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Brother Eugene Morgan, FSC

February 4th, 2019 | [All News](#), [Transitions](#) | [1 Comment](#)

1934 – 2019



Words of

Remembrance for Brother Eugene Morgan, FSC

Reflections on the Life of Brother Eugene Morgan, F.S.C.
Br. Colman Coogan, FSC

"I am indeed going to prepare a place for you, and then I shall come back to take you with me, that where I am you also may be." Jn: 14, 1-3.

Brothers, friends – I consider it an honor to share with you these reflections on Brother Eugene, a fellow community member I have known for many years. His nephew, John Morgan, a surviving family member, sends his sympathy but regrets not being able to be with us today.

Those of us who knew Brother Eugene has his or her favorite story. I suspect they diverge in two different directions: the first being that of his earlier years, and more recently, the Gene they came to know as the victim of a personality change that he could not control, but with which he coped as best he could. Today, with his passing, we come to celebrate the true Christian Brother and deeply spiritual man that he was.

From his own telling, we learned that the Morgan family was typical of the thousands of others of humble means, living as they did among the endless blocks of row houses in the Most Blessed Sacrament parish of West Philadelphia. For them, life was not easy, and death came early: an older son died in the Second World War, a daughter passed away from an illness they had no money to cure; his father, too, died relatively young yet, in spite of it all, Gene's mother struggled to keep bread on the table until she, too, met a relatively early death. All of this made a lasting impression on young Eugene Morgan and about which he often spoke.

As a high school student at West Catholic, Eugene worked part-time to contribute to the family. He attained status as an Eagle Scout, the values of which opened his eyes to a call to the Christian Brothers' way of life.

Striking in appearance, strong and well-built, the young Brother Eugene of Mary prided himself on his athletic ability, above all in skiing where he excelled. Friendly and well-spoken, he was characterized by a hearty laugh that could wake the angels.

As a scholastic in Elkins Park, he began to cultivate an interest in woodworking by the creation of several furniture pieces around the house, the most remarkable of which was a vestment case, still in use, that would be the pride of any cabinetmaker. Good-humored, there is the often repeated story of how he laughingly informed the Director, Paul Carey, when he confessed, “Brother Director, you won’t believe what just happened; you know the truck? Well, I left it parked behind the house and it rolled down the hill, and it is now on Serpentine Lane”. Carey did not respond well to the humor!

As teacher, Brother Eugene furthered his interest in the Vocational Arts which he taught. In woodworking, he was meticulous about design, tool safety, and precision workmanship. He later broadened these skills into welding and maintenance which he supervised with infinite detail.

Vacations in Colorado gave Eugene the opportunity to serve as a part-time parish maintenance worker, earning room and board with free time spent on the ski slopes. These were probably the happiest years of his life.

As Brother’s life progressed, we saw the beginning stages of a serious mental illness that threw him into depression, withdrawal from community interaction which necessitated counseling and eventually – institutional care. This decline extended over many years, and at times, challenged the limits of caretakers who valiantly struggled to keep their patient in community, but it was not to be. Throughout this ordeal, Gene clung to being a Brother and to his love of community life.

What was it about community that affected Gene so deeply? As outlined in Chapter 4 of our Rule, it was this:

“The community life of the Brother is a gift from God, which they receive through Jesus Christ present in their midst. It is He who gives them the spirit of love who lives in each Brother and unites the community . . . The community is for the Brothers their home . . . There they live together. . . They experience anew each day the friendship, the esteem, the trust, and the respect they have for one another . . . Keenly aware of the obligations of fraternal friendship the Brothers are especially attentive to those who are undergoing the ordeal of illness, or whom the Lord is preparing to call to himself.”

It was this that Brother Eugene, a deeply spiritual and loving man, in spite of psychological disturbance, understood about “community” and “home” for which he pleaded to return over the weeks and months spent in care.

In the end, his prayer and ours was granted by a merciful God in the form of a very brief illness calling Gene home to the true life and community that are now his for all eternity.

As we heard in John’s Gospel: *Do not let your hearts be troubled. Have faith in God and faith in me. In my Father’s house there are many dwelling places; otherwise, how could I have told you that I was going to prepare a place for you, and then I shall come back to take you with me, that where I am you also may be. You know the way that leads where I go”.* Jn: 14, 1-3

And so it was.

In closing, I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge here the expressions of friendship, concern, and helpfulness shown by others who supported Brother Eugene in his times of greatest need either by words of encouragement, visits, or professional care. Some of you are here today and so, I extend a word of appreciation to you on behalf of the community.

Eternal rest grant unto him, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon him. May his soul and the souls of all of the faithful departed rest in peace. Amen

Please pray for the repose of the soul of Brother Eugene Morgan, FSC

Born Eugene Thomas Morgan in Philadelphia PA on 9 September 1934

Entered the Ammendale MD Novitiate on 16 June 1952

Received the Religious Habit and the Name Brother Eugene of Mary on 7 September 1952

Pronounced Perpetual Vows in Ocean City NJ in August 1959

Died at Saint Joseph's Medical Center in Towson MD on 4 February 2019

Funeral Arrangements

Thursday, 7 February 2019

Viewing – 9.00am to 10.00am

Mass of Christian Burial – 10.00am

at

La Salle Hall

6001 Ammendale Road

Beltsville MD 20705

Burial following

at

La Salle Hall – Saint Joseph's Cemetery

6001 Ammendale Road

Beltsville MD 20705

Brother Eugene passed away early Monday morning due to complications from an aortic aneurysm.

The District of Eastern North America remembers Brother Eugene with memorial liturgies according to the tradition of the Institute. Through their prayers, communities, and individuals entrust Brother Eugene to God's loving care.

May he rest in peace.

Assignments

1953–1957

Elkins Park PA
Scholasticate

1957–1958

Audubon PA
Saint Gabriel's Hall

1958–1962

Canton OH
Central Catholic High School

1962–1964

Eddington PA
Saint Francis Vocational

1964–1966

Canton OH
Central Catholic High School

1966–1977

Baltimore MD
Calvert Hall College High School

1977–1978

Bensalem PA
De La Salle Vocational

1978–1985

Wyndmoor PA

La Salle College High School (maintenance)

1985–1993

Philadelphia PA

Saint Mary's Hall (maintenance)

1993–2000

Minturn CO

Saint Patrick Parish (maintenance)

2000–2002

Edwards CO

Saint Clare Parish (maintenance)

2002–2019

Beltsville MD

La Salle Hall (retired)

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John Mc Garvey, David John February 24, 2019 at 4:37 pm - [Reply](#)

Brother Eugene was the finest high school teacher I ever worked with and I taught high school for 31 years. He attracted children like a magnet. His students loved and respected him and would do anything for him. So would his many friends, including me. I learned more about teaching from Gene than I ever learned in an Education Class. Gene and I kept in touch after our community closed in Canton. The years we spent in Ohio were special for all of us and

were never forgotten. Barbara and I loved Gene and I hope to see them both soon.

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