

## **Memories of the Dayton Novitiate**

### **Bro. Jesse O'Neill**

I have some treasured memories of my time at the novitiate. I remember Tom Pieper our novice director, who taught us how to string popcorn for the Christmas tree and who would wax the novitiate floors at two in the morning. Most importantly, he modeled how to walk the walk when living the vows. He was a true inspiration.

Or the day I made a meatless meal of tomato soup and grilled cheese and tomatoes. Dave McGuigan expressed to me with great passion that that was the worst dinner he had ever had in his life. You see, sometimes it was the little things that would get to you at the novitiate. Ironically, I wound up in the hospital hours later for an appendectomy. Dave said it was caused by my meatless meal.

The fondest memory was the evening we made our novitiate promises in the chapel. An emotional evening for all in my class. Through many twists and turns in life we were led to a place we called home, a place where we began our journey as Marianists.

I must continue. Jack Somerville is a saint. My class was assigned to remodel the family room upon our arrival. We were knocking down walls and putting in drop ceilings. None of which we were skilled in doing. Jack had such patience with our inability to be true carpenters but he was patient with us and a good teacher.

And finally sitting in classes with the late great Bro. George Dury. He sat in on our classes at the age of 90 and quipped that he had not gotten it right the first time and was coming back to school to learn again. He was a wonderful man of wisdom for those of us entering and he showed us how to age gracefully while remaining a vibrant member of the Society of Mary.