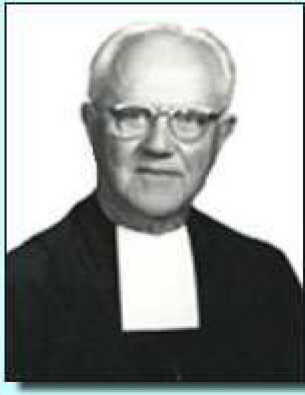


(October 17, 1913 - November 24, 2002)



In 1950, a young boy overslept and was late for the New York City wide entrance exam for St. Ann's Academy. Brother Gene Michel inquired why the boy was sitting on a bench outside the examination room. A senior Stanner student explained the situation to Brother Gene. "Give him the exam and let him be clocked separately," ordered Brother Gene. That momentary but generous decision, by Brother Gene, changed the boy's life. A year later, under the tutelage of Brother Stephen Urban, the boy left St. Ann's Academy and entered the Marist Brother's postulate at Esopus, NY and in 1954 took his vows as a Marist Brother.

Brother Joseph Teston recalls many such instances where Brother Gene changed the life of students under his care. From his first teaching assignment at Mount St. Michael Academy in 1933 to his retirement from Aquinas High School, Brother Gene's ever present smile and joyful enthusiasm touch and made a difference in the lives of the many young people under his care. His educational tenure in Boy's Catholic, St. Agnes, St Ann's Academy, Central Catholic, Cardinal Hayes, St. Joseph's Academy, Aquinas High School, Marist High School and Roselle Catholic reads as an honor list to the wide spread influence and contribution of Brother Gene's special qualities as a classroom teacher and to his integrity, compassion and professionalism. His 69 years in the classroom with so many young people was Gene's formula for keeping young both physically and in spirit.

Brother Joseph remembers Brother Gene's love for the Marist missions and how he organized and skillfully moderated bingo games to financially support the League. To the hundreds of Marist Brothers who shared their lives with Gene, his personal charm, generosity and graciousness made him "one of them".

Poetry gives you a perspective into a person's life. Brother Gene liked to recite a poem that he had translated:

Alas, daylight descends outside my window.  
I have closed my door against the chilling cold.  
Songbirds no longer inhabit the woods  
And I dream- a little sad, perhaps..  
Of the woodland trails of April.  
The flowers have long since gone. It is Autumn.  
November fills me with tenderness and with pain.  
Once again the birch, the poplars, the oak trees  
Are playing out the game of dying.  
For me. How many times? How many more times?  
And then it will be my turn  
To act out that final scene.  
Then, Lord, let serene peacefulness envelope me  
As the ground, the grain of seed:  
All corruption today.  
New Life tomorrow!

On November 24, 2002, after a life of service, dedication and generosity, Brother Gene was enveloped in serene peacefulness as he was called home to live a new life with his God and Lord.

Brother Joseph reminds us that Brother Gene was GOD'S GIFT TO ALL OF US.