

Assumption’s oldest alumnus celebrated his 100th birthday in March

- **How/why did you attend Assumption Prep and Assumption College?**

- God wanted me to. After graduating from high school in 1934, I wanted to further my education. I was persuaded by Fr. Antonio Dufault, a diocesan priest and the brother of Fr. Wilfrid, A.A. ’29, who later became Superior General of the Assumptionists. I agreed to go only if no one would pressure me to become a priest. As a sophomore, I freely chose to become an Assumptionist priest. Limited knowledge of French and Latin obliged me to do a P.G. (pre-graduate) year at the high school (which later became Assumption Prep).

- **What do you recall about your days as a student?**

- I recall almost losing my identity when as a P.G. student my classmates called me “Minsky,” because I was often with a fellow student who had been dubbed “Pinsky.” The nickname stayed with me through college. These names probably helped us to not take ourselves too seriously and said something about the familiarity, informality and mischievousness that then characterized student life and that helpedus face the challenge of a disciplined, studious and prayerful life.

- **How does the involvement of the Assumptionists like yourself help to make an Assumption education unique?**

- Assumption offers an education that helps form students who know and live out what is most fundamental and essential to being humanand Catholic … students, true disciples of Christ, ready as citizens to stand up for the common good. We do this while living in the real world, with all its diversity, respecting the freedom and dignity of all who make up the college family, offering them, especially by the example of our lives, the good we believe our faith has to offer them while always remaining open to learning from others.

- **Do you have a favorite Assumption community assignment among your many years of service?**

- My assignment as associate pastor at our St. Anne/St. Patrick Parishin Sturbridge, MA (1980–99) was most fulfilling because, apart from doing my share of regular sacramental ministry at St. Anne Shrine, I helped in other ministry areas. I was active in the local ecumenical fellowship, inter-faith groups, a local group helping the poor and a Sturbridge town committee. The generous and competent help of others, mostly parishioners, and the merciful grace of God made this possible.

- **How did your assignment in East Africa at the age of 83 come about and what did you do there?**

- I was asked by Fr. John Franck, A.A. '70, then Provincial Superior, if I would be willing to go to the Assumptionists East Africa Mission. After a bit of consulting I gladly accepted. My first responsibility was to be simply present to my young Assumptionist brothers studying theology in Nairobi, Kenya or philosophy in Arusha, Tanzania. Soon I was helping them with their written and oral English and doing a bit of counseling. One vivid memory of my time in Africa is of creatinga greatly needed clinic for members of the Massai tribe in Arusha. People from back home, mostly St. Anne parishioners, helped finance it.

- **You recently celebrated your 100th birthday, do you have any secrets to your longevity you'd like to share?**

- To quote from Roger Ellsberg's book All Saints, "I'd rather die young, having lived a life cramming with meaning, than die old, even insecurity, but without meaning." May I not consider living in securityat 100 a goal achieved, but rather may I live this twilight time with as much

meaning and love as possible, counting always on a patient and merciful God.

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