



Terence Todd, SJ

60 Years as a Jesuit

Early in the morning of August 14th, 1958, I went with my family to Holy Name of Jesus Church to Mass. Fr. Benard Tonnar celebrated Mass for us. Then all of us, including Fr. Tonnar, went back home and had a wonderful breakfast. My folks were taking me to the train station. I was on my way to Grand Coteau to enter the novitiate as a Jesuit.



As we were all leaving the house together, and as I approached the doorway, Fr. Tonnar turned around and said, “I am going to tell you the same thing that my father told me when I was leaving for the novitiate.” Fr. Tonnar quoted that passage from St. Luke: *“No man who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God.”*

Certainly this advice is not for everyone who enters religious life, but it has sustained me for 60 years. During these years there have been days of unutterable joy filled with glowing sunrises. There have also been dark and gloomy days which have brought with them burdens of sorrow. There have been days or periods of confusion, when both of my hands were still on the plow, but I was at a loss to know what seeds were being planted.

I would like to think that during these times of confusion and desolation that I did not look back nor did I take my hands off the plow. What has sustained me during these times was St. Ignatius’ admonition not to change our resolution, but only to increase our prayer, meditation and examination of conscience.

What I am most grateful for in my life’s journey is the enduring friendship of my Jesuit brothers, my family and the many wonderful people from all over who have walked with me.

