

FR. ED JACH

50 years of ordination

My serious reflection on life as a Marianist started in 1945 when Bro. Anthony Sobocinski, my homeroom teacher at Don Bosco High School, innocently asked why I was taking Latin. Of course it was part of the curriculum at that time, but I innocently responded that maybe, someday, I might want to be a priest.

Well, that started it — and only on the last day of school in 1949 did I give positive indications to all my vocation recruiters that I wanted to be a Marianist. At that time, it would be more accurate to say that I wanted to be a Brother of Mary. The term Marianist only came later in my religious life. Teaching and coaching various sports in our high schools was a source of great happiness for me.

With a good background and foundation from my earlier teaching experience, my priestly ministry took me to many and varied experiences that included teaching again, school chaplain, formation ministry, Family of Mary ministry and finally pastoral work in parishes.

I succeeded Fr. Louis Trawalter as pastor of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Helotes, Texas, from 1978 to 1989. The parish was continually growing and I was instrumental in building a parish community center in 1984. Just two years before I left for a sabbatical in Berkeley, I helped start the process for building a new church. Fr. Gerry Hammel was already working in the parish, and he took the brunt of all the final decisions for building the new church.

My next assignment was at St. Francis De Sales in Cincinnati from 1990 to 2010. Hard to believe that I was there for 20 years; diversity was the blessing and challenge during these years. The parish census was small, the school was being blessed to afford a good Catholic education to many African-American children, and other demographic situations in the area brought forth new initiatives to meet the needs of our people. De Sales Crossings was a new entity (a collaborative effort of the Catholic institutions and Marianists and Mercy Sisters) that embraced the ministries of Purcell Marian High School, the HOME PROGRAM (now combined with Mercy Neighborhood Ministries), Calvary Catholic Cemetery, the Marianist Community, and Mercy Montessori School.

So, in 2010, it was time to retire and I did so. Had a four-month sabbatical in Texas, and then I took on the chaplaincy for our health care center in Dayton.