



Society of Mary - Compañía de María - Société de Marie
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February 12, 2025

Biography of Death Notice N. 03

The Province of the United States recommends to our fraternal prayers our dear brother **Richard Joseph DIX** of the Marianist Residence Community in San Antonio, Texas, USA, who died in the service of the Blessed Virgin Mary on February 2, 2025, in San Antonio at the age of 92 with 75 years of religious profession.

Brother Richard was a beloved teacher and administrator in high school and college settings for more than two decades. He also served for many years in community and province leadership positions. Throughout his life of ministerial service, Brother Richard drew great satisfaction from physical work—the maintenance and construction projects he took on almost every Saturday, everywhere he lived. This practice continued in his retirement years when, as he joyfully reported, “I have all Saturdays!”

Richard Joseph Dix was born on March 2, 1932, in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. He was one of six children (one brother and four sisters) in the family of Martin and Helen (Kitowski) Dix. Like all his siblings, Richard went to the parish grade school (St. John Kanty) in Milwaukee, where they were taught by the School Sisters of Notre Dame. But he “considered it a wonderful stroke of luck – or maybe providential – that Don Bosco High School opened” just as he was entering high school. Instead of enrolling at St. Stanislaus/Notre Dame like his older siblings, he went to Don Bosco instead – where he first encountered the Marianists. “I was impressed by their family spirit, especially their working together in a wonderful, joyful way,” he later wrote.

As a sophomore, Richard was invited by Marianist Father Glennon McCarty to consider religious life. He and four classmates then entered the postulancy in 1947 at Maryhurst in Kirkwood, Missouri. He began novitiate a year later at Marynook in Galesville, Wisconsin, and professed first vows there on August 15, 1949. That same summer, his older sister Benilda took vows with the School Sisters of Notre Dame – and in 2009, the siblings jointly celebrated their 60th jubilees in religious life, an event that merited a feature story in Milwaukee’s diocesan newspaper.

As a newly-professed Marianist, Brother Richard pursued scholastic studies at Maryhurst, the University of Dayton in Ohio, and St. Mary’s University in San Antonio, Texas. He earned a Bachelor of Science in Biology from St. Mary’s in 1952. He professed final vows at Marynook on July 17, 1954. With his teaching career already well underway, he earned a Master of Science in Biology from the University of Notre Dame in South Bend, Indiana in 1963.

Starting at grade schools in Missouri and Texas, Brother Richard moved on to high school classrooms in 1956 – serving at McBride (St. Louis) and Central Catholic (San Antonio). In 1963, his teaching ministry expanded to include administration when he was named Assistant Principal at Nolan Catholic High School in Fort Worth, Texas. During the next twelve years, Brother Dix would continue in similar roles at high schools in Missouri and Texas. Called to provincial leadership, Brother Richard was named Provincial Assistant for Temporalities (Treasurer) in 1976, serving eight years in that role for the

former St. Louis Province. In 1984, he moved to San Antonio and took on a new set of responsibilities, serving as Registrar for St. Mary's University as well as Director of the Marianist Community.

In 1995, Brother Richard rejoined the Provincial Council as Assistant for Temporalities, helping to guide the process as the St. Louis Province combined with three other provinces to form the Marianist Province of the United States. He continued to serve in provincial leadership until 2007 and then returned to the Marianist Residence in San Antonio. Describing himself as "semi-retired," Brother Richard assisted the community thereby continuing to take on maintenance projects around the house and by handling various business management tasks.

Marianist Brother Michael O'Grady is among the many who were touched by Brother Dix's spirit of service. "I admired Richard. He was a highly intelligent person with skills in all areas he was asked to serve. He never said 'no' to the congregation," Brother Mike says. "I especially admired his patience and his humility. He was a model religious."

Marianist artist Brother Brian Zampier gratefully recalls the boost his work and career received from Brother Richard's support and leadership. "Brother Dix was the person on the Provincial Council who said, 'Maybe Mel could use some help,'" Brother Brian says. "This began my over 10-year adventure (2003 to 2014) with Brother Mel Meyer as his artist assistant at the Marianist Galleries in Kirkwood, Missouri."

Ann Mueller, who retired as a Communications Specialist at the provincial office, cherishes the many years she worked alongside Brother Dix in St. Louis. She remembers him as "always kind, humble, positive, and a delight to be with. He was the Assistant for Temporalities. I didn't always understand Temporalities, but Brother Dix was a patient teacher. He was also a great listener. If something needed to be done, he would do it," she says. "One of my favorite things about Brother Dix is that he loved tinkering with things – whether it was computers, washing windows, taking things apart, or rebuilding things. He loved working with his hands and doing physical labor. When he left the Provincial Administration and moved to San Antonio, he continued his tinkering and

building – and you can still see the fruit of his labors throughout the community and grounds. He was a true Marianist Brother! I am grateful for having known him and will miss him.”

Marie Gray, Bookkeeper for the Marianist Residence in San Antonio, grew to love working for Brother Richard. “He was my supervisor, off and on, for 30 years – and one of the most stable, unshakeable, helpful, and knowledgeable persons I have ever known,” she says. “He gave me so much confidence doing the job, there was no way I wanted to let him down. And he knew everything about the Community, the building, and the people in it!” Through the years, Marie learned how to please his taste buds, too. “Brother Dix loved lemon meringue pie, and it was my joy and honor for him to say that my pies tasted practically the same as his mom’s,” Marie smiles. “As much as any of us are thankful his suffering is over, he leaves a huge hole in our community and in many of our hearts personally. I will miss him dearly.”

Director of Human Resources Mary Ellen Garcia worked closely with Brother Dix for many years after he hired her to work for the province. “He was always a joy to work with,” she says. “I came to realize that he was the personification of all things Marianist. He lived a simple life and followed the rule of ‘Do whatever he tells you.’ He had more energy than the Energizer Bunny, going nonstop from morning till night and only taking time off midday to swim laps. He could fix anything and would stick with it until he fixed it. I am humbled to have been able to work side by side with Brother Richard and to later have him as my friend. I always looked forward to my trips to San Antonio so we could sit and talk for hours. He was a great one – the best Marianist ever!!”

Charlotte Soria, a Certified Nursing Assistant at the Marianist Residence, considers it a special grace to have been with Brother Dix during his final days at the hospital. “It was a very hard and emotional time,” she says. “There were moments of happiness, sadness, and most of all, the big question of when he might come home. He would ask every day, and I would say, let’s see what the doctors say.” Charlotte saw how her friendly presence helped to calm his spirit before and after medical tests. And she noted that he often returned the favor. “We would have long talks of life, death, and how he would like to be remembered,” she says. “He knew he had lived a good life, and he was so grateful to God for his ministry. He loved being a Marianist! We prayed together,

sometimes quietly, when nothing needed to be said – we just both knew! I miss him dearly, but his spirit is in these hallways with us! I feel very blessed by the friendship we shared. I will always carry him in my heart!”

May he rest in peace.
