

**ALFONSO JOSEPH LOTITO**  
**"Father Floyd" of St. Boniface**

Alfonso Joseph Lotito, known to generations of Tenderloin residents as "Father Floyd," died in San Leandro July 14 at age 74. He received the religious name "Floyd" when he joined the Franciscan Order of Friars Minor as a teenager in 1953. He was ordained a priest in 1960 and came to St. Boniface Church and the St. Anthony Foundation eight years later.

He served St. Anthony's in many capacities, as deputy executive director under the guidance of Father Alfred Boeddeker, and as director of public relations and director of St. Anthony's Dining Room. He initiated St. Anthony's Sunday meals program in 1981 and presided over San Francisco's first drop-in hygiene program for the homeless two years later.

In 1984, he delivered the invocation opening the Democratic National Convention in San Francisco. The Democrats nominated Walter Mondale for president and for the first time in history, a woman, Geraldine Ferraro, for vice president.

In 2000, Father Floyd blessed the field at the opening of Pac Bell Park, and although the Giants lost that day and the following five home games as well, they played before capacity crowds all year in their new home, winning the National League pennant in September.

Since 1990, Father Floyd presided over the Blessing of the Animals at St. Boniface Church, an annual October event coinciding with the Feast Day of St. Francis of Assisi and, beginning in 1999, he oversaw the annual Blessing of the Taxi Fleet, including individual cabbies' religious medals, rosaries, Bibles and pictures of loved ones.

Barry Stenger, St. Anthony's director of development, was a student 40 years ago at St. Anthony's Seminary High School in Santa Barbara where he took first-year Latin and speech courses from Father Floyd. He does not believe that the priest, who was educated by the Jesuits at Marquette University and held a master's in speech and communication, entered the Franciscans with a clear understanding that his calling was to be a social reformer for the poor.

"Floyd's first experience at St. Boniface guided him," Stenger said. "It was the daily exchanges with people waiting in line on Golden Gate Avenue for meals at St. Anthony's that formed his dedication to

the poor. He also understood that creating the opportunity for people to volunteer time and service to the poor was as important as fundraising. He felt the longing people have to be of help."

A requiem mass was said for Father Floyd at St. Boniface on July 21. He was buried at the Franciscan cemetery at Old Mission Santa Barbara. ■

—JONATHAN NEWMAN

**MEMORIAL FOR 8 AT THE ALEXANDER**  
**A lively celebration**

"I'm in the Mood for Love" didn't seem quite the song to memorialize eight Alexander Residence tenants whose names and death dates were posted in the community room. But the idea was to provide entertainment to turn the residents on to life.

The deaths, all this year, have taken an emotional toll on the mostly elderly residents of the TNDC-owned SRO. As 40 of them streamed into the room while the song played, Marvis Phillips, sitting next to a window, explained how he had dreamed up this way for his fellow residents to handle grief.

"I was in bed one morning thinking about this and thought of New Orleans and what they do in Louisiana at funerals," Phillips said. "Five of ours died in 14 days. I wanted to do something besides sit around and be mopey."

Phillips said that the week before he had pitched his lively "celebration of life" idea to honor the deceased to TNDC Executive Director Don Falk, who liked it and approved. The Alexander staff took it from there, lining up entertainment and food that TNDC furnished — a chicken and macaroni soup prepared by the building's steadfast, volunteer cook Carol Moratillo, 83.

Greeting the celebrants June 2 were SoMa's Canon Kip Senior Center Singers — a female vocalist accompanied by keyboard and maracas. It was a leap from toe-tapping New Orleans street bands but a mood elevator just the same. And Canon Kip offered dozens of songs during the 90-minute morning celebration and brunch that the crowd enjoyed.

The residents at the Alexander commemorated were: Edward King, who died Jan. 3 at 80; Ronald Urrutia, died Feb. 9, at 55; Leonardo Dizon, March 18, at 89; Teofilo Medlad, May 4, at 84; William Maye, May 11, at 57; Yan Chen, May 17, at 77; Mark Reynolds,

May 20, at 54; and Mark Gouguen, May 12, at 52.

The group's average age is 68.5 and the average length of residency was 10 years. Only one cause of death was known: Mr. Urrutia had cancer. His obituary and Mr. Dizon's ran in The Extra in May and June respectively.

"There is a lot of sadness," Alexander Property Manager Nicole Grays said to the group. "It's hard. I think of you all as family. Now they're gone. But death is a part of life. I encourage you to remember what these people brought to us."

Desk clerk Sudarma Kalekula from Sri Lanka told something about each of the deceased and said she had broken through to a few who had been reluctant to communicate. Hard times, said Michael Nulty, is why so many had died. He urged residents to get to know one another and "show a sense of community."

The Alexander has a diverse population of 200 residents in 179 units. In a recent TNDC survey, 130 responded and declared their ethnicity: 57 Chinese, 42 white, 18 black, 5 Native American, 2 Pacific Islanders, 1 Hispanic, 1 mixed and 4 "other" ethnicities.

Several took the opportunity to express feelings about their extended family, the Alexander residents.

Yue Mei addressed the crowd in Chinese. Her remarks were translated by a man who had been translating for a group of Chinese women sitting in the middle of the room.

"Even though we don't speak the same language, we live together as family and care about each other and love each other," Mei said through the interpreter.

"We are all neighbors," said Reggie Meadows, an 18-year resident. "It takes time to get to know someone. But we all have an opportunity to help each other. Doing right is loving each other and not judging each other. I appreciate all my neighbors. God bless us all."

"The outpouring here shows our love for the people in the building," Phillips said as staff began delivering bowls of soup to the tables. Copies of a four-page fact sheet on Grief and Loss from the Family Caregiving Alliance were available on a table along with a list of counseling contacts at the Institute on Aging. ■

—TOM CARTER

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