

Bro Conan Vincent Dinnean



Received the Breath of Life
21 June 1915, New Haven CT

Entered the Novitiate as a Postulant:
1938

Called to Accept the Marist Brotherhood
26 July 1939

Was Commended to God
3 January 2007
Miami, Florida

Mass of Christian Burial
9 January 2007
St. Richard Catholic Church
Palmetto Bay, FL

Interred in Marist Brothers Cemetery, Esopus NY
11 January 2007

Obituary in the Eagle Tribune, Lawrence, MA Tuesday January 9, 2007

Brother Vincent Dinnean, 91

MIAMI —Brother Vincent Dinnean, FMS, a member of the Marist Brothers, Province of the United States of America, and formerly a member of the faculty at Central Catholic High School, Lawrence, died on Wednesday, January 3, 2007 at the Marist Brothers Retirement community in Miami. He is survived by his sister, Ms. Edna Bray of Hamden, Conn.

Born in 1915, in New Haven, CT, Brother Vincent entered the Marist Brothers in 1938, professing his first vows in 1940. His ministry as teacher, school administrator and community superior included assignments in Georgia, New York and Connecticut. His ministry brought him to Central Catholic in Lawrence in 1968, where he served as teacher of religious education and science. For many years he was the school's attendance director and helped out after school, organizing the maintenance of the school's athletic equipment.

In his final years at Central he was an assistant to the librarian. Always a student himself, Brother Vincent pursued graduate work in theology at Rivier College and Fordham University and continued his study up until the time of his death.

Personal Information

Vincent Daniel Dinnean was born June 21, 1915 in New Haven CT. His parents were Daniel and Mary (Meehan) Dinnean. His sister is Edna Bray.

BS in Education (major in English) Fordham University, 1948
MS in Education (Major in psychology) Fordham University, 1955
Postgraduate work in Sacred Theology Rivier College and Fordham University 1976-1977

1940-1942 Laundry, St. Ann's Hermitage, Poughkeepsie NY
 1942-1944 Scholasticate (Marist Normal Training School), Poughkeepsie NY
 1944-1946 Boys Catholic HS, Augusta GA
 1946-1953 St. Helena HS, Bronx NY
 1953-1957 St Agnes HS, Manhattan NY
 1957-1962 Holy Trinity School, Poughkeepsie NY
 1962-1968 St Joseph HS, Trumbull CT
 1968-2002 Central Catholic HS, Lawrence MA
 2002-2007 Retirement Community, SW 136th St, Miami FL

From the Eagle-Tribune, Lawrence MA — Monday, June 3, 1997

"If I'm already in heaven, you can forget me." — Brother Conan Vincent Dinnean FMS

Brother Vinny has long been thought of as "Central Catholic's treasure" — but he does not fear the day he finally leaves the school.

By Kathie Neff Ragsdale
 Eagle-Tribune Writer

Weekday mornings he prowls up and down the cafeteria, wordlessly reading his psalms and rarely glancing up at the early-arriving students he is supposed to keep in line.

He doesn't have to.

Central Catholic High School's Brother Vincent Dinnean — "Brother Vinny has power in his presence, says Assistant Principal Jeanne Burns. He may be 81 years old and well past his teaching days, but he's not a man students are apt to cross

In dealing with people, "When you're not that smart, God gives you a certain instinct," explains Brother Vincent, in one of the self-deprecating one-liners for which he is celebrated.

But he is more than the school's early-morning cafeteria proctor.

He is also the attendance-keeper, checking in at nearly three dozen classrooms in two buildings every hour.

He volunteers faithfully at the Mary Immaculate nursing home, where some of the residents are younger than he is. .

He walks for miles down Lawrence streets a warier person might fear, to read and watches televised religious programs regularly..

"You're getting so close, you might as well get to know the other side," he says. His references to death are frequent and light-hearted.

He hates riding in a car because of the hassle of getting in and out. "I may not be a big man, but I'm an awkward one," he says. .

He is a beloved fixture in the 61 year-old Catholic school that only last year opened its doors to girls, a move of which Brother Vincent approves.

"He's like a local treasure, a Central Catholic treasure," says Dean of Students William Cowie, a friend of almost 40 years.

Brother Vincent joined the Marist order 58 years ago as a man in his 20's, old by comparison with others. He has joked that his parents thought he didn't have the intelligence to get a degree and teach, like many men in the order, but figured he might be useful in the laundry. .

Instead, the Hartford, Conn., native did teach in Manhattan, the Bronx, upstate New York and Augusta, Ga., for the first 30 years of his religious life, then at Central Catholic, where he has been for 20. He taught earth science and later religion before he left classroom work five years ago.

These days, he's up at 5 a.m., then heads for group prayer and his day at the school. At 7 a.m. he is in the cafeteria, where he is responsible for collecting the excuse notes of students who have been absent the day before-and where he has a reputation for not missing a trick. . .

"When the girls first came, they tried to charm you, saying 'you don't want to put me in detention, do you?'" he remembers. He would assure them that he wasn't enjoying the process...but that they would go to detention.

But don't let the facade fool you. The most outlandish excuses, he confesses, provoke inward chuckles , ... , "He has that kind of gruff exterior," says Central Catholic Principal Brother Rick Carey, "but he's very gentle and really funny." .

He attends noon Mass at St. Mary's returns to school to do some filing, then heads to the brothers' Sheridan Street home, where he often watches religious shows and naps before dinner.

On weekends and at odd times during the week he goes to Mary Immaculate nursing home, where he assists residents in wheelchairs on their way to lunch or Mass. He may spend two hours there on a Saturday and four on a Sunday, often distributing Communion as well.

He jokes to the staff that they should remember his name for when he returns as a resident.

He has already outlived some "great men" and fellow Brothers much younger than himself, "but I figure God didn't want me yet," Brother Vincent says. "He's giving me time to get myself in order."

And though he is prepared for his own passing, he can't resist joking about it. "We get buried at night, so all the Brothers can come," he says. "The kids don't have a holiday, which delights me."

School secretary Mary Ann McDonough, who has worked at Central Catholic for 21 years, says Brother Vincent is "just a joy, and he has so much faith. It's almost like you could say in your lifetime it was a pleasure knowing someone like him."

As for Brother Vincent himself, "I don't want to be remembered," he says. "If I need the prayers, I'll want to be remembered constantly. If I'm already in heaven, you can forget me."

From the January 2007 Newsletter of the United States Province of the Marist Brothers

REMEMBERING CONAN VINCENT DINEEN

The death of Brother Conan Vincent Dineen on January 3 brought to a close the life of one of our Province "giants." Loved by generations of students, faculty, and Brothers, Vinny is especially remembered by novices in Tyngsboro who had Vinny as their summer prefect and teacher. The novice master had gone on a well earned vacation, and Vinny came to Tyngsboro with this simple admonition to the novices, "Don't get sick. Don't die. Don't have a vocation crisis – at least not until the master comes back." Whether he was Conan, Conan Vincent, or Vinny, he was a wonderful model of what Marist brotherhood is all about.

Vinny was born to Daniel and Mary (Meehan) Dineen in New Haven, Connecticut on July 21, 1915. He entered the novitiate as a postulant in 1938 and received the habit in 1939. Vinny made first vows in 1940, final vows in 1945, and stability in 1955.

After completing the scholasticate in 1994, Conan served at Boys Catholic in Augusta, Georgia (1944-1946),

St. Helena High School in the Bronx, New York (1944-1946), St. Agnes Boy's High School in New York City (1953-1957), Holy Trinity School in Poughkeepsie, New York (1957-1962), St. Joseph High School in Trumbull, Connecticut (1962-1968), and Central Catholic High School in Lawrence, Massachusetts (1968-2002). From 2002 until his death, Conan lived in our retirement community at 136th Street in Miami.

Because of his long tenure at Central Catholic, Vinny is most often associated with that school. An article in the June 2, 1997 edition of the Lawrence Eagle-Tribune described Vinny as "Central Catholic's treasure." At age 81 at the time, Vinny talked about why he watched religious tv programs. "When you're getting so close, you might as well get to know the other side," he quipped.

In typical Conan humor, he described for the article's author that the Brothers often held funerals at night so that as many Brothers as possible could attend. Then he added, "The kids don't have a holiday, which delights me."

There is so much for which Conan Vincent will be remembered. He had a wonderful sense of humor and could laugh at himself. He had a remarkable faith which sustained him through tremendous change in both the Church and religious life. He had a remarkable ability to adapt to the changing youth to whom he ministered for almost 60 years. Most importantly, Conan loved his brothers, and they loved him.

Godspeed, Vinny. We miss you already.
