



## The Marianists

### **FATHER MICHAEL REAUME**

*50 years of ordination*

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 cities where I have served and the ministries in which I have served were not even in the imagination of people when I entered in 1956. Early in my Marianist life, I was inspired by Mary's words to the servants at Cana, "Do whatever she tells you." When I first entered the Marianists, I thought that I would probably teach science, since I was close to many of the Marianists who taught science, and I was very involved in the radio club at St. Joseph High. However, I also was inspired by the Marianist priests I met, and when I went to scholasticate, I had to choose between studies toward the priesthood or science. I chose the Latin over the science.

I taught in Chester, Pennsylvania, Pittsburgh and Cleveland 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 to help people to make sense of the many complicated times which have 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 the campus ministry at Wright State University.

Marianist priests are ordained to serve our communities and then, to do other work. I frequently have been the only ordained member of my community, as is the case right now. While working at something else, I have tried to be available for the community. During my seminary studies, 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 in sorting out questions about Scripture and its relevance for today's spiritual journey through courses and study groups as well as individually.

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.

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