



The Marianists

Bro. Joseph Barrish

70 years of profession

My life has been full of surprises. I had a wonderful formation in the novitiate and in my scholastic years. Superiors were very gracious in allowing me to study both in the United States and in Europe. I traveled in many parts of this country, as well as in Europe, in all the major countries and Mount Athos in Greece with wonderful men like Cletus Behlman and Mel Meyer. Mel and I traveled for more than 25 summers, in all parts of the United States.

I've been able to establish myself as an artist and have grown as a result of all the wonderful opportunities provided for me. I have been graced with good health, and I find our Marianist life very fulfilling. Each day, I illustrate Scripture readings from the liturgy of the day. I've developed a love for the visual arts as well as music. My life has been filled with blessings. I have no regrets at all for the decision I made as a young kid in Cleveland, Ohio, where I met the Marianists for the first time. It's been a great ride — I've enjoyed it all.

Throughout my years as a Marianist, something wonderful has happened. I have come to sense a presence — a benign, encouraging presence — in my Marianist living. While I may take my ups and downs, and my mistakes and failures seriously, this presence does not seem to be overly concerned about my less-than-perfect performance. I experience this presence in our community chapel's beautiful icon of Mary and Jesus, which I have grown to love. This presence, mysterious but real, is not confined to a room or to a building. So, I am beginning to understand why our founder, Blessed William Joseph Chaminade, spoke so glowingly of Mary and the importance of being like Jesus, son of Mary. My first provincial, Fr. Walter Tredtin, wrote in my first copy of our Constitution: "In her company, all good things come to me." (Book of Wisdom: 7-11). For me, this has been a true grace, a grace of being fully alive — and fully Marianist.