



The Marianists

Leading Others to Christ

By **Bro. Justin Quiroz**

Being not only an educator but a Marianist educator has been the greatest experience of my religious vocation. My journey into the understanding of Marianist education began when I was a student at [St. Mary's University](#) in San Antonio, Texas. I met many brothers inside and outside of the classroom and I could see a uniquely different way of how these men lived their lives. Sometimes stern, sometimes friendly, sometimes simple, but always with a presence that was rooted deeply in the love of Christ and devotion to the Blessed Mother.

It was this vision of the Marianist educator that Fr. Chaminade saw over two hundred years ago, a uniquely Marian way of educating that could lead others to Christ. As a Marianist brother, I am proud to have joined this tradition of the many Marianist educators that have come before me. My life has been greatly influenced by the brothers who have taught me and guided me during my years in the classroom. My first experience as a teacher in the classroom was at Mother Seton Academy in Baltimore, Maryland. Those two years were the greatest joy of my life. My time there opened me up to a new world that changed my life and perspective. It was an experience where I could share the joy of our charism with students who needed it most. It was an experience that cemented my belief about the need for brothers to be present in the classroom while helping to create a Marianist atmosphere throughout the whole school.

In my ministry, particularly with middle school students, very few, if any, have ever met a religious brother, much less have one as a classroom teacher. It's through this ministry that I feel the greatest joy because I am working with students who need our ministry of presence the most. Recently, I sat with a

student in spiritual direction who struggles to speak with others. In our conversation, we talked about many struggles; from his issues at home, school and the questions he has around his faith. I feel that it was our charism lived in my life as a brother that allowed me to bring the gift of Jesus to him through Mary. A gentle presence of being and listening. It was through Mary's guidance that I was able to bring some sense of hope to this student.

My sincere hope for the future of the Marianists as we celebrate this two-hundred-year anniversary of education is that we continue to dream about how we will carry Marianist education to future generations. The Marianist Charism is a unique gift to the world of teaching today as it was over two hundred years ago and my hope is that we continue to find new ways to share that, not only with our existing schools but that we find new ways to share our charism with other schools across the United States.