



The Marianists

Bro. David Herbold

50 years of profession

Looking back at my life, I realize that I have been blessed — people, places, experiences, opportunities — too many to enumerate in a short, personal reflection: those experiences at North Catholic on Troy Hill; those experiences in initial formation at Beacon and at Marcy; that exhilarating experience of life at Mount St. John and UD during that time of effervescence in the Society of Mary and its works, in the Church and in society at large; those experiences in my first active communities — in Dayton as a student brother living at Chaminade and in Cincinnati at Moeller as a teaching brother.

Originally, I saw myself as a teaching brother, teaching Latin or biology. However, the director-principal at Beacon told me early on to forget about the Latin: “There is no future in Latin,” he told me. I later shifted to social studies, but my teaching experiences in the States— and later in Japan (in hindsight, wonderful ones) — convinced me that I was not cut out for teaching (at least, not in high school or in grade school). Maybe if I set my sights higher — teaching on the university level, things would work out for me in the classroom.

With that in the back of my mind, I dialogued for some months with then-provincial administration in Dayton to be able to go live and work in Japan. This came to be known in General Chapter documents as an “other culture experience.” In the Chaminadean sense, we all are missionaries, but I didn’t come to Japan as a missionary, per se. My plan was to return to the States after that three-year experience in Yokohama and go on for higher studies (Asian Studies) there. The higher studies happened, but not in the States. I studied Japanese language and culture here, in Tokyo.

Except for a few short stints in the States every decade or so (first in Dayton and then in Paradise — Hawai’i — some 20 years later), that “other culture experience” continues to present living in a cradle-to-the-grave community (one facility having many functions, ranging from that of initial formation program to a healthcare facility for the aged and infirm religious). It’s located in the heart of Tokyo and in a ministry (translation: office and grounds work) that serves the needs of the Society of Mary and one that seems to fit my personality and gifts.