



FR. PATRICK TONRY

50 years of ordination

Time is surely a very interesting phenomenon. Here I am, remembering 50 years since I was ordained a Marianist priest in Fribourg, Switzerland, and it does not seem that long ago at all. In addition, I have been professed for more than 60 years, and that time has passed so quickly, I sometimes have to pinch myself. During all of these years, I have been blessed beyond measure, and I am extremely grateful.

My vocation as a Marianist has its roots in my family, which was deeply steeped in faith, and in a strong love for the Blessed Virgin Mary. But it was at the first profession of vows of my eldest brother, John, in Beacon, N. Y., in 1949, that I witnessed Marianist brotherhood, was attracted to it and wanted to be part of it. In September of that year I entered the postulate at Mount St. John, and here I am celebrating another jubilee. God is so good.

I have been blessed to do ministry as an ordained Marianist in many places: at Chaminade High School in Mineola, N. Y., and in Colegio San Jose in Puerto Rico. I was in the provincial administration of the New York province as assistant for religious life and then as provincial. I had the joy of serving as rector of the University of Dayton for three years under the extraordinary leadership of Bro. Raymond Fitz. As a Marianist, I always thought I would be in school work, and then I was asked to be pastor of St. Joseph's Catholic Community in Eldersburg, Md. I never wanted to do that type of ministry; and yet, those 10 years turned out to be among the best of my life. I never realized how compatible Marianist life and community — mixed composition — are for parish ministry.

Since leaving St. Joseph's, I have been spiritual director of the Marianist mission, helping to seek funds for our ministries in Africa, India and Mexico, and for our brothers in formation as well as those in retirement. This ministry is wonderful, as I see

the amazing generosity of so many people and the extraordinary work our brothers have done.

In my entire Marianist life, I have been blessed with good health, fine communities, loving fellow brothers, many very good friends and colleagues, and tremendous support and love from my family. As I celebrate this jubilee, I am so grateful, and all I can say is THANK YOU to God, our Blessed Mother and all family, fellow brothers and friends.