

FR. GERALD CHINCHAR

Celebrating 50 years professed

From my baptism at Holy Cross Church in Euclid Ohio on Nov. 7, 1943, to my religious profession on Aug. 22, 1962, to my ordination on May 29, 1982, to the present day has been a grace-filled journey of challenges and blessings. I give thanks for the many people who were instruments of grace. I would like to name but a few of the folks who have incarnated God's grace to me along the way: the priests and Ursuline Nuns at Holy Cross, the Brothers at St. Joseph High School—especially Bro. Aaron, Eichner and Bredestege; the many Marianists I have met along the way of formation and community at Cathedral Latin School. For Fr. Norb Brockman who encouraged me to follow my dream of studying the Liturgy. For Fr. Tom Stanley who encouraged me when I was discerning changing categories. For Fr. Bert Buby—a long standing mentor. Bro. Ray Fitz who has always inspired me by his vision, his willingness to look at the bigger picture and his kindness. For Brother Victor Forlani, a long-standing, ever-faithful friend since the Novitiate. Bro. Larry Cada who is my Guru of Marianist documents and ever affirming friend. And so many others who know that they are “in pectore.” I ask pardon for my failures and transgressions.

My work as a priest has been focused primarily in Marianist communities and projects and in campus ministry at the University of Dayton. I thank Fr. Joe Lackner who made a space for me and got me going. Campus ministry has been a good fit. I have been able to use many of my interests and talents, and have discovered some that I didn't know were there.

As the campus minister for catechetical programs, I developed the RCIA process at UD and I have led another catechetical process for Catholic students who wish to complete their Christian initiation by confirmation. Presiding at the gamut of liturgies on campus has been a joy and a treasured work: from on-campus Sunday and weekday Masses, to individual reconciliations, to the whole process of marriage preparation and all the ways that I have been able to share my liturgical knowledge and resources.

I have been challenged by my work as priest-on-call, responding to crisis moments from terrible accidents to suicide. Part of me is a geek, some call me techno-priest. Somehow I catch on to how technology works and I use it in the midst of my ministry providing well-crafted programs and brochures for lots of occasions. I am self-taught in FINALE, a music engraving program which makes my compositions look like they came right out of a hymnal. Further, in every community I have been in, I have contributed to the prayer life of the Brothers, by providing materials, playing the organ, and writing music for the Liturgy of the Hours. I often prepare the liturgies for our Province retreats

including composing some of the music for the antiphons and psalms, as well as coordinating or accompanying the music during retreat as well.

Along the way I earned master's degrees from St. John's Collegeville, the University of Notre Dame, and University of St. Michael's College Toronto; and then the doctor of ministry while working full-time at UD.

Throughout the entire journey, the living of the consecrated life in community has shaped the way that I have responded to Mary's inspirational words: "Do whatever He tells you." It is my hope that the efforts I have put into Marianist ministry across the years has indeed been for the glory of the Most Holy Trinity, the honor of Mary, and for the salvation of the world.