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## **At 99, tech-savvy Marianist uses computer three to four hours a day**

By **Catholic News Service**

DAYTON, Ohio (CNS) -- "Maybe I should be reading more," mused Marianist Brother Francis Deibel.

The 99-year-old brother may have a point. Each day he spends up to four hours at his computer exchanging e-mails with more than 100 contacts.

"Lately I've been getting too many e-mails," added Brother Deibel, who thinks too many older people are afraid of technology and computers. "I try to open and read all of them, but sometimes they are too numerous."

He begins his computer time by forwarding readings about the saint of the day. "I send this information to all my Marianist contacts," he said. He then spends hours answering personal e-mails and deleting junk e-mails.

Brother Deibel has been a Marianist since 1926 -- one year before the first "talkie" feature film.

"I began using a computer when it was just a bunch of wires put together," he said. He refined his skills in classes at the University of Dayton, where he worked for 48 years as a librarian. He also credits 86-year-old Marianist Brother Bill Callahan, whom Brother Deibel calls his "young" friend, with teaching him additional skills.

Brother Deibel started e-mailing in 1990 and he says he has used his computer daily ever since. His e-mail address book has four groups: Marianists, relatives, "something else," and "all." The size of his groups are growing, too.

"When I learn of a new e-mail address for someone I know, I'll add it to my list, if it is OK with that person. It doesn't cost extra to add them, so I go ahead and do it," he said.

Brother Deibel said it's possible for all of his fellow senior citizens to pick up the technological tricks of the trade.

"I would encourage old people not to be afraid of the computer," he said. "Too many old people are, but there is nothing to be afraid of. It's just like a typewriter. It won't talk back at you! Learn how to use it. Don't lose time watching TV. Using the computer is much more personal and enjoyable."

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