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Q&A with Catholic Library Association Members: Brother Andrew Kosmowski, S.M.

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WITH
CATHOLIC
LIBRARY
ASSOCIATION
MEMBERS

920
CLA

Br. Andrew J. Kosmowski, SM

Librarian, Marian Library, University of Dayton, Dayton, Ohio

Describe your career as a librarian and where you work.

I am a librarian at the University of Dayton's Marian Library, one of the largest collections of items dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary. This is a larger special collection with about 112,000 monographs. This year is the 75th anniversary of its foundation. The Society of Mary (Marianists) — which founded what would become the University of Dayton (UD) in 1851 — wanted to create something that would honor the triple centennials of the first Marianists in the United States, the death of our founder Blessed William Joseph Chaminade, and the establishment of Saint Mary's Institute (later UD). In 1943, the brothers decided to start the Marian Library. (See go.udayton.edu/marianlibrary75 for more information.)

Some interesting aspects of my position include maintaining some of our devotional materials collections, developing our music collections, and curating our books when they match with our art exhibits.

How has being involved with the CLA been important to your professional development?

The reviews in *Catholic Library World (CLW)* have been helpful in developing the collections. Sometimes we miss items related to Mary, and *CLW* has served as a net for us to catch those items. Furthermore, the local chapter (Cincinnati) and the Dayton Deanery Librarians have allowed me to remain active in the school library media specialist community, although I no longer am serving as one.

What do you hope for the future of the CLA?

I am excited to see the theme for the 2018 fall conference is "The Vocation of the Catholic Librarian." This is where CLA can excel, forming us Catholic librarians as both Catholics and librarians. While the professional growth is important, so too is spiritual and faith life development. I hope that CLA will continue to faithfully cultivate our professional and spiritual selves.

Why did you become a brother? Why the Marianists?

In 2001, I was working for Nature's Classroom in New England when the feeling came. To complement the school curriculum, especially environmental education, we staff members lived as community. At weekly Mass, I felt my heart stir. That summer, I met with a priest I knew who was a rector of a Nigerian seminary. He urged me to live as I was for a year and then see if the feeling was still there. I did this. At the parish I was attending when I was at Nature's Classroom, I saw the *Vision* vocation magazine. From there, I winnowed the list to orders with Mary in the name. The Society of Mary (Marianists) fit the criterion. After researching a few, I stayed a week with the brothers in Dayton, Ohio. I found home, so to speak. When I professed my final vows in 2010, I decided not to seek the priestly state. This is quite normal with the Marianists, as only about 33 percent are ordained worldwide. I discerned that seeking priesthood was not my call from Jesus. ■

Do you know a remarkable CLA member who we should learn about?
To nominate a CLA member to be featured in CLA 920, e-mail the editor
at sigriddkelsey@gmail.com.