

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

St. Paul Apostle Catholic Church Project

Parishioner Experience

O. H. 709

JOHN MARKOTAN

Interviewed

by

Jerome Hiznay

on

November 14, 1984

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INTERVIEWEE: JOHN MARKOTAN

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SUBJECT: organizations, choir, bingo, pastors, Vatican II changes, communications

DATE: November 14, 1984

H: This is an interview with John Markotan for the Youngstown State University's Oral History Program on St. Paul the Apostle Church in New Middletown, Ohio by Jerry Hiznay at the Markotan residence located at 12897 Youngstown-Pittsburgh Road in Petersburg, Ohio, on November 14, 1984, at 6:30 p.m.

First of all John, could you tell me a little bit about yourself, your family, and your occupation?

M: Right now at the present time I have put twenty-five years in at Nemenz Valu-King. I work in the produce department. I'm sixty-two year old. I hope to put in one more year and I should retire.

H: Where were you born at?

M: I was born September 14, 1923. I was born on the south side of Chicago. I was born and raised there. I moved here in 1946 to Petersburg. I married Helen Zuback. She passed away about fifteen years ago. I have six children. I have three boys and three girls. After my wife passed away, I remarried. It did not work out. I found another nice wife and got married. I am married now for ten years. I have nine grandchildren.

H: What type of jobs have you held over the years?

M: Over the years, I have worked at Truscon Steel for approximately twelve to fifteen years. I ran a welding machine at Truscon Steel. About the time things were getting rough, I got laid off more than I was working. I went to work for a contractor. This contractor was adding on to the store at Nemenz's. I happened to be there working on the store and one day Henry

- Nemenz came up to me and asked me if I wanted a job. I went home and changed clothes. And as I said, I have been there now going on twenty-six years.
- H: Coming back to your education, how far did you go in the high school?
- M: I went to my second year in high school.
- H: You moved here in 1946? You have lived in Springfield Township since 1946?
- M: I have been here in Springfield Township in the same house here for the whole length of time.
- H: How long have you been a member of St. Paul's?
- M: I have been a member of St. Paul's Church before the church was even built. I mean, before you even had a church to build.
- H: Could you tell me a little bit about the origins of the church? How did the church get started?
- M: We were going to St. Anthony's Church in Bessemer. We really weren't realizing as parishioners that there . . . As a matter of fact, on my first marriage they wouldn't even marry anybody there from our area. I was married at St. Cyril's in Youngstown. As far as the church, we held our first mass in the New Middletown Grade School.
- H: In what year? I know the cornerstone was laid in 1953 so . . .
- M: It had to be about 1954 because our church was not complete yet. It was still in framework. We started holding masses . . . We got permission to hold masses at the New Middletown Grade School. That was our first mass in the New Middletown Grade School. I was among the first in the choir. We sang.
- H: Could you tell me some of the people who were involved in the early formation of the church?
- M: The people that were really in for them--both of them are deceased now--were the Yasechko's and the Petrick family. They were the ones that got this in the birth. They got this thing off the ground.
- H: Going back to the beginning when the parish got started, what did most of the people who belonged to St. Paul's back then do for a living?
- M: A lot of them were farmers. They were mostly farmers. There were a few steelworkers who worked in the steel mill. Most of the people were farmer people, the old-timers.

H: About how many families were in the parish when it first started?

M: I think when they went down to the Diocese they told Bishop Walsh that we wanted a church here, I think they had 150 families. It was about 150 families before we could get recognition to start our church here.

H: You said that you went to St. Anthony's to mass?

M: I went to St. Anthony's in Bessemer.

H: Where did some of the other people go to mass?

M: As far as I know, most of them split all over. A lot of them from this area here went to St. Anthony's.

H: How about Palestine? I know that is where Father Pawlewicz stayed down there when the church was first being started. Did some people go down to the Palestine mass?

M: Not that I know of.

H: What can you tell me about the construction of the church? Were you involved at all with it?

M: I wasn't really involved with the construction. I know it is all metal construction building, but I was not involved until we were on the inside working on the inside. Steve Shirilla was a very faithful member of the church. He passed away not too long ago. I worked with him. We worked on the main altars. All of the carvings up on top,, the over-head canopy on top of the church on the altar side, Steve Shirilla carved them out. I worked with him. I have worked on the confessionals. Then I also went in there on a Saturday on Father Pawlewicz's request when they were laying the tile before the pews were laid into the church. I was asked to sit down and watch to see if there were any gaps. I marked a couple spots where the tile didn't fit right.

H: Can you give me some of the other men in the parish that helped work beside Mr. Shirilla?

M: Mr. Pletchnik did a lot of the work. He is deceased now too.

H: How about some of the men that would still be alive then?

M: Mr. Baski, Paul Cutchick.

H: Did any of the Ohlin's work?

M: The Ohlin's worked; almost all of them worked. All of the Ohlin brothers helped out.

H: How about the Hucko's?

M: The Hucko's worked at it too. John Hucko worked at it. We worked at different times. I worked more or less with Steve Shirilla because he is the one who built my house here.

H: A lot of the work on the construction of the parish was done by the parishioners?

M: Yes, all of the inside, the confessionals, the main altar, the canopy over top of the altar was all done by the parishioners.

H: Do you remember when they broke ground? Around when did they break ground?

M: I don't know the exact date. I would have to look that up in my book.

H: When the church was being completed and finally went into a completed church, what type of impression did it have on you?

M: I was very happy that we could have a church that we could call our own in this area. It just made us feel good because the organizations when we started . . . We had a men's club and it wasn't too long before we had fifteen, sixteen, or seventeen members to call a men's club. We had dances. We raised money to help pay for the different articles in the church and different things that we needed. We needed chalices for the church. We raised money through the dances. A short while later we figured that a men's club was mostly like a social club. We wanted to get into a little more of the church things, so we organized the Holy Name Society.

H: Could you tell me some of the people who were involved with that besides yourself?

M: Again, Steve Shirilla was president of the Holy Name Society. The Rutana's were involved with the Holy Name Society. Mr. Bair was a member of the Society. The Hucko's, Stanley Hucko, the Savaet's, there were quite a few involved.

H: When did the Holy Name Society disband?

M: I don't remember. They disfigured . . . It really wasn't disbanded by the men. I hate to say it this way. The priest at that time, our pastor, which was Father Haidet, didn't think that the Holy Name Society was going anywhere. Something different had to become of it. I'm not sure. When that was disbanded I think a bus club was formed. I didn't take part in that.

- H: Mickey Burke was telling me that the people who wanted to send their kids to Holy Family or to Cardinal Mooney . . .
- M: The joined the bus club. It was like a social club for them. It was just more or less . . . We kind of fell away, which hurt me. It kind of fell away to me. We went as a body, at least fifteen men. We sat in the front pew at the church. We went to communion as a group together. We said our Holy Name prayers. It just made me feel good, the religious aspect of it.
- H: The Holy Name Society that we are talking about, how often did you have meetings?
- M: We had a meeting once a month.
- H: Did you serve as any functionary duties for the church or did you put on any dances or anything like that?
- M: We put on several things. One year I can recollect that for the members and the people of the church that were sports-minded, we had a film. We picked up a film, a series of films, on four years of professional football, dating way back. We had about fifty or sixty people who came to see that. It lasted for about three hours. It was of all programs from way back.
- H: Where did you hold your meetings at?
- M: In the church basement.
- H: How much has the church changed since it was constructed about thirty-one years ago? How is it different today than it was thirty-one years ago?
- M: The church is different today. We don't have Latin anymore. We have everything in English. I guess they are trying to get more people to participate in the mass together.
- H: How about the physical changes though?
- M: Not really. I mean I don't see where . . .
- H: I know when it was first built, there were murals. What were the murals?
- M: There were murals. That was one thing that bothered a lot of people. Right in the center in the church right on top there was a big eye. It stared at the people. As far as the other decorations, I thought they were beautiful. Most of the statues have been taken out of the church. I think that is a symbol of something. I am still going back to the old thing. I love the statues. The vigil light, we have a big

- vigil light in church, but they took the small ones out to modernize it. The change I do like is the priest coming forward now. I like the altar changed the other way. Before we switched I sang in the choir and we sang four different Latin masses. Of course I understood what I was singing, because our English was right underneath the Latin when we were singing it. I think more people can understand better now.
- H: You think when Vatican II took place in the mid 1960's that it was . . .
- M: I think that more people can understand what the mass is about now. I don't think a lot of people understood the Latin; it was all done in Latin. They knew what the gestures and everything were, but didn't realize what the prayers were like the "Our Father"; now it is said in English. I think more people are beginning to understand it more.
- H: It has been twenty years now. I can even recall myself as an altar boy in the pre-English days and the Latin mass. I was young enough that the change wasn't upsetting. I know a lot of people thought it was an upsetting thing.
- M: We had a beautiful turnout for each choir practice on Monday nights. Believe it or not our first organ was a little pump organ. I think they paid two hundred and some dollars for it. You had to pump it to play it.
- H: You talk about choir, so let's go back to it.
- M: All right. Betty Baroschak, let her soul rest in peace, she was our organist. She was one heck of an inspirer because if two people would not come to choir practice, she would go down to the phone and call the house up and ask them why they weren't there. We sang in three parts. Our choir was all men. It was an all men choir.
- H: Who were your choir directors over the years?
- M: Johnny Brentin was our choir director.
- H: Can you name some of the other men who were in the choir?
- M: Jim Baski, Paul Cutchick, Paul Cherniga, Mr. Pletnick, Mickey Burke, Richard Billock, and Johnny Brentin was our director
- H: When and where did you have your practices?
- M: We had our practices upstairs in the choir loft up there when we got to swinging. When we first started when we had our first mass, it was just like a grab bag. "Do you want to sing in the choir?" "Hey, do you want to sing for

our first mass?" I said, "Yes, I will sing." I don't remember all of the men, but I think that we had five or six people. Mrs. Billock was our first organist. She played that little pump organ. She had it down in the school. She played the organ for us.

H: When did the male choir disband?

M: It disbanded about the second mass of the new type of English mass for the simple reason that our voices somehow did not blend with the women's voices. We have tried it a couple of times, but it just didn't fan out, so . . .

H: The Latin was a lot better?

M: The Latin was better for us. Our voices were just so used to singing in three parts. Some of the women have real high-pitched voices which there isn't anything wrong with it, but we just had all of those voices. We just couldn't latch onto it and slowly one by one the men . . . It had become an all women's choir for the longest time until a few of the men jumped in there. I guess that we don't have a choir now, do we?

H: Right now we don't ever since we lost our prior organist. I don't know whether our new organist is going to get one organized or not.

At the 10:30 mass two Sundays ago we didn't have an organist. But we sang and it was beautiful. The people out here can be proud of themselves for that fact that they . . .

M: I was at that mass.

H: It sent chills up and down when you realize that the people can do it and you don't need the organist there. It was really an enjoyable mass because there was a lot of veneration done by the singing.

M: It does. It brings out something.

H: You were talking about fund raising. What other things do you recall that they did for fund raising besides the dances?

M: It was always like anything else. It was extra collections in the basket. As far as other things, I did not . . . I missed one great thing. There were four of us that started the first bingo that we ever held in the church. Stanley Rutana was the chairman. He was the head man. Myself, Mr. Savaet, and a couple of others . . .

H: Can you remember what year the first bingo was?

M: I can't even recall.

H: Was the church done yet or not?

M: Oh, yes, the church was done. Steve Shirilla, Stanley Rutana and quite a few others were in there. Savaet, later on, I just don't know when it happened, but I think . . . Who is that, your uncle?

H: Yes, my uncle Cy.

M: He worked at bingo. He called at bingo. I have something else I want to put in there. I worked at bingo for the longest time. I got sick there. I had an operation on my feet and couldn't go for awhile. In that length of time, bingo changed a little bit. I did have a very important job. I always sold the master card. I could sit down and sell the master card to the people. I went back down after my feet healed a little bit. I figured I had a job and I went behind and started selling master cards. I don't recall who was head of the bingo. They said we pay the people now to work at bingo. I said, "My work will all be donated. I do not wish to get paid for working here. I am going to sell master cards because I cannot walk around these tables here." They said, "We already have somebody to sell master cards." That ended my days at the bingo.

H: Going back to when they first got started, what type of people came to the bingo?

M: Bingo was a pretty wild thing. That was something new in this area for the church. We might have had twenty-five or thirty people. As a matter of fact, we got money from the church to start off with. For the first four times, we went in the hole. We lost money because it wasn't publicized enough that we were having bingo down there. I think within six months, we were making \$300 or \$400 clear money.

H: Did you have a regular crowd then?

M: The crowd started picking up from Bessemer. The Bessemer people would come regularly. We had quite a few people come.

H: Were they a mixture of men and women?

M: Yes, it was a mixture of men and women. They weren't even all Catholic. A lot of them were people who played bingo elsewhere and found out . . .

H: I will ask a sticky question here. Do you consider bingo gambling?

- M: Right now, my definition of bingo . . . I am like some other people even though I did start it. I don't believe after thinking things out that bingo should be a source of church function. I really look down deep--even though I was one of the originals. I think a lot of people question us about having bingo. I know a lot of people come, but it is a big question why a church has to have bingo in order to survive.
- H: I was just wondering about that. Since we are talking about organizations, were there any other organizations that you were involved with besides bingo, Holy Name, and choir?
- M: Not really.
- H: Do you recall some of the other organizations that were in existence back then?
- M: Of course, you had your Altar Society. It was an Altar Guild. It was called Altar Rosary Society at that time. The Holy Name Society and the Altar Rosary Society kind of worked together on different things. As a matter of fact, the two of us got together when we chipped in. We bought most of the equipment to furnish the kitchen downstairs. We also bought I don't know how many original tablesthat went in there. We also bought a 16mm sound camera. I don't know if the church still has that or not.
- H: I know since I have been there, they have had a couple of movies for the kids, but I don't know if they still have it.
- M: We had a sound projector there. We had paid \$300 for it with the money that the Altar Society and Holy Name Society made. We used to clear money at those dances. A lot of people would go to those dances. We had top notch-bands; like at that time it was Steve Garchar. We had some pretty good bands going up there. Of course, we had our own there. We made money. We bought our own stuff. We made good money on our dances.
- H: I think today you don't have something like that and a lot of people in the parish . . . I think you need something first to serve as a social club function.
- M: We have that picnic.
- H: The family picnic?
- M: The family picnic.
- H: That is about it, right?

- M: Even here a few years ago when the Tonya's were here, they played in a garage and the people danced at our picnics. People would dance right out in front of the garage. We had a ball. I don't see anything wrong in it. Some of the parishioners might be against it, but I don't see anything wrong with holding a polka dance in a church basement. I don't see anything wrong with it, but a lot of people are against it.
- H: I think at bingo there, you sure could have a dance.
- M: That is right. I think that would bring . . .
- H: They open it up to weddings and stuff like that.
- M: That is where we are missing the boat on a lot of functions. Of course, you have the bus club, the boosters club. They sponsor dinners and bake sales and stuff like that. I think that if somebody would try to sponsor something other than that, I think it would be a pretty good fund raiser.
- H: Going back to the beginning of the church, can you recall what the mass schedule was back when it started?
- M: We had mass at 6:00 in the morning.
- H: Was that the daily mass?
- M: It was 6:00, 9:00, and 12:00. I think they had three masses. We had none on Saturday.
- H: This is post-Vatican?
- M: I'm pretty sure that is was 6:00, 9:00, and 12:00, three masses.
- H: How about daily mass once the church was built? Do you remember when the daily mass was held?
- M: I don't know because I didn't go to any of the daily masses.
- H: In the old days, it used to be at 6:00 or 6:30 in the morning because of the working man. Today they have it at 8:00 a.m. for anyone who works . . .
- M: I used to work different turns. I worked nights before and there were mornings that I did get to 8:00 church. When the church first started, I really couldn't remember because I really didn't get to any of the services other than . . .
- H: Did you go to the first midnight mass here?
- M: Yes, I did.

H: Did the choir sing?

M: Oh, yes. We sang. We sang in Latin. For the first years as long as we had our choir, we sang at midnight mass; we sang Latin mass.

H: Going back to the church here again and looking at the pastors, could you give me your impression of what Father Pawlewicz was like?

M: Father Pawlewicz was a determined man. What he wanted to do, he put his foot down and it was done. Off the record, Father Pawlewicz had a little problem. I don't know whether I am allowed to reveal this on the tape or not.

H: It's okay.

M: Father Pawlewicz was an alcoholic. He ran his car into the ditch many times. People bailed him out. As far as . . .

H: That is something that I think goes with the profession.

M: He had a rough job. As a whole, Father Pawlewicz was conscientious about his parishioners. He got together with the parishioners. He was very good. They liked him. He was the demanding pastor; he had something to say from the pulpit. If he didn't think things were going right, or he didn't think his collections were coming around right, he would come right out and tell the people that we have a parish here to run. He was a determined person. I give him full credit of what we are today. He built us.

H: He was a traditionalist.

M: He was a traditionalist. That is right.

H: What were his sermons like?

M: He was not a very good speaker. He couldn't ad lib anything in between. His sermons revolved on the lessons for the day, the gospel and he would read almost all of his sermons right from . . . He could never make up his own speech. It was always right from the text.

H: As a pastor, would he get up on the pulpit and ask for money if it was needed?

M: Oh, he would ask for it. He would tell the people that if he didn't get enough he would make sure that the people . . .

H: Going back to those days, do you know what the collections were like? How much would you say? Did they publish it in the bulletins back then?

M: No, not really. They never published it until Father Haidet came to the church. That was when there was a problem. That was a big problem there because he hurt a lot of the people over collections. As a matter of fact, I am one person that got a letter through the mail that told me that I was not giving my fair share. "Dear Parishioner," is what it said. I had just gotten married and it was kind of rough for me. I built a house. I was paying for my house. When I got that letter, I didn't feel too good. I jumped in my car and went down to the rectory. I said, "Father, how do you know what my fair share is to give?" I explained to him that if I ever got a letter like that again. . . I said I didn't think that was the way the Catholic church operated. He right away informed me that it wasn't meant for me, it was meant for people who weren't giving anything. I said, "Father, that was addressed to my house. My address was on it. I was included on it." He apologized to me because at the time I figured that I was giving my fair share.

H: Did they ever publish what people gave?

M: Father Haidet did publish it in the bulletin, what the people gave. The people were really perturbed over it because they did not like . . . Some of the parishioners even though they were parishioners they were putting in cash money. They didn't want to reveal what they were . . . They were putting in cash money instead of using an envelope and putting in cash money. Of course, when the names appeared on there, their names did not appear and you could imagine what hurt that was. How do you know what I am giving? What if I don't want you to know? I don't want my name published in it. They had their list of the names of the parishioners at that time and when it came to that person's name, it was zero. It hurt.

H: Can you recall when Father Pawlewicz died?

M: I went to his funeral, but I don't recall the year . . .

H: Was it in the early 1960's?

M: It was about that, in the 1960's. As a matter of fact, I tried to find a paper; I will find it yet. It is brown and tattered. It is made up like the Vindicator. I don't know if they have a copy of that at the church.

H: I will have to check in the archives. Getting back now to Father Haidet, what was he like as a pastor?

M: I don't think he pleased too many people in our parish. Myself, after the session about the money when I went to him, that is as far as it went. I respected him because

he was the pastor of my church. As a person, I didn't feel . . . As a pastor and being a Catholic, I respected him for his collar.

H: What were his sermons like?

M: His sermons were pretty good. He would go off the beat. He would ad lib. He would take different things from the newspaper that pertained to certain parts of the religious aspect and bring it up. He has very good sermons, I would have to say that. His sermons held you. You wouldn't go to sleep on his sermons.

H: Since he was pastor when Vatican II came in the mid-1960's, did he or the church do much in pre-educating the people about the changes?

M: Not really, not at the time. He would mention the few things but it wasn't stressed like it is today where the priest would take certain parts and read it to you that you would understand.

H: After Father Haidet, you had Father Bissler. What was he like?

M: Father Bissler was like a sportsman. He was a sportsman. He was a Notre Dame man. His weekends were spent away. It was more away than what it was here. My involvement with Father Bissler, in my second marriage, he married me. When I had problems I always thought that you could go to your priest and discuss your problems and he would help you. I had no help. I had no help from my church when it came to my problems. I had to go to the diocese and I had to talk to a man--I don't know whether you know him or not--Father Susko.

H: I don't know Father Susko.

M: He is director of St. Columbus. He more or less pulled me under his wing. As you know, I got a divorce and when you are divorced you are almost automatically disembarked from the church. He took me under his wing and pulled me together.

H: How about Father Bissler's sermons?

M: They were almost like Father Haidet's. They were read from the book, taking a few words from the scripture; these are from the gospel or from the lessons, one of two of the lessons. It was mostly the same thing all of the time.

H: Ralph Bair said he tended to have pretty fast sermons. They only lasted for ten minutes. That is all it was. At 9:30,

- we were out of church. That is a far cry from today.
- M: That is for sure.
- H: Getting to Father O'Neill, what was he like?
- M: Father O'Neill was a very dedicated man, I think. He had a problem too. Again, his sermons weren't . . . It wouldn't hold. That man had a heart of gold. He loved his people. As a speaker and as a . . . He was a very dedicated man to St. Vincent De Paul. He believed in charity. He believed in helping people out. That was his biggest thing. He loved to help people out.
- H: Each pastor obviously had different strong points and weak points. I only know that Father Brobst has been here only for a little bit so it is very hard to evaluate him.
- M: Father Brobst . . . Most people are not in the situation that I am here with my mom. I have my mom here. I think that if it wasn't for Father Brobst and of course my wife . . . I think Father Brobst has pushed her up 100%. There is only my wife and myself; we just love Father Brobst.
- H: I like him too.
- M: His sermons are very educational. He brings it out to the people. He comes to the point. If he wants something, he comes to the point. You don't go to sleep with him either. He keeps my attention at every sermon. I like the way he comes to the front. It is beautiful. Our family right here thinks that Father Brobst is something else.
- H: He leaves you with a message. That is one thing that I like about his sermons. You leave there thinking.
- M: I think he holds the younger generation a little bit more. I have been going to church for quite a few years with these different priests that we have had. You could see the young kids half the time looking around. I know you shouldn't look around in church, but sometimes I did. The younger generation is wide awake. They listen to him.
- H: Looking over the last thirty years then, how has St. Paul changed in your eyes?
- M: We have grown. In the first place, we have a heck of a lot more parishioners. There are parishioners that I don't even know anymore. We used to know everybody. We went to church before and we used to know everyone. We would meet down at the hall for different things. Every Sunday . . . The only thing I have right now against our church is like in the summertime, nobody seems to want to . . . That might be

the trend all over. I don't know. Nobody wants to stay and converse anymore. Mass is over and everybody just more or less rushes to their car. They don't want to have any fellowship. Our church has gotten away from that. I do like the priest standing outside. That kind of holds back things a little bit where people are standing there. They even communicate in church a little bit because they are standing in line waiting to shake his hand after the end of the mass. I think that is good, very good.

As far as communications, I think that we have a lot to go because I think anymore . . . this is just my theory now. This club like the boosters club, they have their own clique. I would like the church to get away from these individual cliques like the bus club. That was an individual thing. Nobody knew what was going on, the parishioners. It was just an individual thing. I would like to see more ecumenical things going on with the whole body of the church like we have on Thanksgiving. We have that . . .

H: Ecumenical service.

M: Ecumenical service. I think that is great to mingle with other churches. That is beautiful.

H: You are aware of the fact that they are talking about renovating the church. I know when and if the changes . . . One of the changes that they would like to see is in the back to make more open space there so that you would have an area for people to lounge around after mass. If you wanted to talk. That is a point that you definitely made that it doesn't take place enough.

M: I heard another point, but I don't know how true it is. I think just like anybody else that your singing the music should be all together.

H: That is what they would like to do.

M: I heard that was another thing. They would like to bring the organ down front because in most places anymore that is where the organ is, down in the front, where the people can see what is going on.

H: It would be part of it more.

M: I think so.

H: That is a change that they are looking at, trying to get a vestibule area where the old baptismal pot is at, break that down and get glass on the front part so you can just look out. It is something, as you have pointed out, we have somewhat gotten away from after mass. It is get out of

there and go do your thing instead of . . .

M: There are a few people that converse and talk. We stop. I tell you, I'm not the one to point on different people; I am guilty of some of that myself.

H: I think we all do at times.

M: If I see some of the parishioners like Mickey Burke at the other end of the church I yell, "Hi, Mickey," or sometimes he will stop and we will converse with some of the old people. I think that we need more of that.

H: That is a change that you would like to see?

M: I would like that.

H: You mentioned the young kids. Do you think the young kids are becoming more positive about church today?

M: To my estimation, they have to bring a little bit more in for the kids than just CCD. They have to bring some kind of a social thing for the kids which would be down in the basement, something to bring the kids together and show them that it is not just all . . . You can't pump these young kids anymore the way life has changed and the mass has changed to English. You have to come with the changes with the kids a little bit too. They have to have some kind of social thing going for those kids and get them off the street and show them that there is something there for them.

H: Looking here at the book, here is the framework.

M: Yes, there is the framework. I watched that go up.

H: Can you identify some of the men in the men's society?

M: There is Paul Cutchik; he was the president. There is Paul Cherniga. There is one of our faithful ushers there, George Zipkovish. If I am not mistaken, this is the one that sells pirogi's down there. What is his name? Comerford. That is me.

H: Can you help me on the ushers in that picture?

M: Yes. That is Jim Baski. There is John Yasechko. There is Paul Cutchik, Steve Shirilla, Savaet, Mr. Bair. I know a lot of faces, but I can't remember their names.

Here are your first councilmen. That was Steve Shirilla, Richard Billock, Stanley Rutana, and Mickey Burke. That was our first council that we had.

H: Were any of your kids in any of these?

M: I think my kids . . . Some of them are here. I don't know which one it was though.

H: How about the Altar Rosary Guild there? Can you help me out with some names there?

M: Helen Baski is there. I know that. This is Hucko, Tommy Hucko's wife. This is Mrs. Masick here. This is Helen Shirilla. This is Mrs. Lyda here.

H: Here is an old society we don't have anymore, Holy Name Society.

M: Here were our officers of the Holy Name Society. Here is the Holy Name Society at that time. This is the full group. It is mostly made out of the same people that . . . It was the same amount of people: Stanley Rutana, Steve Shirilla, Marty Ohlin, Ralph Bair, Mickey Burke, Cutchik, Jim Baski, Joe Savaet, Richard Billock and Frank Slauser. He is not with us.

H: You are that good-looking guy in the middle, huh?

M: Yes. We all wore bow ties. It wasn't neckties; it was bow ties.

H: I know in the Vatican II Liturgy the church changes that they called for, they are not trying to do away with statues per se, but they want to get them removed from the altar area and have like shrines within the church. If people wanted to come in away from the altar and just say your prayers . . . They are trying to get the focal point of the altar to have three things: the altar of sacrifice, the ambo or the pulpit, and the presider's chair. They want to get even the tabernacle moved to a special place for veneration also. That is what the Vatican II changes called for.

I know you said you were an altar boy. Do you remember benediction?

M: Oh, yes.

H: That is a beautiful service. We have done almost completely away from that.

M: There are some things that I kind of miss. That change I don't like because I thought benediction was beautiful.

H: What do you think of the Pope's decision to allow an occasional Latin mass?

M: I think that is all right. Again, the Latin mass, the younger generation if they did go to that mass, they wouldn't understand it.

H: Do you think they would if there was an education process so that they could be aware of their past heritage?

M: That would be something good. I'll tell you what I went out and did. I really missed the Latin mass so one day I was browsing at the mall at that Catholic place there. I saw an album which is priceless right now. You can't even get it anymore. I have the High Mass in Latin on two sides of a record. I play that. Everything is in Latin, the singing, the "Our Father". It is all in Latin.

H: I think it would be nice to have again occasionally. I think youngsters . . . The mystic and beauty would be nice to have again.

Is there anything else that you could add, John?

M: I am really grateful to take part in this. It really shows that somebody like you is interested in doing something like this. I think the future generations have to hear what this is all about in years to come. When this is done, I think it will be a thing of history like any other historical thing.

H: I would like to thank you for your time. If you ever have any recall on any other things that you would like to add or any tidbits about the church's past, feel free to get in touch with me.

M: I will try to find this dedication paper. If I find it and you can't find it anywhere else, I will make sure that you get it and you can make a copy of it.

H: Fine. That would be good to have in the church's archives and stuff like that. That is one of the major goals here to keep our tradition.

Offhand, are there any whimsical or embarrassing moments about the church, any funny things or on the lighter side . . .

M: Not really, outside of somebody telling me I wasn't giving my fair share among the collection baskets. Outside of that, I am pretty well satisfied.

H: I was talking with Ralph Bair the other night. He mentioned the dress of people in the 1960's. We talked about the hats and the ladies. That was such a common thing.

M: Yes, the hats were common.

H: Now today when you go to mass and you see somebody with a hat, it really sticks out where in the old days it was a great commong thing.

END OF INTERVIEW