

**Bro. Robert Moriarty, S.M.**  
***Celebrating 50 years of profession***



Raised in the 1940s, immersed in Catholic culture, I early, easily and consciously absorbed the sense that God was the deepest and all encompassing reality and that being in touch with the great mystery above me, below me, within me, and all around me was the highest value. Mary, who I spoke of in those early years as “our Blessed Mother,” was an intimate part of that world and my experience of it.

Encountering the Society of Mary at Chaminade High School in Mineloa, N.Y., was my first experience with religious, lay and priest religious. I was drawn into everything about that experience – the school and the brothers and priests. In a sense, it was a natural for me to ask to be accepted as a postulant during my sophomore year. I completed high school in the postulate at Beacon and moved to the novitiate in the first mid-year vow group in January 1959. With Fr. Joseph Martin still very much present in the first part of that year, Fr. Fred Mathues, the in-coming novice master, was the strong formative influence. Even in that still pre-Vatican II era, there was something about Fr. Fred’s whole style/tone that anticipated and oriented me to the church that would be emerging in the years ahead. From him, I caught and bought the sense that the mission of the Society of Mary was “the multiplication of communities of faith in mission.” And this has shaped my life as a Marianist ever since.

“Community as primary instrument of the apostolate” is a Marianist principle that is deeply important to me, *even* and *especially* in these last 20 years. *Even*, I say, while the ministry in which I am presently involved resulted in my living apart from a Marianist community when we withdrew from corporate Marianist service to Sacred Heart Parish in Vernon, Conn. *Especially*, I add, being involved precisely as a Marianist in developing and implementing a vision for parish as a “community of communities” as director of the Pastoral Department for Small Christian Communities in the Archdiocese of Hartford.

Fr. Chaminade’s vision of re-building the French church through the “multiplication of communities of faith in mission” has transcended his time and place. It is a dream whose time has come in our church in North America today. I love being a part of it all.