



Bro. Thomas Oldenski, SM

Celebrating 60 years of Profession

“All is grace” are the dying words of the young country priest (*Diary of a Country Priest*); and “Everything is grace” are the dying words of St. Thérèse of Lisieux. As I reflect upon my 60 years of Marianist life, I cannot find truer words than these to describe this journey of my life. God is gracious, kind, and merciful in every step of this journey. I give thanks to the many people, especially my fellow brothers, who have affirmed these words in my life.

I was born in Pittsburgh, PA, in 1948 and raised in Sharpsburg, PA, where I attended St. John Cantius Parish School. I graduated from North Catholic High School in Pittsburgh in 1965 and professed my First Vows on August 22, 1966, in Marcy, NY.

In my early years as a Marianist, I was a cook, motivated by serving those who serve God’s people. I moved from the kitchen into the classroom as a “yes” response when I was asked to do so because of a need for a religion teacher. And since then, my focus has been education in one form or another, even though I continue to enjoy cooking and baking.

I have served as an administrator, teacher, and counselor in secondary schools in Memphis, Dayton, Kalamazoo, Benin City, and Dublin. I had the opportunity as a university professor to teach in Dayton, Bangalore, and Bangkok. I have had the opportunity to give retreats and in-service days to teachers and administrators of Catholic schools and other schools within the USA and to many other places like Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam, Trinidad & Tobago, Micronesia, and Saipan. I have considered the world as my classroom, and I am a global educator.

I had the privilege to work for many years with our brothers in the District of India and to see these young men develop intellectually and spiritually to be committed and vibrant Marianists. Now that I am retired from active ministry, residing in the Hollywood Marianist Community (FL), I realize that God has always been with me and, like Mary, I acclaim our God who is mighty has done great things for me!