



BROTHER ROBERT MORIARTY

Celebrating 60 years of profession

Raised in the 1940s, immersed in Catholic culture, I early, easily and consciously absorbed the sense that God was the deepest and all-encompassing reality and that being in touch with the great mystery above me, below me, within me and all around me was the highest value. Mary, who I spoke of in those early years as “our Blessed Mother,” was an intimate part of that world and my experience of it.

Encountering the Society of Mary at Chaminade High School (Mineola, New York) was my first experience with religious, lay and priest religious. I was drawn into everything about that experience — the school, and the brothers and priests. In a sense, it was a natural for me to ask to be accepted as a postulant during my sophomore year. I completed high school in the postulate at Beacon and moved to the novitiate in the first mid-year vow group in January 1959. With Fr. Joseph Martin still very much present in the first part of that year, Fr. Fred Mathues, the incoming novice master, was the strong formative influence. Even in that still pre-Vatican II era, there was something about Fr. Fred’s whole style/tone that anticipated and oriented me to the Church that would be emerging in the years ahead. From him, I caught and bought the sense that the mission of the Society of Mary was “the multiplication of communities of faith in mission.” And this has shaped my life as a Marianist ever since.

“Community as primary instrument of the apostolate” is a Marianist principle that is deeply important to me, *even* and *especially* in these last nearly 30 years. *Even*, I say, while the ministry in which I am presently involved resulted in my living apart from a Marianist community when we withdrew from corporate Marianist service to Sacred Heart Parish in Vernon, Connecticut. *Especially*, I add, being involved precisely as a Marianist in developing and implementing a vision for parish as a “community of communities” as director of the pastoral department for Small Christian Communities in the Archdiocese of Hartford.

Completing my work in the Archdiocese in 2017 after sabbatical leave in both Berkeley, California, and Rome/Manziana, Italy, I returned to the states in December 2018. Here I once again engaged in the Society of Mary’s traditional community as a member of the Marianist Community in Philadelphia. I am working toward publishing “The Best of Quest,” a compilation of works previously published as a weekly scripture-based resource (Quest) for small, Christian communities during my ministry in Connecticut.

When completed, my work will publish online by the North American Center for Marianist Studies and will be available at no cost to small, Christian communities.

In closing, Fr. Chaminade's vision of rebuilding the French church through the "multiplication of communities of faith in mission" has transcended his time and place. It is a dream whose time has come in our church in North America today. I love being a part of it all.