

TESTIMONIALS FOR BR. JEFFREY CALLIGAN, FSC

Having been a classmate of Br. Jeffrey I went through four years of Juniorate as well as Novitiate and Scholasticate with him. We always kept in touch and I followed his career of many contributions to the District, the Region, and the Institute. He will be missed.

Brother Jim Brown, FSC

Brother Jeffery Calligan was one of three Brothers, the leading brother on our Saturday picnics in the bus [I was the driver]; there was a constant rapport between the three Brothers on every topic under the sun

But Jeffery was the #1 by far... I had to laugh to hear him verbally joust with an intellectual brother who was always reading even on picnics; Jeff would tease him about St. Thomas being greater than Aristotle and then Jerry would say that St. Thomas was a learner of Aristotle.

What Jeff lacked in intellectual skills, he well mastered in his ability to get out of trouble with his verbal skills. My favorite [because I like to sing] would be the endless songs we sang [all from memory]. Needless to say that these songs were repeated often and the juniorates were the source of these many songs.

Brother Mel Pelton, FSC

"Welcome home!" These may not be the first words I heard from Brother Jeffrey, but they are the earliest I remember. Jeffrey had driven me to the Saint Paul's campus in August of 1974 to my first community and assignment after college studies. And these words spoke to the welcoming and fraternal attitudes that were so much a part of Jeffrey. Throughout years after, in community and school, Jeffrey always showed the presence and support a brother has of a brother, to Brothers, students, and colleagues. While the experiences as Brother are too many to list completely – think late-night community discussions, mealtime guiding advice, liturgical leadership in school and community events, outings to hear some noted theologian speaking, encouragements to all to learn transcendental meditation, organizing a community pre-dawn jaunt to an Easter sunrise service in a graveyard, prayerful retreat coordination, novel approaches to classroom management, and on and on – the overriding experience is of one who knew and practiced the brotherhood De La Salle must have envisioned for his Brothers living as brothers. There is necessarily a haziness that places a halo on all the experiences of long ago, but years passed and I still saw a Jeffrey that continued always to be brother to brother in all of the roles to which he rose. His roles were many,

whether teacher, prefect, principal, reality therapist, auxiliary visitor, spiritual director, 4MAT instructor, counselor, formation leader, "Brother-in-residence", and others. But even with that litany of roles he took on, he once stated that the work of a Brother is that of being a Brother – titles and assignments were not the important thing. The relationships were.

Through all of his roles, Jeffrey was strong in opinion and did not hold back in saying what he believed right -- and what was he thought right often predated what we today take as a given. It seems that Jeffrey was always ahead of the curve in relational and pedagogical matters. (And Jeffrey would likely have those two matters as really being two aspects of the same thing.) Always equipped as he was with the latest item of personal electronics – as well as with the latest book on some author's theological or pedagogical perspective –, Jeffrey was determined to stay on the cutting edge of his areas of expertise, teaching and counseling. Without a doubt, Jeffrey always placed the student and student needs at the center of all things, and his expectation of Brothers and colleagues was that they do likewise. He was a model educator.

Jeffrey was one who had and followed a unique and personal theology. An early effort of musical creativity – and there were innumerable examples of creativity throughout his career – was in a composition he authored, *"Spirit Through Whom We Can Say Abba Father."* The Abba signifies the very real relational dynamic that I think was at the core of his religious beliefs, that our God is a loving and caring Father. (In later life he probably viewed that as caring Mother.) Putting it mildly, he shied away from a theology that was hierarchical rather than relational. He held a strong affinity to Judeo-Christian and Catholic traditions, and also maintained an appropriate respect for rituals and beliefs of other world religions. It was as if he adopted a transcendent view that united all faiths into a oneness that is ultimate Truth, humankind children of the one God our Father. I can only imagine that Jeffrey looked forward with excitement to the ultimate end to which we all go, and there he would find his spiritual beliefs, and his questions, satisfied. In that place of our Abba Creator, and in that place of Brothers who had gone before him, and in that place of our own Saint La Salle, I feel sure he heard the words "Welcome home!"

Brother Peter Tripp, FSC