

BRO. STEVE O'NEIL

Celebrating 25 years of profession

As any vocation contains times of joy and challenge, my life as a Marianist religious has seen its share of both. Looking back at the last 25 years, however, I now see many more times of joy and fulfillment and that those few periods of struggle and challenge have also strengthened my identity as Marianist. In large part, I was able to weather those challenges with the help of many Marianist friends and mentors.

I have had many opportunities to grow as a person and a Marianist religious. I am grateful for the year of studies I had in California to pursue my passion to learn more about creation spirituality. It still forms the foundation of my personal prayer and spirituality. I also look back with gratitude to the opportunity I had to participate in the *Horizons* program in the cradle of Marianist identity, Bordeaux, France. There I was able to steep myself in the life and places of our Founders. It was also there I began to appreciate the international character of the Marianist Family; meeting many other brothers about my same age from around the world.

I have always had a strong connection to the call for justice in the Scriptures. In the first chapter of Isaiah we find, "What are your multiplied sacrifices to Me?" Says the Lord. "I have had enough of burnt offerings of rams and the fat of fed cattle; and I take no pleasure in the blood of bulls, lambs or goats. Learn to do good; seek justice, reprove the ruthless, defend the orphan, plead for the widow." I feel that I have tried to live this out in recent years with my work at the United Nations and the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility.