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First UD Rector Mourned

05.20.2008 | Faculty Brother Stanley Mathews, S.M., the first rector of the University of Dayton and former Chaminade High School principal, died Sunday, May 18. He was 85.

Mathews, a Cincinnati native, served in several education and Catholic leadership roles in Cleveland and Dayton.

As UD's first rector from 1982-94, Mathews was the official representative of the Marianist religious order at the University and the liaison to the UD administration.

"He was a very thoughtful and very practical kind of person, and he was a great friend," said former UD President Brother Raymond Fitz, S.M., who appointed Mathews rector. "He just had a very easy way with people. It didn't matter if he was dealing with a CEO of a Dayton corporation or the person taking care of the grounds, he was equally hospitable and kind to everybody."

It was Mathews' leadership as rector that started the Marianist Foundation endowment, which funds the rector's office and supports the University's efforts to promote Marianist activities and values.

A 1943 UD graduate, Mathews went on to earn degrees in education and library science. He taught English at both UD and Wright State University, served as one of the first librarians in UD's Marian Library, served as a residence hall counselor, held a seat on UD's board of trustees intermittently from 1972-98 and served as executive director for UD's Center for Christian Renewal prior to becoming rector.

During his years in Dayton, he also served as president of the Dayton Junior College and principal of Chaminade High School from 1965-68 and as executive assistant and educational programmer at the Bergamo Center from 1968-75.

Mathews began and ended his teaching career in Cleveland. His first assignment was at Cathedral Latin School in 1944 as an English teacher and counselor. He later served as principal at St. Joseph High School until 1965.

After stepping down as UD's rector in 1994, Mathews did a sabbatical at the University of Notre Dame and then returned to Cleveland to teach adult education and seventh grade tutoring at St. Agatha-St. Aloysius School.

"He also was a volunteer librarian and collected books to send to children in Nairobi, Kenya," said the Rev. Paul Marshall, current rector of the University of Dayton who lived with Mathews in Cleveland. "He was always doing little things like that."

Mathews returned to Dayton in 2003 and resided at Mercy Siena Woods on Main Street.

A viewing for Mathews will be held at 6 p.m. Tuesday, May 27, followed by the Mass of Christian Burial at 7 p.m. in the Immaculate Conception Chapel at the University of Dayton. He will be buried at Queen of Heaven Cemetery at Mount St. John in Beavercreek, Ohio.

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