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What is the definition of a Christian? Rather than giving a definition, let me give you a model. Carl Kouba of Green Bay, was one of the greatest Christian laymen I have ever known. Early on Sunday morning, September 25, he died in a hospice.

What is a hospice? The hospice in which Carl Kouba died is a witness to his faith. On January 12, 1976, a friend, Dr. Tom Leicht, came to see me. A highly regarded internist, I knew him also as a devout Christian. He told me that he and his family had come to a decision: they were agreed that he should give up his private practice so that he could devote the rest of his medical career to caring for terminally ill patients. He had taken seriously the writings of Dr. Elisabeth Kübler-Ross, the world's leading authority on death and dying. On January 21, 1976, Dr. Leicht and I had a meeting with the administrator of Bellin Memorial Hospital, Dr. Leicht's pastor, and the President of the Bellin Board of Directors, Carl Kouba. There was immediate acceptance of Dr. Leicht's proposal that Bellin Hospital establish a special unit for the care of the dying. No one was more supportive than Carl Kouba. Yet many more people had to be convinced that this was a useful service.

On March 24, 1976, I had the privilege of going with a group of six persons, including Carl Kouba, to seek the counsel of Dr. Kübler-Ross in her home in Flossmoor, Ill. This proved to be one of the most memorable moments in the lives of all six of us. On November 8, 1977, the group that made that trip to Flossmoor will gather in the home of Dr. Leicht in Green Bay for a celebration of that idea which has become actualized in the establishment of a special unit in Bellin Hospital for the care of the terminally ill, known as a "hospice," and directed by Dr. Leicht. But one member of that group of six will be missing. Among the first persons ad-

mitted - by his own request - to the hospice, Carl Kouba died on September 25.

Bellin is a flourishing and highly successful hospital, related to the United Methodist Church, largely because of the devoted leadership of Carl Kouba over many years. After retiring as a Vice-President of the Larsen Co., he gave himself unstintingly to the development of the hospital -- as well as to a host of other public interests in Green Bay. In June, 1977, Bellin opened a marvelous new addition, devoted mainly to cardiac care and surgery. Within the past year Carl Kouba also underwent open-heart surgery in the hospital to which he was giving his life.

It was my privilege to be his pastor in Green Bay for four years. One of his characteristics I shall always cherish: he had a seemingly infinite capacity to work with all kinds of people, engaging in brisk controversies with people who disagreed with him vehemently. But always he glowed with the grace of a Christian gentleman, always he honored and respected those who differed from him. Prizing as I do the freedom of the pulpit, I knew that I was affirmed as a preacher of the Gospel when I saw Carl Kouba in the pew. The last time I saw him was at Green Lake in June. He was a Lay Member of the Wisconsin Conference, elected from First Church, Green Bay.

No one is admitted to Bellin's Hospice except on his own request. Knowing that he was dying, Carl Kouba asked to be admitted to the hospice one year and nine months after he first said he believed in it. All of his life was lived in that kind of faith.

A hospice may be defined as "a house of shelter or rest for pilgrims, strangers." Carl Kouba was a Christian pilgrim whose pilgrimage on this earth has ended. How we shall miss him when we gather on November 8, but in our hearts I think we shall be singing:

*For all the saints, who from their labors rest,
Who thee by faith before the world confessed,
Thy name, O Jesus, be forever blest,
Alleluia, Alleluia!*

Leel. Marchand