



## The Marianists

### **Fr. Michael Reaume**

*60 years of profession*

I'm not supposed to be here. I was 11 when I nearly died of a burst appendix. While I was near death (but didn't know it) my mother quietly dedicated me to the Blessed Virgin. I only learned this many years later. A radical operation cleared the infection, and I have now lived seven times as long! Each day is a gift.

For ninth grade, I attended the new St. Joseph High School and met the first religious brothers I had ever seen. I was attracted by their sense of community, and I began to discover the depth of our Catholic faith. My vocation grew with contact with the community, but when I told my mother that I was thinking about the Marianists she was shocked and said to herself "Mary has claimed him!"

Many of the cities and the ministries in which I have served were not even imaginable when I entered in 1956. Early in my Marianist life, I was inspired by Mary's words to the servants at Cana, "Do whatever He tells you." I taught in Chester and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and Cleveland, Ohio, before the seminary. Working with school sodalities laid foundations for my future work with Marianist lay communities.

Seminary in Fribourg corresponded with the end of the Second Vatican Council, and my studies enabled me help to help people to make sense of the many complicated times that followed. This led to my assignments in Dayton: to one of the new small communities, to working with the emerging adult lay communities and to the re-founding of campus ministry at Wright State University.

Scripture became important to me, and I earned a master's degree, but decided that I preferred to use the knowledge pastorally. I have assisted many — through courses and study groups, as well as individually — in sorting out questions about Scripture and its relevance for today's spiritual journey.

I came to Ireland in 1980 for two years, and I am still here! As Ireland has been undergoing a challenge to the Church, even more profound than that which I had experienced in the States, I have tried to help with that transition. Besides teaching and school chaplaincy, I have worked in vocations and formation, as well as assisting in local parishes.

These days, I am at St. Laurence College for a time, most days. I assist our chaplain, Mary McBride, and help out as needed. I also help in local parishes and am the gardener in our community. As I continue to reflect on those jars at Cana, I will keep working as long as I am able.