

Larry Keogh died on Saturday, October 26, after a setback while recovering from serious colon surgery undergone the week before. Larry is survived by his wife Jan and his three adult sons, Stephen, Christopher, and David. The Keoghs have been residing at 17125 West 145th Street, Lockport, Illinois 60441-2295; ldjmk@aol.com; 815-838-1570)

from VINCE POISELLA ('58):

I knew Larry Keogh only through the annual Marist Family Institute of Spirituality. What seemed most to consume the life of Larry Keogh was his desire to serve: his family, his parish community, his students, the clients of his counseling, former Brothers and their spouses, and indeed, all who crossed his path. His role as deacon was merely the latest choice in a life devoted to others. Inspired by a desire that the Marist Spirit be a vehicle for serving, he (along with Hugh Turley and Denis Dunne) organized the first retreat-reunion at Marist College - soon to enter its ninth year -- known now as the Marist Family Institute of Spirituality. Larry and his wife Jan served this community of Brothers, former Brothers, wives, widows, and friends as they gathered together each summer to pray, share, and celebrate the Marist Spirit together. His demeanor, although externally calm, belied the passion within. His soothing and caring words comforted those around him. His keen perceptions of others reflected his own longing for virtue, feeling that he himself fell short of his own ideals. The fire in those bright Irish eyes erupted in disappointment on occasion, as he wondered why life could not be better for all. One disappointment he showed each July at Marist College was that the makeshift weekend community didn't expand in action to spread the Marist Spirit throughout the land! He stepped back, waiting for the process to evolve, like the true counselor that he was. Larry Keogh will be sorely missed by this modest community formed each July. And yet, this was only a page in the many chapters of the book of service in a life inspired by the Marist Spirit.

Eulogy

for

Rev. Dr. Larry Keogh

by

Catherine Cherry

November 2, 2002

Larry was husband, father, professor, Marist, friend, tease, and lover of God. He was filled with enthusiasm. Enthusiasm comes from the words en Theos which means "in God", and he lived his life with enthusiasm for learning, teaching, friends and family, shopping and decorating. He lived his life with an awareness of and a desire for a relationship with God, and for a desire to share that God in community. He did so, first as a Marist brother, then in his family as husband and father, and more recently as a deacon.

He really valued you, his brother deacons, for you became the community with whom he shared his faith and his hunger for God.

To truly hear what I wish to say, you need to know who I am. I am Larry's friend, Catherine, from Montreal. We met in Montreal at a time when my father was acting out in the dementia of the terrible disease of Alzheimers. I needed to learn how to deal with my aging father, so I went to the Adler Institute to take a course from the expert in Gerontology from the distant land of Chicago. We became friends and gave retreats together, for we were both educators and counsellors. Larry brought his added knowledge of history, sociology and gerontology, and I brought my training as a spiritual director and retreat director. We made a good team.

I am going to describe the first day we met, because it encapsulates so much about Larry that was only more fully enfolded as time went on.

David, you were very sick that day, and your Dad was so worried about you, that his mind was filled with family and little bits of information kept popping out all day. He mentioned you were going to stay with your Uncle Jack where you could recover in the warmth, not just of Florida, but also bask in the warmth and care of his loving brother whom he knew would help you heal.

Larry spoke of Jan whom he called "his best friend" and "his greatest support, without whom he would not be where he was", or "have become all he was meant to be". Jan, Larry always referred to you that way, as "his best friend".

Throughout that day, and all the days since, he kept saying how much he loved his sons. Steven, Christopher, David, your dad not just care about you, he loved you with a passion the depth of which surprised him. He was so proud of you. As the years went on, he shared with me his joy in your growth and in your accomplishments.

Larry was a tease. The class went to lunch at a Mexican restaurant. He never stopped laughing. Everything in the restaurant was written in French. You see we have laws about that in Montreal. Even our Spanish Mexican restaurants are French. He never let me forget it.

He also teased me about our weather, often asking in mid-summer if it were snowing and if we were having blizzards. He knew that our weather systems are the same as yours, and he was just as distressed that my car didn't have air conditioning. For several years he only came in November and April when it was so cold and bleak. Larry loved flowers, so he was thrilled when he and Jan came one July and found the city blanketed in flowers.

Larry revelled in everything that could grow - trees and flowers, students, friends, relationships and mostly his sons.

After his diaconate many of us stayed on for a week, and he put us to work planting tomatoes, and begonias, and dianasis, and many other flowers whose names I do not know. Brother Luke and his friends from Florida and I worked hard to bring life and beauty into his world.

Brother Luke, his high school Latin teacher, was very special to him. They teased each other mercilessly. Along the way, Larry realized that Luke had become father-figure and dear friend. Luke also loved Larry. I've spoken to him several times this week and Luke shared his aching sorrow at Larry's death. He would be here today, but at eighty-three, he finds it just too difficult to travel.

I return to that first day. The day was sprinkled with spirituality. It wasn't part of the course. It just appeared here and there like flashes of Light. At the end of the day, I mentioned I was going off to mass. His response was immediate. I was just going to try to find a church. May I come with you? I took him to Notre Dame Basilica in Old Montreal, and so the celebration of the Eucharist, praying together, became part of our first day. It was to become an essential part of what we shared together, for we became friends and went on to give over a dozen retreats together, both in Montreal and at Marist College in Poughkeepsie, New York.

Larry began his twenty years as a Marist brother at Poughkeepsie. He valued those years, the sense of belonging, and ever after he hungered for a community of prayer. He finally found that that sense of belonging, that community who thought and questioned, and who prayed together, a group who desired God - in the community of his brother deacons. Especially you, Dan, and the members of his core group. You were very important to him. He told me how you walked with him and talked with him, how you were so present on his journey to a renewed service in the Church.

Larry did have an Irish temper, and sometimes it got in the way. Yet, Larry wanted to know and love and serve God. Now his is with Jesus. As a Marist brother, as an educator, husband, father, and friend, he was always generous. This is important. All of you here, you are here because Larry was important to you. Somehow he touched you. You felt his care, his love. Well know this: he is now before the face of God, before the face of Truth, the face of Love. Do you think he has forgotten you? No! God welcomes Larry with all the love in his heart, and God hears his concerns for you and me, his friends. God hears his concerns for his family. So, each of you, pay attention! Watch for the grace that God is sending you at Larry's request. God acts through each of us on one another. God wants to grace us. God wants to pour out his healing love on us. Watch for it!

I end with the words of the song we sang earlier: "He seeketh the Lord, and he found the Lord, and now he truly knows - I have loved you with an everlasting love. I have called you and you are mine."

Good bye dear friend. Now you know how much God loves you.