

Bro. Frank Spaeth, S.M.
60 years of profession



I taught math, mechanical drawing, and physics. After graduating from the University of Dayton, I was sent to the Pacific Province and taught in California, Washington and Hawai'i. I suppose physics was my specialty. We did some 40 experiments each year. The boys and girls generally liked them very much. Besides, it used a lot of the electronic skills and information that I had learned in military service in the Marine Corps. I had intended to be a Navy pilot, as my brother was in the Navy. Down at the Federal Building I happened to meet my former Scout Master, who was the local Marine recruiter. He signed me up that day, in November 1942, and I was in the Corps. From my mechanical drawing experience in high school and from two summers of drafting work at the Ohio Knife Company, I was sent into electronics.

I went to Purcell High and liked the brothers there very much. During service time, I thought and prayed over my future life. An aunt, two cousins, and my sister were nuns. They must have been praying for me. Anyway, one day in May 1948, I decided, and walked into the office at Purcell, and told Fr. Barrett I wanted to be a Brother.

As Marianists are usually assigned responsibilities, mine included various school jobs: cross-country coach, athletic director, dorm prefect, student council, dad's club, and even principal.

My high school days were Depression years, so I spent non-school time at various jobs: selling magazine, cutting grass, caddying, working at a grocery store. After about five years of teaching, I had an emergency appendix operation. The doctor advised me to run. That was my start. Through the years I ran many 5K and 10 K races, three marathons, and two short triathlons. One year, another brother invited me to bike down the Northern California coast. It was great! So after that, I would bike, returning from summer school science-math programs. A few trips stand out: a 10-day trip from University of Dayton to Cape Cod was a blast, and two trips from San Francisco to Los Angeles were also great!

Teachers are generally busy people. I was invited to be on Bishop Di Lorenzo's Honolulu Diocesan Pastoral Council. It was four years of very interesting work with lay men and women, deacons, nuns and priests.

During retirement, I have been community driver, part-time janitor at the Mystical Rose Chapel, and part-time physics lab worker at the high school. Your life as a "retired" Marianist is less structured but generally busy. When I was looking forward to retirement, I took up sewing and rosary making.

The life of a retiree is really centered on our Marianist spiritual life: daily mass, periods of meditation, praying and reading spiritual topics. The rest of the day goes quickly: meals, community-style recreations, personal hobbies and needed personal health care.

I see my Marianist life as a very special gift from God. It was been a super experience working with so many great men. If I had a second life, I would gladly do it all again.