

October 16, 2007

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



The Province of the France, recommends to our fraternal prayers our dear brother, **MICHEL BEHR**, priest, who died in the service of the Blessed Virgin Mary on October 1, 2007 in Farebersviller, France, in the 90th year of his age and the 73rd year of his religious profession.

Michel Behr was born on November 9, 1917 at Loupershouse (Moselle) to Pierre Behr and Eugénie Drui. He was the oldest of five children. Baptized at Loupershouse, two days after his birth, he would make his primary studies in this locality and continue at the Lycée in Sarreguemines. In 1931, he entered the postulate at Antony, as a recruit of Bro. Loos, SM. His novitiate took place at St. Rémy-Signeulx, the last year of Fr. Schellhorn, who influenced him deeply. He made his first vows on September 12, 1934 and his perpetual vows on November 16, 1945 at Paris, rue de Monceau. His scholasticate took place at Rêves and at Fribourg, at the Normal School, rue Botzet. He made his seminary at Pavilion Chaminade and was ordained on July 24, 1949 by Bishop Charrière in the chapel of Collège St. Michel before the reliquary of St. Peter Canisius.

For diplomas, we must mention the baccalaureate in 1938 at Besançon, the licentiate in German at Paris, the licentiate in English at Bordeaux in 1950, the licentiate in Theology at Fribourg in 1950, and the doctorate in Theology “Vatican II et la culture,” in 1969 at the University of Lille, after attending EMACAS under Father Jérôme Regnier.

In 1939, he was mobilized (Montargis and Versailles) for Reserve Officer Training School. In 1940, he was in Paris, 32, rue de Monceau. In 1942, in La Rochelle, at Ecole Fénelon as teacher and auxiliary chaplain of the US forces. From 1952-56, he was in Canada (Ecole Provencher, in St. Boniface) and vicar in San Antonio (Texas). In 1956, he was at Caudéran as teacher of English and vicar at Beutre. In 1959 he went to Art-sur-Meurthe, as successor of Bro. Loos, the recruiter. From 1960 to 1962, he was in Phalsbourg, living with the Franciscans, as chaplain at the Lycée Erckmann-Chatrian. From 1962-66, he was vicar at Farébersviller and chaplain at the lycée technique of St. Avold. From 1966-68 in Lille, he was stationed at EMACAS and the University. In 1968 he became vicar at Farébersviller with the construction of the church of St. Thérèse and was a teacher of catechism at Collège Holderith. He remained there until 1995 when, after the death of Fr. Krier at Thédning, he helped out in a parish and was chaplain of the MAPAD in Farébersviller. He also was editor of biographies in “NOUVLLES” and of “Souvenirs.”

His best memory was to have been at the service of the mining population, in the Lorraine coal-mining area, with more than twenty nationalities, and of having given them a place of worship with the construction of the church of St. Thérèse. The master-piece in this church is the cross – an icon made by Ludmilla in the St. John Damascene studios, in the Drôme, which were founded by Russian monks. He was a non-conformist, belonged to the charismatic renewal, and was admitted to the places of apparition of the Virgin not recognized by the Church. We must not forget Taizé (Youth Council in 1974). He was a great traveler and, on his return from Canada (twenty times larger than France) he traveled throughout

Europe. He understood modern communication methods and took advantage of his computer to be in touch with the Marianist world.

Until his last days, he was a friend of the sick. With his title of “priest-helper”, he animated the retreat house in Farébersviller and hastened to help his fellow brothers. Until his last days, he wrote well-rounded biographies for NOUVELLES, pointed out the burning issues in the Church, and commented on the works of the Marianist novelist Roger Bichelberger.

After a short hospitalization, he left us to receive the just reward for his apostolic work here below. May the Virgin Mary, whose faithful and devoted disciple he was, reward him for all the good he accomplished!