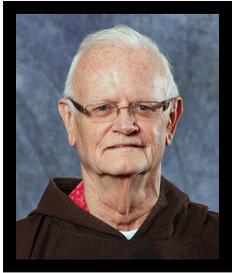


Neerology

James Magnan
1943-2019



James Magnan was born on January 21, 1943, the son of Clarence and Monica Magnan. He had one brother, Clarence Jr. Jim's hometown was Greendale, Wisconsin.

Jim attended public school until St. Alphonsus was built. Jim says that his parents, the School Sisters of St. Francis, and his pastor who went to St. Lawrence Seminary had a great influence on his vocation. In high school he wrote a paper on religious vocation, focusing on the religious brother. The first Capuchin he met was Francis Mary Sparacino, whose mother had moved to the same town as Jim. Francis would go to mass wearing his habit and walked by Jim's house. Later he met Jerry Higgins who took him to a meeting in Milwaukee. While at St. Ben's he met Herbert Mathieu, who also had a great influence on his vocation.

In 1962 Jim went to Sacred Heart Friary in Baraga, Michigan as a candidate, and on March 19, 1963 he was invested as novice. Jim continued his formation at St. Mary in Crown Point, Indiana where he served as infirmarian until 1965. He was transferred to St. Anthony Friary at Marathon, Wisconsin, and took over the print shop. During a visitation the provincial minister asked Jim to go Milwaukee and pursue education in nursing. The thought was that one day he could assist elderly brothers and be infirmarian at St. Lawrence. This seemed to be a perfect fit because his mother was a nurse and he learned a manner of care from her. Jim was kind, gentle and caring, and was a real people person. He seemed to be comfortable with anyone and was always enjoyable to be around.

Jim attended Sacred Heart School of Nursing. He worked at hospitals at St. Mary's in Wausau, Wisconsin. After his studies he was asked to go to Crown Point, Indiana to be infirmarian. At that time Jim was part-time at St. Catherine Hospital in East Chicago. After his time in Indiana he went to St. Lawrence to serve the students and faculty from 1969 to 1978. At St. Lawrence he did a very good job caring for the students in the infirmary. During his time there he also worked at St. Agnes Hospital in Fond du Lac, and when the Calvary volunteer ambulance crew was started, he volunteered for that. The faculty at that time had a lot of young Capuchins which made life there especially enjoyable.

After 10 years at Calvary, some friars from Central America were coming back to the US and seeking a warmer climate, so they went to Arizona. Jim joined them at Immaculate Conception in Douglas, AZ. After a year he transferred to Wilcox, AZ to do parish ministry, CCD and hospital pastoral care. He enjoyed the area and the ministry greatly and remained there for five years.

Perhaps because of his experience with the returning missionaries in Arizona, in 1983 the provincial asked Jim to go to Detroit to be mission secretary. It was a big job. At the time the Mission Office had its own building, fund-raising and many employees. During that time the province added a new mission in Panama. He was director for five years. He was always

approachable and tried to run the office in a team method. After completing his ministry as mission secretary, he went to the University of Chicago and completed Clinical Pastoral Education for future work as hospital chaplain. He was then hired as a chaplain at Mercy Hospital in Chicago and ministered there for 20 years. He then began a ministry at St. Rita High School in Chicago where he worked on the switchboard, the school store and cooked for the Augustinians. He enjoyed the work and found friends in that community. Jim loved Chicago; it was truly home for him. He had been on his own for many years and while he felt very connected, he was often seen as apart from the Capuchin community. In recent years he had retired from cooking and nursing, and was enjoying retired life.

A couple weeks before he died, he found out he had inoperable stage 4 stomach cancer. He realized then that all he could do now is wait for the end. While he spent many years as a “distant” member of the Capuchin community, he loved the brothers, and told some of them so near the end. He was transferred to St. Fidelis in Appleton for hospice care. Shortly before he died, one of the staff asked him if he was afraid to die. He told her that he was at peace and ready to go. After only three days he passed away peacefully, with the brothers whom he so loved at his side, on November 5, 2019. He is buried in Mt Calvary.

Jim always said his motto in life was: love, labor and laugh.

~ Michael Gaffney