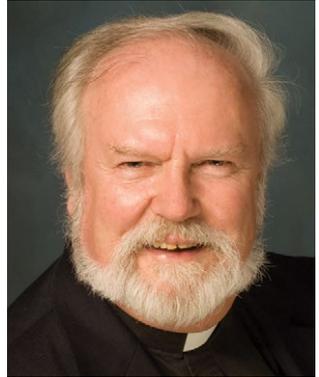




Simon J. Hendry, SJ

50 Years as a Jesuit

As I look back on my 50 years as a Jesuit, my overriding sense is that I am incredibly happy and grateful. I am happy and grateful that God has been interested in me, has loved me, and has been faithful to me. And I am happy and grateful because of the people who are and who have been part of my life.



God kept me a Jesuit. I do not get credit (or blame) for that. My momentous decision when I first made the Spiritual Exercises was to stay until tomorrow. It turned out to be 50 years of tomorrows.

I appreciate the way God has led me on a winding path: teaching high school, doing spiritual direction and giving retreats, working in minority communities, directing the Jesuit Volunteer Corps, studying in grad school, teaching in universities, guiding Jesuit communities as their superior. Each job challenged and delighted me, and each called forth something new and different from me.

Each community where I lived and where I worked touched my heart and taught me something of how to be loved and how to love. Each brought forth deeper and deeper places in myself. Each has enhanced my awareness of Jesus' presence in my life and my desire to follow and serve Him.

Long-term friendships have become incredibly valuable for me. I have walked with so many good and wonderful people. When I was younger, I had good Jesuit role models and mentors. Various Jesuit companions have become life-long intimate friends. I have developed and deepened relationships with men and women outside the Jesuit community. These include people I knew before I entered, former students, Jesuit Volunteers, work colleagues, and so many others. They all provide a richness that I cannot fully describe except to say that I have been amazingly blessed by them.

So, after 50 years, I find myself grateful, especially for the people; and I also find myself looking happily toward the future.