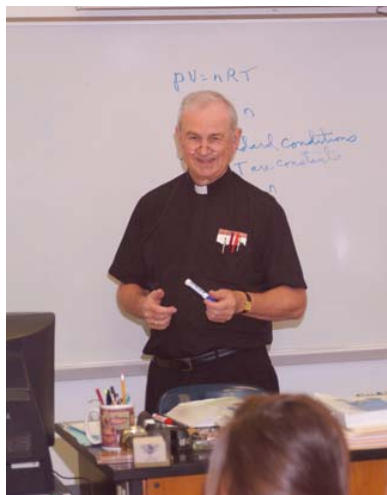




## Saint Viator Chemistry Teacher Reaches Major Milestone

September 9, 2010



Fr. Van Wiel, C.S.V.  
teaching a chemistry class at  
Saint Viator.

The Rev. John Van Wiel, C.S.V. is among eight Viatorians --- including four priests and four brothers --- on staff at Saint Viator High School. As a key member of the chemistry department, who helped design its honors and AP courses, he is highly respected by his peers.

However, students and faculty recently learned of an even bigger achievement when he celebrated 50 years as a Viatorian.

The Rev. Robert M. Egan, C.S.V., president, told the students and staff during daily announcements on Wednesday.

“Father Van Wiel has dedicated his entire life as a Viatorian to high school education and ministry with young people,” Egan said. “It is a privilege to have him as a member of the faculty.

“He is truly a master teacher,” Egan added, “and has shared his gifts and talents to make our high school community better every year

he has been on our faculty.”

Most of his years at Saint Viator, he says, have been spent in the same chemistry lab, though it has been updated over the years with increased technology and electronics.

“I love chemistry, but it’s the students that keep me here,” Fr. Van Wiel says. “Even if I’m feeling grumpy in the morning, a quick walk down the hall to my mailbox and saying “hello” to many of my past students usually brings a smile to my face.

“The students continue to energize me and give me life,” he adds.

Van Wiel grew up in the Quad Cities and attended Alleman High School run by Viatorians.

He joined the Viatorian noviciate in 1960 and went on to earn an undergraduate and graduate degree in chemistry before adding an advanced degree in school administration from the University of North Carolina at Charlotte.

After being ordained a priest in 1966, Van Wiel spent stints teaching math and science at McNamara High School in Kankakee, Alleman High School, his alma mater, and at Griffin High School in Springfield.

He arrived at Saint Viator High School in 1988, the year it became a co-educational institution, and he helped revamp the chemistry offerings. He continues to teach chemistry, honors chemistry and AP chemistry.

Among his Viatorian religious community, Van Wiel has served as vocation director and master of novices. However, he also is known as something of a Renaissance man. He took up painting more than 20 years ago, and many of his watercolors, drawn from nature scenes, hang in the Clerics of St. Viator Province Center in Arlington Heights.