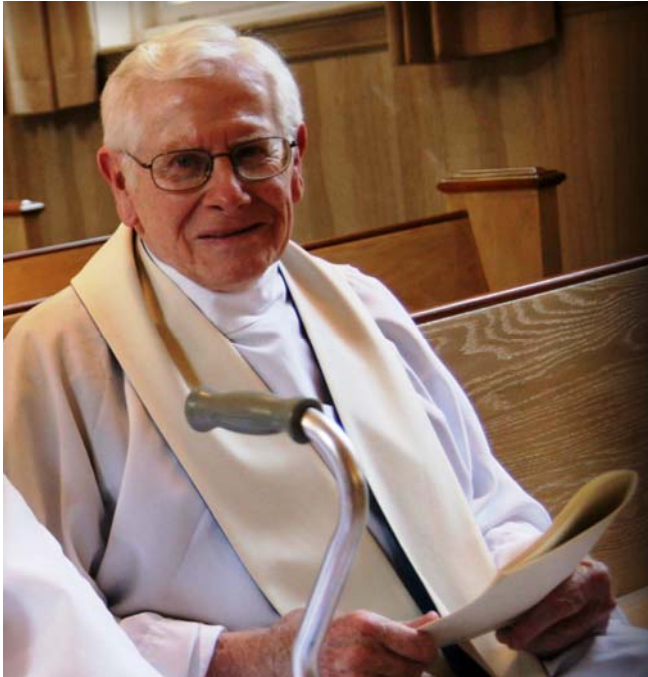


**Rev. J. Donald Cahill, S.M.**  
**60 years of profession**



I begin my reflections on 60 years as a Marianist recalling the Scriptural purpose of a Jubilee Celebration. For our Hebrew Ancestors, Jubilees were a call to return to an original state of covenant relationship with God. All debts were forgiven... All land exchanges reversed to the original owners, and so each believer was to renew their original covenant with God and accept a new beginning of pardon and grace. Each one would remember how God has been active in their personal lives.

So as I recall my life journey as a Marianist, I go back to seventh grade at Holy Redeemer School in Detroit. The school no longer exists, but my memory of my first contacts are still recalled and enjoyed. This was 1940. Some of my teachers, including Fr. Glennon McCarty, Bro. Theodore Hoeffken, and Bro James Pieper kept in contact with me. So in the summer of 1948, I went to the Novitiate in Galesville, Wis., to discern if I had a calling to the Society of Mary.

I made first vows on Sept. 24, 1949. It was the Feast of Our Lady of Mercy! I made Scholasticate on three different campuses: the first year at Maryhurst in St. Louis, the second year at University of Dayton, and the third year at St. Mary's University in the newly built Charles Francis Residence Hall.

I graduated from St. Mary's University in August 1952. My first teaching assignment was at St. Mary's High School for four years and then for one year at Central Catholic High School in San Antonio. I then departed for the International Marianist Seminary in Fribourg, Switzerland, where I spent five years. It was my first experience of the Society as an international religious family. It was an enlarging experience of human differences and backgrounds coming together to build a religious Family and Community.

I returned from the Seminary in 1962 and began my priestly ministry at St. John Vianney High School in St. Louis. From 1962 until 1975, I taught in several schools:

Vianney, McBride, Nolan in Fort Worth, and then St. Mary's in St. Louis and back to Vianney.

From 1975 until 1981, I was chaplain for St. Francis Medical Center in Milwaukee. While learning to be a hospital chaplain, I took a six month course in what is called Clinical Pastoral Education. It was a very meaningful course that taught me how to meet people and approach people with an openness to their needs rather than going to them with a definite agenda.

In 1981, I returned to a Province mission by becoming an associate pastor at Our Lady of the Pillar Parish in St. Louis. In 1983, I was given a sabbatical year at Catholic University in Washington, D.C. Then was another opportunity to see my life as a journey with unexpected curves and turning points that help see God and Mary's presence and guidance in life. The sabbatical experience helped me to make changes in my attitudes about life and how I am living it to assist Mary in her mission. I returned to the Parish after my sabbatical. In 1993, I began teaching Scripture full time at Vianney but was still living at the parish and helping out there on weekends. It proved to be the best of both worlds.

In 2002, I retired from full-time teaching at Vianney. I stayed on at Our Lady of the Pillar until, in 2005, I was asked to go to help out at Mercy Siena Retirement Center in Dayton. I worked there until I was allowed to return to the Curé of Ars Community at Vianney. And it is to the Brothers, students and faculty of St. John Vianney High School that I continue to try to be helpful in any way I can.

I am a blessed person. During these 60 years I have been blessed by the Lord and His Mother most generously. I thank my fellow Brothers, my friends, my family for their prayers and encouragement over these years. Their support has made it all possible!