



## **FATHER JAMES TOBIN**

*50 years of ordination*

It was September 1945! Mom and Dad sent me to Chaminade in St. Louis to begin fourth grade. My brother, Tom, was already a student there in high school. Through those nine years at Chaminade, Fr. James P. Canning, S.M., always encouraged me to think and pray about becoming a priest in the Society of Mary.

After graduation in 1954, I had been accepted at University of Notre Dame, but at the last minute (challenged by a Marianist), I decided to try out the “road less travelled” and head to Marynook Novitiate in Galesville, Wisconsin. After the initial shock and homesickness, the seed of a vocation gradually was cultivated and nourished during that novitiate year. Somehow, at the ripe old age of 18, I knew I had a direction for my life. I felt drawn to the priesthood, especially to celebrate the Eucharist and sacramental ministry.

This year, as I celebrate 50 years of priesthood in the Society of Mary, I feel humbled and grateful to God for each one of those years. Walking down this “road less travelled” for 50 years of priesthood has been quite an experience. I reflect on all the different Marianist communities that have been part of my life, all the different ministries, and all the love and support I received over the years from my family, my fellow brothers, my friends, my students and so many people.

I ask God's forgiveness for all my mistakes of the past and ask for His grace I need to continue this Marianist priesthood for as long as He wants. So, what more can be said than a quote from one of the psalms: “What return shall I make to the Lord for all His goodness to me? I will take up the chalice of the Lord and call upon His name!”

For all that has been — THANKS! And for all that will be — YES! And it's all grace!