Obituary for Fr Larry Nemer SVD (24 November 1932–9 June 2021)

On 9 June 2021 the Society of the Divine Word lost one of its most loved and esteemed priest members, Fr Lawrence John Niemierowicz. He was born in Chicago on 24 November 1932 into the Polish American Catholic family of Boleslaus Niemierowicz and Mary Nowak, as one of seven children. Larry was drawn early to his priestly vocation, entering the Divine Word seminary at 13. After ordination, Larry was sent to Rome to study Missiology at the Pontifical Gregorian University. By 1961, he had already completed his Licentiate and been influenced by the leading Catholic scholars of the time, particularly on the goal of the missionary endeavour as *plantatio Ecclesiae* – planting the Church through adaptation. After his Roman sojourn, Larry completed an MA in Church History from Catholic University in Washington, DC, and a PhD in Church History from Cambridge University (UK). With these he taught in the US for more than 20 years, predominantly at Catholic Theological Union in Chicago, but also in the Philippines and in London.

Larry first arrived in Australia in 1991 as a lecturer in Missiology in the Department of Moral and Practical Theology at Melbourne's Yarra Theological Union (YTU). Here he offered not only outstanding scholarship, but immense teaching experience, organizational expertise, a deep commitment to ecumenism and inter-faith dialogue. In 1999 Larry moved to England and for 6 years was President of the London Missionary Institute. He returned to YTU in 2005, and in 2008, became President of YTU. He continued to teach and to add new courses to the Missiology program, and at the end of 2012 he retired as *Lector Emeritus*. Larry also served as president for the Australian Association of Mission Studies (AAMS) and chaired the editorial board of the Australian Journal of Mission Studies (AJMS) for several years. In recent years Larry had a series of health problems which greatly limited his movement and activity, but not his intellect, spirit, or friendships. He created community wherever he was present. Larry Nemer was blessed with amazing gifts. He recognised them as coming from God and used them generously to build up the Body of Christ. May he rest in peace.

Xiaoli Yang
Melbourne, Australia