MARIST SEMINARY  
AUCKLAND, NEW ZEALAND

VOCATION IS MORE THAN A JOB

(Voice)

Can you share with us the difference between a vocation and a job from your own experience?

(Joseph)  
Well, before I joined the seminary, I had a really nice job. I was an asbestos building surveyor and consultant. It was a really good job and I really enjoyed it. And yet, I felt like I was earning money to do what I really wanted to do. A lot of people were asking me “Why don’t you just work for the Church?” Perhaps I could have worked in parish administration or become a lay pastoral leader. That would have been good, but, deep down, I felt that God was calling me to do something more. For me, religious life is giving your whole self. This is a life-style that goes beyond business hours. It’s a whole life dedicated to the service of others and it’s an opportunity to be and to bring Christ whenever and wherever you go.

(Thomas)

Whenever I hear these two words “vocation” or “job” compared or opposing each other a lot of things come to mind. But the one thing that stands out the most to me is that, first, a vocation is a calling from God. You have to accept it. A big thing is that vocation is alive. It requires work, constant work. It can’t be a job where can leave it after nine to five. Vocation is for twenty-four hours, if you like, around the clock, and it requires lots of work. This work is prayer. Prayer is what keeps the vocation going. It’s the driving force for me personally. Other things include Holy Mass, the other sacraments, Scripture readings, spiritual reading, studying the Church, studying theology and philosophy. That’s all part of what helps to keep the vocation moving, and to keep growing. So, unlike a job that requires a person to work from nine to five, we have to be there around the clock. And we have to be in it, we have to live in it, we have to work at it all the time. And that is what keeps, for me, my vocation alive. Without it, I hate to imagine the things that could happen if I stopped working at it daily and stopped giving it my all.