



The Marianists

BRO. FRANK DAMM

60 years of profession

Being a Marianist has given my life direction and purpose. It has also given me opportunities that I could not have imagined. Each assignment has involved challenges and support that increased the sense of purpose. Almost by accident, it has introduced me to a variety of approaches to God. Besides the French School, I have met the mystics, the integrity of creation and the Eastern religions. All this has provided experience to help me develop a fulfilling image of God for my retirement years.

I wanted to be a farmer, and my mother thought that I wanted to be a teacher – like she was. The Marianists had an ad in the back of the Sacred Heart Messenger. Since the Marianists had both farmers and teachers, it solved the immediate problem, and I went off to the novitiate at Marcy. As it turned out, Fr. Martin decided that my mother was right.

My first assignment was to Cleveland, Ohio. It was in the days of the large communities and Fr. Jim McKay was a great director. The science club at Cathedral Latin and the aviation club at St. Joseph gave me my first chance to work individually with students outside the classroom.

The graduate school years were good. It was the '60s, and there was an interesting group of religious attending Ohio State. I think it might have been a good time to be out of the community. When the group returned to Columbus, Ohio, for each new academic year, I would ask them if we recognized the old communities. Generally, the answer was "no."

My 20 years in Africa was the most enriching time of my life. Working in a different culture with a remarkable group of Marianists, including our provincial, was a wonderful experience.

I was on my way back from Africa to Dayton, when I got involved at Chaminade University of Honolulu. It was truly exciting to be part of its rebirth.