



## Rev. James A. Russell, SM

### *Celebrating 75 years of Profession*

Born in Pittsburgh, PA, in 1932, I attended St. Norbert grade school there, followed by Mt. St. John Postulate High School, before professing my First Vows on September 8, 1951, in Marcy, NY. I went on to earn a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Dayton in 1954, completed my seminary studies at the Marianist University of Fribourg, Switzerland, in 1964, and earned a Master of Arts from Duquesne University in 1983.

Except for two long periods of service—in Campus Ministry at University of Dayton (UD) and as chaplain for the Governor’s Island Community in Huntsville, OH—I had a number of brief assignments, especially in my early years as a Marianist. From 1954 until 1960, when I left for the seminary, I taught at Immaculate Conception School in Washington, DC; Colegio San Jose in Rio Piedras and Colegio Ponceño in Ponce, both in Puerto Rico; and North Catholic High School in Pittsburgh, in addition to a year of my own philosophy studies at UD.

Following my ordination on March 14, 1964, in Fribourg and subsequent return from Switzerland, I briefly served as Campus Minister at UD before returning to the classroom at Dayton’s Chaminade High School and Chaminade College School in Toronto, Canada. These shorter assignments, both before and after the seminary, were sometimes difficult and caused me to underestimate the value or efficacy of my ministry. However, I am still amazed at how many folks, even after many years, express gratitude for my work with them.

I left the classroom in 1972 to serve two years as Director of Novices at the Marianist Novitiate in Dayton before resuming my role as Campus Minister at UD from 1974 until 1995. The next five years were spent in service as chaplain of the Chaminade-Madonna Community and associate pastor at Nativity Parish in Hollywood, FL. I then continued my parish service as associate pastor at Holy Rosary in San Antonio, TX, which also included pastoral ministry at the Marianist parish in Coatzacoalcos, Mexico. From 2002 until 2014, I served as chaplain for the Governor’s Island Community before retiring to the University of Dayton Alumni Hall Community for the next eight years.

Following a sudden health event in April 2022, I have resided at two health care facilities, both in the Dayton area—the Siena Woods Care Center and the St. Leonard Community, where I currently celebrate Mass once per week.

All my assignments and experiences throughout my career have helped convince me that it was the Lord who was truly the minister. I have simply tried to be a generous and caring Marianist, doing what was asked of me. And now, looking back on almost 75 years of Marianist life and ministry, which included 62 years of priestly ministry, I am profoundly grateful to our loving God and our Blessed Mother Mary for my vocation to the Society of Mary.