I grew up in a very Catholic family. As far back as I can remember my Mother and Dad were involved in the activities and services of our local Church, St Joseph’s in Covington, Ky. and later on at St. Paul’s in Florence, Ky. For us kids in the family, helping out at church was part of what you always did whenever the sisters and or parish priest called. This every day involvement was my first experience of really belonging to a larger faith community beyond my own family. The Marianist Brothers, who taught at Covington Catholic High school, where my Dad and uncles had gone to school, lived right around the corner from our house and they too, were part of this faith community.

After eighth grade, I followed in my Dad’s and my older brother’s steps in going to Covington Catholic High School. The Marianist Brothers were so welcoming and so full of life, inviting me and others to join the Sodality of our Blessed Mother, opening the gym on Saturdays and inviting us to help out around the school. At school Marianists: Bro. George Deinlein, Fr. George Cerniglia and Fr. Bill Behringer, were real inspirational people of faith and prayer for me at the school. Bro. George Cerniglia, back then, was even my cheerleading moderator! High school was a great place for my faith to grow and live in a Marianist community.

During April of my senior year, two of my friends told me that they were going to join the Marianist Brothers. I thought about it and decided to ask Fr. Bill Behringer if I could too. Before graduation, both of my friends decided not to follow this call; I then made a decision to at least try this religious thing for four months. I believe the Spirit set this scenario up, because God knew I would never come to this call, this decision on my own!

The novitiate was a time of growth in prayer, meditation, Marianist history and the charism of our Founders, especially Blessed Chaminade. It was during this year of the novitiate that my love for Mary moved beyond devotions to an understanding of her mission as my mission too, of bringing Jesus to others in our world. I loved hearing this and being a part of Mary’s mission!

Throughout my many years of ministry and living in a number of Marianist communities I have tried to live my religious life in service of Mary’s Mission: bringing other to Jesus. I tried to accomplish this through teaching in a high school, directing novices toward their commitment to our religious life and journeying with college
students in their faith and service to the poor. In all of these ministries I focused on the building of community and building communities of faith.
As aside note concerning community, I have always had a gift or eye for decorating, fixing up the common areas of the communities that I have lived in. A welcoming and hospitable place becomes a sacred space where my brothers can gather as a community and at times with their friends to share the joys of life and being together.

As I celebrate this 50th year of my Marianist profession, I am so grateful for my Marianist vocation and for the many brothers who helped and challenged me to live this sacred and wonderful life.