

Bro. Leo lived a long and fruitful life. He is a member of the generation of Brothers to whom we owe a debt of thanks for the work they did to establish many of our works. Bro. Leo played key positions in the development of several campuses—most notably the Atrium ay Chaminade in St. Louis and the present building housing St. Mary’s High School. He also recognized that the buildings and surroundings were a small part. He recognized the importance of working with his students and living with the Brothers

From the stories Leo would tell, I knew he had served in many places. I did not realize how many until the other day when I reviewed his assignments over the past seventy-seven years: Belleville, San Antonio, Chicago, St. Louis, Victoria, Detroit, and East St. Louis. Teacher of English, Latin, mathematics, and religion...moderator of sodalities, newspapers, speech and debate...Director/Principal, Sub/Director, Assistant Principal, Administrator/Treasurer...Bro. Leo left his mark on many areas of the Church. The good that Leo did his life will surely accompany him as he now finds rest from his labors. John’s vision in Revelation reminds of the importance of the work we do to fulfill our mission as religious in Church. Leo also recognized the importance of prayer in our mission. *Faithful* hardly suffices to describe Leo. Even in his later years, he was faithful to community prayer. I spent two summers at Chaminade while working at the camp there. It always seemed to me a competition between Leo and Louis Meinhardt to make sure common prayer would begin as the last tone rang from the clock in chapel. Leo’s faithfulness went beyond the strict time table. He was an avid reader, including a wide variety of spiritual books. He had a deep, fruitful interior life. This will not shock anyone but Leo was not shy about speaking his mind—even providing a brief commentary on the Scripture for the Eucharist—after he had served as lector. This was sometimes to the chagrin of the presider, but some of the Brothers found it helpful—as it was described to me. I was a young Brother and figured that how they did things at Frishe Hall.

We heard Job’s answer to Bildad, proclaiming the heart of his faith: “I know that my vindicator lives!” Teacher, administrator...whatever he did, he realized he was working with a young person in need of guidance and knowledge. From the stories I had heard over the past several years, Bro. Leo was a demanding teacher. It seems to me he had two passions outside his teaching, the Brothers with whom he lived and the golf which kept him physically active. In the classroom, Leo was calm, rational, unflappable, and strict. For students who needed that sense of order and a firm hand, he proved to be a good instructor and positive mentor. In his life he tried to model the presence of God by the constant attention to the details of Latin and English Grammar, the minutiae of the community or school budget, or the strokes of a golf match. For Leo, God was in the details. This is how understood God’s presence and his salvific act.

Leo was faithful to Church and also to the social time. He enjoyed spending time with Brothers. For him golf and other activities with Brothers was an experience of God’s grace. I never knew Leo to be shy about sharing his perspective. I guess you could say that Leo had a strong personality. Predictably, this could cause some tension with other strong personalities. I’ll leave those stories to other and to God. As all of know, the great strength of our personalities can also be a source of tension for us. Leo was, as Shakespeare would describe, a blunt fellow—but a real softy at heart (the latter description not from Shakespeare). He has the respect of the Brothers, many of whom he counts among his friends and confidantes.

Leo’s life reminds us of Martha’s words: “I have come to believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, the one who is coming into this world.” His life is now with the God whom he so faithfully served. We should sit here in awe. Leo lived through the 20<sup>th</sup> century, into the 21<sup>st</sup>. The changes in culture and in the Church—the tumult, the joy, the celebration and the tensions---all lived in history—the

wars, the economic ups and down, the vagaries of life in community, the challenges faced by the Church and the Society of Mary, the changes to golf.... Leo took each of these and in his own way and made sense of them as he tried to understand what it meant to follow Jesus as a son of Chaminade.

We gather here in prayer—as family, Brothers, and Sisters—all bound by our baptism. We each promise prayers for the repose of Leo’s soul and the comfort of family and friends. We gather here to celebrate the life of a man whose longevity and faith challenge us to more faithful service and a deeper sense of God’s providence. Like Leo—we need to proclaim that vindicator lives and by our work, our prayer, and our life in common that follows us in death profess our faith in Jesus—“the Son of God, the one who is coming into this world.”