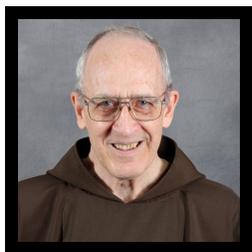


Neerology

Leo Petrimoulx
1935 - 2018



Leo was born on Sept 21, 1935 in Cadillac, Michigan. He always claimed Bay City as his hometown. Bay City is known for two things: the huge Dow Chemical Plant and Madonna. Leo would brag about both. His parents Norbert Petrimoulx and his mother Rosanna Helie had eight children. Leo was number three. His family was close knit and Leo always found time to visit them and hold them near. When he returned for vacation from the missions he would always organize a family day so all could come together. He was the magnet that would pull them together.

He also kept in touch with his high school classmates calling them together, especially on his vacation time from Nicaragua. In the past years he was one of the few survivors of his high school class.

He entered the novitiate after high school taking the name Conrad. After his studies of philosophy and theology and a pastoral year in Milwaukee he headed to Cuernavaca Mexico where he took Spanish studies for about seven months. Arriving in Nicaragua he was sent to Puerto Cabezas for two years where the Miskito language is more prevalent. He spent one year as a seminary professor in Bluefields. Then he was sent to La Luz, Siuna as an associate. The next assignment was in Paiguas as an associate and later as pastor. It was in Paiguas where he was really tested going on long mission trips. Later he was sent to Rama which is the biggest parish in the coast. He was a good pastor, well organized, knew how to work on a team with the priests and sisters. He even took a few puppets along on his trips to entertain the children.

Larry Weber is grateful for the way Leo treated him as a brother and introduced him to Hispanic pastorals.

Leo had a good sense of humor. He would have a mischievous look in his eye before pulling something on someone. Even the campesinos were often heard laughing with Leo. His name, as we pronounce it in English comes out *Lio* in Spanish and means "a problem." He would love to pull off some trick on another. I think he learned that in his own family. The other way of pronouncing Leo is close to Leon which means "lion." He was strong like a lion and could withstand well the difficult trips along the rivers and trails. But above all Leo was gentle. He had a special love for those suffering. Everyone noticed Leo's compassion.

In 1988 Leo returned to the States. He probably suffered during some of the changes of government and revolution in Nicaragua. He was assigned to Maternity BVM in Chicago where

he spent more than six years. He was an assistant and got really close to the people. After he left the parish to work in Madison at a house of prayer he would often return to that parish in Chicago to visit friends especially those in most need. He easily formed many friendships. The friars who worked with him felt him as a true brother. Those also who enjoyed going for an ice cream or occasional movie and restaurant found Leo a good companion who loved the camaraderie. He kept close contact with former missionaries and religious sisters. His deep respect for women was noteworthy. Because he was a close brother he must have felt deeply the death of some close friars such as Rupert and Loran with whom he lived. He was gifted as a counselor, confessor, and spiritual director. When he was back to the US on a sabbatical he took classes in CPE which equipped him to work in hospitals as chaplain. When he went to Madison he took up chaplaincy and was often on call for any emergencies. He also would help out with masses in Spanish in different places on weekends. During the week he could often be seen driving the tractor to keep the lawn in shape. He was asked to be pastor at St. Joe's in Saginaw and it was not a good fit for him; he left after one year. He returned to his work in Madison where he flourished for another ten years until he had a stroke. This stroke led him finally to St. Bonaventure. Again he was at home with the friars and people, but little by little dementia settled in and he became more difficult to handle. His family was there always to support him, especially his sister Pat. He has been a man of prayer and a real brother to us. We will miss him.

~ Alfredo Gundrum