



The Marianists

Bro. William Chewning

75 years of profession

Every day is a “thanksgiving” day for me. My life as a Marianist has been guided by the Benedictine saying, “Ora et Labora,” although I have interchanged the words to “Labora et Ora.”

Labora

I began teaching in 1944, and I retired in 2005 after 61 years of service. I enjoyed my high school teaching and administration, as well as my 28 years of teaching at St. Mary’s University. I did enjoy some assignments more than others.

In 1949, when I began teaching chemistry, Bro. Fred Weisbruch had just published a lab manual using the semi-micro method. I thought it was a good idea. I became his friend — and later his collaborator — on the revision of the second edition of the manual. We then published a more challenging manual. D. C. Heath was our publisher for both manuals. For six years, I was a member of the American Chemical Society – National Science Teachers Association committee. The St. Louis group, of which I was a member, produced the test. It took us two years.

Ora

I began to develop a more contemplative prayer after I retired. It seems to me, Blessed Chaminade had a vision of a more contemplative prayer in the Society of Mary. In the “Constitutions of 1839,” articles 368 and 355 say that the working brothers were to supply this element. In the five silences of the Preparatory Virtues, the silence of the mind, of the imagination and of passions, seem to me, to point to a more contemplative prayer. I would propose that with fewer working brothers the retired brothers could supply this element.

In this prayer, I reflect on “if today you hear his voice...” “Behold, your mother...” and “become a Son of Mary...” This is my goal in retirement.