

FR. ANTHONY JANSEN

60th year of ordination

Reflecting on my life experiences as a Marianist, I can say the following: I never found my life as a Marianist boring – from the moment that I entered up to the present day. I always found myself surrounded by the possibility of personable relationships and contact with people you could feel comfortable with and relate with... I never really felt alone or isolated in whatever I did or wherever I went. I always felt welcomed, encouraged, directed and challenged by the tasks that were assigned to me, like taking charge of the volleyball team at Matero Boys School in Lusaka, Zambia. In my first and second year out teaching religion at Cathedral Latin in Cleveland, it was the daily support I received from Bro. George Dury in preparing religion classes together that meant a lot. We planned and prepared assignments and methods with which to capture the attention and minds of the pupils from day to day. It was this kind of working together that really made one feel good about facing the challenges of the day and being happy as a Marianist.

There are really two great maturing experiences that I have had as a Marianist. One was the experience of studying for the priesthood in the Marianist Seminary in Fribourg, Switzerland. And the other was the experience of teaching at our secondary school in Lusaka, Zambia. Both of these experiences immersed me within a cultural milieu – one for four years and the second for 40 years.

This is precisely the kind of experience needed to rise above the tendency to think that the American way is the only way of doing something. These experiences have deepened my respect for others and opened my mind and heart to learning. I have been humbled by my experiences as a Marianist.