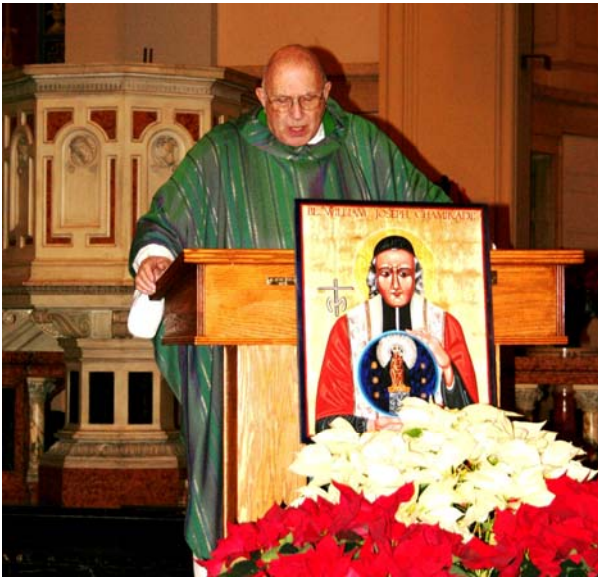


Fr. William Behringer
Celebrating 50 years of ordination



When I entered the Society of Mary, I knew that the Marianists worked with young people at the high schools and universities and that they were supported by a strong community life. It was with that rather limited vision that I entered. I expected to be working in a high school all my life and never traveling much out of Ohio!

As I look back, I can see how God just exploded that vision. Due to my various assignments and positions, I have traveled all over the world and lived in Switzerland and Kenya. Besides teaching I have been involved in formation work, administration, parish ministry and any number of local and national religious organizations. My understanding of the Church has broadened in ways I could never have imagined.

These experiences have called me to grow in new ways and to take on responsibilities I had never previously considered.

All these ministry experiences, my years of formation, the many retreats and workshops, and my sabbatical in Berkeley, along with the various community experiences, have changed me spiritually as well. When I entered, I had at best a very superficial relationship with Mary, but now I have come to know her in a much deeper and personal way. And every time I said yes, I have grown.

For a major part of these past years, I have been involved in service to the community as provincial, novice master, master of scholastics, and member of several General Chapters. This was also a great grace as I got to know all the members of the Province and the strengths and the excellence of my brothers. Even when I had to deal with problems, God never allowed me to lose sight of the goodness present in the Province.

I entered with a certain attraction to the Society of Mary and have grown to have a deep love for the Society. I believe in the vision of Fr. Chaminade, and I am convinced that the Marianist charism is a great gift to the Church. Finally let me just say that one of the highlights of the past 60 years was being present for the Beatification of the Founder.