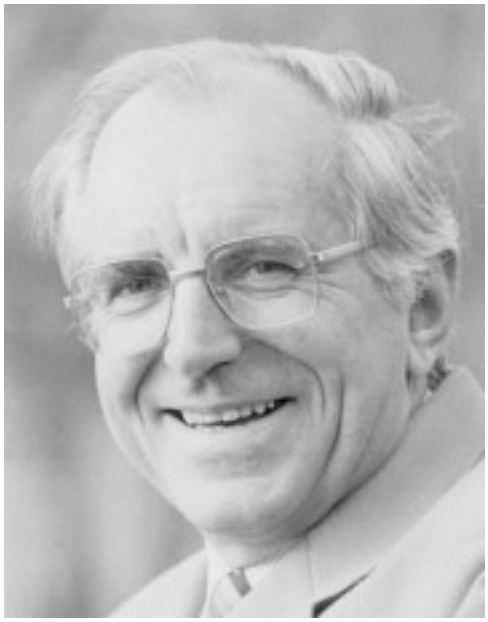


PROMINENT ASSUMPTIONIST The Assumptionist philosopher Marcel Neusch (1935-2015)

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For many years professor at the Institut catholique in Paris and a specialist of St. Augustine, Fr. Marcel Neusch died on December 30, 2015 at the Assumptionist retirement community in Albertville (Savoie), France; he was 80 years old.

Discreet, affable, extremely kind, Marcel Neusch was appreciated by everyone who met him. And God knows how numerous they were! This Assumptionist religious, born in Dambach (Lower Rhine) on August 15, 1935, held many positions throughout his life.

Having entered the Assumptionist minor seminary in Scy-Chazelles (Moselle) in 1947, following in the footsteps of a brother and a cousin, then completing his novitiate in 1954 in Nozeroy (Jura), he was ordained a priest ten years later. He immediately took up a career teaching, first at the Assumptionist major seminary in Layrac (Lot-et-Garonne), then at the one in Valpré, near Lyon, even as he pursued higher studies. Appointed to be chaplain at the Collège d'Alzon in Nîmes, he took advantage of his new position to complete a thesis in philosophy at the Université de Toulouse (1971) and another one in theology (1992) at the Institut catholique de

Paris (ICP). Shortly thereafter he was asked to go to the regional seminary in Avignon where he stayed until 1980.

That year he was asked by the Assumptionist provincial to join the editorial team of the Assumptionist newspaper in Paris, *La Croix*, first as a journalist and subsequently as a book reviewer, especially for works of philosophy and theology. At the same time the ICP recruited him to teach courses in fundamental theology and contemporary philosophy; he also spent time teaching at the Institut de science et de théologie des religions (ISTR).

ONE OF THE OUTSTANDING SPECIALISTS OF ST. AUGUSTINE

German-speaking from his youth by virtue of his Alsatian origins, Marcel Neusch was always interested in German philosophers, especially Feuerbach, Nietzsche, Marx and Freud whom he judged essential in his teaching of theology students today so that they would be fully capable of articulating their faith in a world that was becoming increasingly atheistic. For 20 years, hundreds of students would have listened to him speak on topics dealing with God, evil, sin, and contemporary philosophy.

During all these years, he also served as director of formation for the Assumptionist Province of France. In this capacity he gave courses at the novitiates of the Congo and Madagascar. Retired from the ICP in 2000, he continued to give lectures and to oversee master's and doctoral dissertations. He was able to dedicate more time to the review, *Itinéraires augustiniens* .

As for his field of research, Fr. Neusch focused on St. Augustine, on whom he was considered one of the outstanding experts in the world. Among the fifteen books he wrote, many dealt with the spirituality of the bishop of Hippo, the spiritual father of the Assumptionists, also known officially as the Augustinians of the Assumption.

by Claire Lesegretain, *La Croix*

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