



## The Marianists

### **Fr. George Montague**

*60 years of ordination*

Community life and service as a Marianist have formed me in ways I never would have experienced had I followed some secular vocation. Since the age of 6, I wanted to be a writer and a newspaper publisher, and from ages 11 to 15, I published a monthly newspaper in my home town of Bandera, Texas. But at Central Catholic High School, I experienced the touch of the Lord, mediated in large part by the mentoring of the “Brothers of Mary,” as the Marianists were known in those days, and by the example of their community life and family spirit — so much so, that despite my father’s wishes, I did not wait to graduate but, with his reluctant permission, entered the order after my junior year of high school. My writing skills, honed already at Central, were buried in deep soil for a while, but then flourished in a new way, beginning with the publishing of my doctoral thesis and some 25 books since. I am amazed at God’s providence in all this.

The call to be “one of the brothers” was — and ever has been — primary. The call to the priesthood was a vocation within a vocation, for it has been part of my journey with the Lord, with Mary and with my brothers since my ordination in 1958. My greatest priestly consolation has been in the confessional and in healing prayer, where the healing, forgiving, merciful grace of God is so tangible. When I walk out of the confessional, I feel not only the joy of the father welcoming home the prodigal, but the joy that I, too — no different from those I’ve absolved — am a prodigal returned to the Father’s embrace.