



Cardinal Serafim Fernandes de Araújo

Founder and Chairman of the Board of Trustees

His Eminence Cardinal Serafim Fernandes de Araújo was born on August 13, 1924, the firstborn of 16 children. In 1937 he entered the Diamantina Seminary (MG) where he completed his studies in 1942. In the same Seminary, he studied Philosophy until 1944.

In 1945 he traveled to Rome, where he studied Theology at the Pontifical Gregorian University of Rome and completed his Master's Degree in Theology in 1949. He obtained a Master's Degree in Canon Law from the same university in 1951.

In 1949, while still in Rome, he was ordained a priest. He returned to Brazil in 1951, beginning his priesthood as a vicar at the city of Gouveia (MG). In 1998 he has appointed a Cardinal.

Cardinal Serafim – then Auxiliary Bishop of Belo Horizonte - for his deep identification with educational endeavors was appointed in 1960 Dean of the newly-created Catholic University of Minas Gerais (now Pontifical University), of whose School of Law he was a professor. Cardinal Serafim was Dean until 1981, and left the University with 23 courses and 15,000 students. He presided over the Sociedade Mineira de Cultura, the supporting entity of PUC-MG and of the Sistema de Ensino Arquidiocesano until March 2005, leaving PUC with 45,000 students.

As an educator and Dean of the Pontifical Catholic University of Minas Gerais, Cardinal Serafim was appointed member of the Federal Education Council as president of its Higher Education Chamber. He was responsible for countless opinions relating to higher education in Brazil.

As Dean of PUC-MG, Cardinal Serafim participated in the creation of Fundação Dom Cabral as a link between the University with companies and entrepreneurs through professional education courses and applied research in this area.

He also presided over the Brazilian Association of Higher Education Catholic Schools (ABESC) and joined the Latin America and Caribbean Regional Center for Higher Education (CRESAL/UNESCO) Advisory Committee.

Fundação José Fernandes de Araújo – his father's name – also created by Cardinal Serafim has been granting scholarships along the years to the University's underprivileged students, becoming responsible for the academic formation of countless students who, without such aid, would not be able to complete their higher education.

In the social field, Cardinal Serafim presided over the philanthropic Associação Providência Nossa Senhora da Conceição, developing important action in the support of street children, the Children's Ministry and socially excluded groups, especially dedicating to spiritual and material support to unassisted terminal patients.

Cardinal Serafim was granted the title of Commander of the National Order of Educational Merit, the Grand Inconfidência Medal and the Santos Dumont Medal, besides have been awarded several honorary diplomas. In 199, he was awarded the title of Doctor Honoris Causa from the Higher Studies Center of the Company of Jesus.

He has been Chairman of the Fundação Dom Cabral Board of Trustees since 1992.