degree in 1959 and was ordained on July 17, 1960, in Fribourg. He continued sacred theology studies in Fribourg, earning a STL in 1961 and STD in 1964. His doctoral thesis was titled: "The Spirit of Faith in Active Life, A Spirituality of Faith Based on the Writings of William Joseph Chaminade."

Decades later, on the occasion of Fr. Jim's 50th anniversary of his completion of his doctoral studies at the University of Fribourg. Fr. Martin Solma noted the timeliness of his thesis topic as it was authored just as Vatican II was drawing to a close in . "His (Chaminade's) vision, which you explored so well, challenged and empowered laity and clergy to return to the roots of Christian life and to live lives of service animated by the Gospel."

When he returned from Fribourg, Father Jim spent the next several years as a high school teacher and chaplain. He ministered at Chaminade High in Dayton (1964-1965), Hamilton Catholic High in Hamilton, Ohio (1965-1966) and Monsignor Hackett High in Kalamazoo, Michigan (1966-1967). During these years, he also developed and presented numerous formational workshops for the dioceses where he served. He later wrote that these were his response to Blessed Chaminade's refrain, "You are all missionaries."

He continued this type of work for the next three years, serving at Bergamo Retreat Center in Dayton. Overlapping with this ministry were two years (1968-1970) teaching at the University of Dayton. Father Jim continued as a university professor for two more years, teaching at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor and Marygrove College in Detroit, Michigan.

In 1972, Father Jim began concentrating more on pastoral work, serving at Michigan parishes including St. Mary's Church in Detroit, St. Catherine in Portage and Our Lady of Consolation in Grand Rapids. During these years, he also ministered as a consultant for the Archdiocese of Detroit and the Diocese of Grand Rapids, assisting with parish council development and providing renewal programs for clergy and religious.

Father Jim moved to Missouri in 1990, where he served at St. Peter Church in Kirkwood until 1995. Now age 65, Father Jim shifted into hospital ministry, serving as a chaplain at DePaul Hospital and St. Joseph Hospital, both in St. Louis, until 2011.

Now age 81, Father Jim returned to his Ohio roots in 2011, living at the Siena Woods Marianist Community until his death.

May he rest in peace.