

WWL Editorial – September 3, 1991
Brother Martin Hernandez, S.C. – In Memoriam

Twenty-two years ago, when St. Aloysius High School closed and was torn down, the Brothers of the Sacred Heart incorporated that student body into another school they ran on Elysian Fields called Cor Jesu. They felt a new name was needed for the school, now that it was an amalgamation of two schools, so they named it to honor the most outstanding member of their order – Brother Martin Hernandez.

Brother Martin was a legendary name, particularly here. Everybody agreed it was most suitable to name the new school after him. There was but one dissenting vote – Brother Martin himself. He objected strenuously. But he was outvoted. It was one of those rare moments when honors were paid to a person before he died, rather than after. And it was so fitting. Brother Martin was, indeed, a legend in his own time.

He came to New Orleans in the 30s, became principal of St. Aloysius until 1949. But that wasn't all he did. He helped found and was president of the prep league. He not only built Cor Jesu, but high schools in Baton Rouge, Dallas, and in Queens, New York. He built a school for the Brothers of the Sacred Heart in Mobile and another one in Uganda, for African members of his order. He served as provincial of his order for nine years. And did a host of other jobs through the years.

When he died last week, at age 87, he had been a Brother of the Sacred Heart for 72 years. In his last will and testament, he said: "If I have done any good in my life, it was done only because God used me as His instrument." What an instrument. What a man. What a legacy to leave to his school and to this community.