



The Marianists

**Fr. Theodore Cassidy**

*50 years of ordination*

I write in a spirit of profound gratitude and also humility — acknowledging complete dependence on God.

I sensed a call to be a missionary in the sixth grade. I was raised in a loving family on Long Island, New York, attended grade school with the St. Joseph Sisters of Brooklyn and the School Sisters of Notre Dame, and spent four great years at Chaminade High School in Mineola, New York. The brothers pulled me aside and guided me in my decision to go to the novitiate in 1956.

I recognize the growth pains, but in my heart is a deep appreciation for the relationships I have had. My temperament struggles with fear and acts too much from the head, but I am fiercely loyal. To tell the truth, I never have had a doubt about my vocation as a Marianist. I remember walking up the path of the novitiate and saying to myself, “This is going to be for the rest of my life.”

I spent 20 learning years as a teacher and being chaplain in Cleveland, Brooklyn, Chester, Pennsylvania, and Baltimore. Students showed me how to relate and not just discipline and teach knowledge. I spent another 20 exciting years in parish ministry in Vernon, Connecticut, Sykesville, Maryland, and Cleveland. We created small communities, and collaborated for social justice, liturgy and the Marianist charism. I cherish the 10 years at the Marianist Family Retreat Center with staff and so many various groups. And I learned much more than what I was able to give as novice master for two years. How precious to me are all with whom I was privileged to be during these years.

My passions are social justice and the growth of the authentic charism of the Family of Mary. I pray to be able to powerfully add to these treasures the rest of my life.

The Marianist charism of the interior life, based on union with Jesus and Mary in the grace of the Spirit and the Father's love, have been the guides and energy of my life. In humility and great joy I celebrate it with you all.