



The Marianists

BRO. BERNARD ZALEWSKI

60 years of profession

In the early part of the 20th century, my four grandparents set sail from Danzig (Gdansk), Poland, to New York and then traveled by train to Steubenville, Ohio, where a group of Polish families settled. My father's father formed a committee to build St. Stanislaus Church. They chose glazed brick so the coal dust and soot would wash off each rainy day. Steubenville was a coal-mining and steel-mill town.

My parents went to the parish school together. After working for several years, they married and had three boys, Walter Jr., Gilbert and me. After I graduated in 1951, I joined the Society of Mary at the postulate in Beacon, New York, and then at Mount St. John in Dayton. For our novitiate year, we were assigned to Marcy, New York, where we professed vows on Sept. 8, 1955.

After I graduated from University of Dayton with a double major, the provincial assigned me to teach at North Catholic High School in 1958. In January 1964, I was assigned to teach biology and chemistry at Chaminade High School in Dayton. In 1968, I taught at Cathedral Latin School in Cleveland. I entered Western Reserve University and earned a master's degree from Case Western Reserve University, the first year of its existence. The master's allowed me to teach advanced-level biology at Mangu High School in Kenya. Malaria cut short my service there. When my health improved, I taught advanced biology and chemistry at Hackett High School in Kalamazoo, Michigan, for three years.

In 1980, I celebrated my 25th jubilee in my hometown at my childhood church — St. Stanislaus Church — with Bishop Ottenweiler officiating. It was grand seeing the church filled!

In 1986, I came to the University of Dayton's biology department, where I ran the introductory labs. At the suggestion of one of our brothers, I inquired about a job opening in management information systems (MIS) at the School of Business Administration. I studied computer science each semester, which prepared me to teach MIS. To improve my teaching, I studied computer information systems at Bentley College for 15 months while living with the Jesuit community in Weston, Massachusetts. Due to health issues, I retired early from UD.

In 1996, an opportunity presented itself at Matero Boys School in Zambia. I taught a group of recent grads to troubleshoot and repair computers (387 at the time). The technical college invited me to teach their students. There were two classes, which included two instructors. They now offer the course three times a year. We've made a real contribution to the technical needs of the country.

I came back to Dayton in 2001 for my health. They found that the trouble was (is) leukemia — a rare form. Doctors have told me I can't be alive ... Here I am!