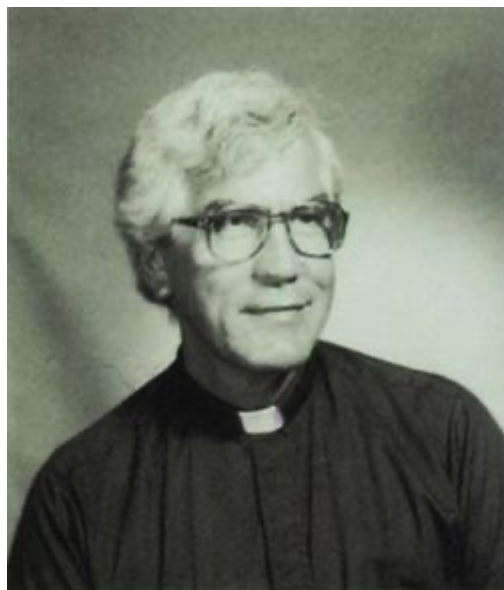


20 July

FR THOMAS VALIQUETTE 13 April 1933 – 20 July 2008



Tom Valiquette was born in Rock Island, Illinois, into a family where two of his sisters also became religious. He joined the Society in Florissant, Missouri in 1951 and went on to do a degree in Physics and Mathematics as well as Philosophy and Theology at St Louis University and then taught at Rockhurst, Kansas City, 1958-61. Ordained in 1964, Tom was dedicated to education went on to teach Mathematics and Physics from 1968 to 1991 in different schools.

One of his students wrote of him in 1974; '(He) was a "Rock" who reached out to everyone with warmth and acceptance, especially attentive to guys who might be feeling self-conscious, bewildered and alone. His "Harvard Project Physics" rewarded self-defined effort on whatever individualized path you chose. Fr. Valiquette's validation approach — what path is going to work best for you as an individual? — really opened up and justified some wild options for me in life as the years rolled on.

In 1991, Tom came to South Africa for a sabbatical and stayed on to do pastoral work until 1997. He was in St Francis of Assisi in Yeoville, Johannesburg, and St Martin de Porres, Orlando West in Soweto. Later on he was the Ecclesiastical Assistant to the CLC in South Africa. He worked closely with Graham Pugin in this work. However, his decision to extend his stay beyond the sabbatical indicates a deep commitment to his ministry and the communities he served there. He was a good community man but had a tendency to 'occupy' the kitchen of the community and talk at length to those coming to prepare their breakfast. Although this was appreciated by some, others would come early - or late - to avoid being detained too long.

On his return to the States in 1997 he spent the last nine years of his ministry at Regis Jesuit High School working as chaplain for faculty and staff and promoting the Christian Life Community with the students in the Boys Division. Known as "Vali" to students and colleagues, Fr. Tom was best known for his relentless cheerfulness, bursting into spontaneous song and answering the question, "How are you today, Father?" with an exuberant, "Why, I think I'm wonderful!" He died unexpectedly aged 75, at the Jesuit residence of Regis Jesuit High School in Aurora, Colorado.