



## FATHER TIMOTHY KENNEY

*Celebrating 50 years of profession*

I cannot believe I am celebrating 50 years as a Marianist in this prophetic and amazing moment in our history: the best of times and the worst of times! I use to look upon golden jubilarians as the old guys. Now I have a different perspective as I continue to see God at work in my life and ministry. I am so blessed with people who love me and encourage me to be better and better.

Daily I pray to God that I can be a *credible witness* in being a person of joy and hope for the people I serve. My vows and my priesthood matter to me in my desire to grow in holiness. Through my vocation, over the years, I have come to believe that *Christ comes to us in many disguises*. I remember seeing that message on a poster when I visited East Africa.

Years ago, my parents encouraged my brother, my sister and I to look to Mary, the mother of Jesus for guidance. Their profound influence is at the heart of our Marianist charism: *always look to Mary: the mother, the listener and the compassionate one who stood at the foot of the Cross of Jesus*. This image always has inspired me to *be present with people*, even if and when I wasn't quite sure what to say or do. Over the years, I have learned so much about the ordinary lives and issues of people, especially at their significant moments like marriage, the birth of a child, First Communion, reconciliation, tragedy, illness and death. I always have tried my best to be first, a spiritual leader and accompany people in their journeys toward God. Make it real! Fast-forward to when I got to know Blessed Chaminade and some of his thinking, I embraced one of his mottos: *Through the Mother to the Son*.

I am honored in these 50 years to have served in four of our schools, one of our parishes and on three different Provincial Administrations as head of each of the Three Offices. What a blessing to have been a campus minister for many years and worked with young people, and to have had the opportunity to be in internal ministry and travel the world: I have been to over 30 countries! Wow, our world is small, and I am blessed. I also have been blessed to have preached many retreats to the young and the old, which has helped me to grow spiritually as a son of Mary! I want to be realistic, but I also want to hope and dream that I have another 25 years to live and serve the people of God in our Church and our Marianist Family. Let's raise together a glass of vino to that hope! How is the world better because I have lived in it? *How am I better because I have lived in the world?*