

Reflections on Fr. Eldon Reichert by Fr. Ken Templin

Eldon was my high school teacher and counselor. He inspired me to join the Marianists. He is the only person in my youth to get me to go on a blind date (long story). I had the privilege of living with him in community for many years. He was a man of prayer and action. He loved to read and listen to tapes of speakers on faith, scripture and the future church. He liked ice cream, steaks, football and sports in general. He prayed for me for years to face my addiction to alcohol and rejoiced with me when I finally let go and got help.

Eldon was always up early and prayed the scriptures daily. He inspired me to be a man of prayer and reflection. He met weekly for years with a diocesan priest friend to prepare the Sunday homily. He preached well and challenged us to be progressive in our thinking about the future church and our relationship with God. He truly was a man of prayer and loved the Lord. I remember his excitement over Jesus Christ Superstar in the late 60s when he came home from Africa. He took the music back to Africa with him.

Eldon loved the poor and broken people of the world. He dedicated his later years to serving the poor in Cleveland at St. Al's. In many ways he was a wheeler-dealer always on the lookout for freebies from friends and community people.

Eldon was kind, compassionate, forgiving, and generous. He was also very German and could be aggressive and stubborn. He was a driven man in many ways. Yet his prayer and reflection always brought him to his knees in acknowledging his own weakness and brokenness. He was a confessor to many priests and sisters and a spiritual director to many in the Cleveland area.

I am blessed to have had him in my life and grateful that I saw him last summer when I was in Dayton.