

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

St. Nicholas Byzantine Catholic Church Project

Parishioner Experiences

O. H. 527

JOSEPH KENNETH GRAN

Interviewed

by

Mary Lou Shirilla

on

November 20, 1986

J. KENNETH GRAN

Joseph Kenneth Gran was born Joseph Garancovsky on November 8, 1925. He was the only child of Nicholas and Mary (Biros) Garancovsky. His father died in 1928, and his mother remarried Michael Kol in 1934. He has several half brothers and a half sister.

He attended Campbell Memorial High School, graduating in 1943. He served in the U.S. Army Air Force, 1943-1948. It was during this time that he legally changed his last name from Garancovsky to Gran.

Upon discharge from the service, he became an usher at the Palace Theater in downtown Youngstown. This led him to organize a band in which he played the saxophone. He called the band "Music with a Different Slant, by Kenny Grant". In 1947, he became a press agent and talent scout for Horace Heidt, and toured nationally with him for four years. During this time, they discovered in New Orleans a new trumpet talent, Al Hirt.

Mr. Gran decided to legally add Kenneth to his name when he became known as Kenny to those who knew him through the band.

He married Mildred Holecko on September 26, 1953. They have three children: Mrs. Karen Ann Torba; Mrs. Debra Maries Gratz; and Kenneth Joseph Gran.

In June 1958, Mr. Gran received an Associate in Business Administration degree from Youngstown University. He received

a B.S. in Business Administration degree (cum laude) in 1959, also from Youngstown University. He attended Kent State University in the 1960's, participating in their MBA program.

From 1960-1978, he was a limited service faculty member in the School of Business, Youngstown State University. From 1966-1974, he worked in Youngstown city government. From 1974-1978, he was employed by the State of Ohio Auditor's Office. And from 1978-1985, he again worked in city government, Youngstown, Ohio. Presently, he is employed by the Mahoning County Commissioners' Office.

Mr. Gran has received numerous awards, including: Knights of Columbus Hall of Fame, Knights of Columbus Past Grand Knight Award, St. Nicholas Byzantine Man of the Year Award.

He was the first president of St. Nicholas Byzantine Men's Association (BMA), serving in that capacity for seven years. He is a member of Knights of Columbus Campbell Marian Council #383, John J. Buckley Catholic War Veterans, Amvets Post #44, Ohio Township Association, Lions Club of downtown Youngstown.

His special interests include golfing, travel, and "big band" music.

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INTERVIEWEE: JOSEPH KENNETH GRAN

INTERVIEWER: Mary Lou Shirilla

SUBJECT: Hazeltøn neighborhood, Big Band Era, Organizations,
Individuals

DATE: November 20, 1986

S: This is an interview with Mr. J. Kenneth Gran for the Youngstown State University Oral History Program, on the history of St. Nicholas Byzantine Catholic Church, by Mary Lou Shirilla, at the parish house, 1898 Wilson Avenue, Youngstown, Ohio, on November 20, 1986, at 7:00 p.m.

Mr. Gran, before we begin talking about yourself, can you give me some background about your family?

G: The name today is G-R-A-N, but I was born Joseph Garancovsky. I was born in 1925, and I was baptized in that same year and also confirmed as Byzantine Catholics are at the same time. In 1935, I received my First Holy Communion at this parish. My parents . . . My father passed away in 1928. His name was Nicholas Barancovsky. He was married to . . . My mother's maiden name was Mary Biros. My mother stayed a widow for about six years. She remarried in 1934. She married my present stepfather Michael Kol. Of course, I have been blessed with . . . I didn't have any brothers and sisters, as I was the only son of a steelworker parent, but I have three half brothers and I had two half sisters. One of the half sisters passed away just last year.

I have memories of the church in my early childhood. I used to live not too far away from here. In fact when I was born, I was born one block away from here on Montgomery Avenue at 19 North Montgomery Avenue. We stayed in the immediate area . . . what is affectionately known as the Hazelton area. We moved when my mother remarried from Center Street--we used to live on Center Street--to the first street as you go into Campbell which is Palmer

Avenue. That is two blocks away from the church. So all of my going to and from church was walking. I never drove an automobile to go to church or rode in an automobile or trolley to go to church. All we did was walk to church.

Actually, during the times of the early Depression, I can remember a lot of memories here in the parish. For what it is worth, I never knew there were so many ways to make potatoes. My mother had so many recipes for making potatoes, but there are a lot of memories here at the church. Of course, when I was born, the church organization was already thirteen years old. This present edifice that we have today was six years old. It was built in 1919. My mother is still living. My father passed away, but my stepfather is still living. My mother is eighty-four now, and my stepfather is eighty-two. The others have relocated from this area except for two. I have a half sister who goes to the parish yet, Martha and Jack Kaschak, with a half brother John living in Campbell. They are the only persons who are here now of the particular family. The others are in Arizona or other parts of the country, but I'm still a member here at this parish as is my family. My children married into the Roman rite. They go to Roman rite parishes, but they have some fond memories of St. Nicholas Church.

S: Going back to your own childhood then you lived right here in the neighborhood. Can you tell me a little bit more about that? Who were some of the neighbors? Were they mostly parishioners also?

G: Well, you have names like Garancovsky; there were quite a few families. You had the Kohl family; you had the Bednar family; you had the Sharshan family. Just to mention a few more, you had the Fuzer family, Vanatsky, Viable, Haladay; just to mention a few, Barolak family on Hazelton here. These were all young people I grew up with and also the Planey's. Many of the Planey family are still here. Of course, the Backus' and I'm trying to think of some of the others like the Pyatak's and Pollock's. We had a lot of comradeship.

I was a member of the catechism classes where I can remember we used to come down and play underneath the church. For a short time we even had catechism across the street at what they called the Old Hall, or the first church that we ever had. Cantor John Horvath was one dynamic person who had a lot of influence on my life from the standpoint of Byzantine tradition and Byzantine teachings. He was my catechism instructor. Of course, if you didn't get your lessons or do your lessons and you were terrible or

bad in the catechism class, you had to spend some time kneeling on a few ashes or stones in order to rub on your knees. But they weren't that severe as far as penalties are concerned.

I can remember a lot of the teachings as far as the catechism classes. I can still speak very fluent Rusin or Slovak as they refer to it even to this day and understand it fully. In those days we didn't speak too much English especially at home or even in church. In the beginning of the church it was mostly Rusin, as they refer to it.

I can relate to a lot of weddings, a lot of functions, and socials across the street. We used to have picnics. I can remember going to picnics where they were held at the Blasko property over on Starr Street or the Geletka property on Cortland Avenue, and we had picnics at the Olenick farm. I can still remember the first Russian Day or Rusin Day they called it at Idora Park. When I was a youngster, I used to look forward to that because it was an all day affair. Those are some of the pleasant memories of my childhood.

I can remember the hard times too. I can remember when you paid 10¢ for a loaf of rye bread at the Isaly or Schwebel Baking Company which used to be located on Lawrence Street. I can also remember the Home Bakery right here on Wilson Avenue. The Manos family used to run it. I can remember the Isaly location which was next to the Hazelton Post Office down on Wilson Avenue where you could buy a skyscraper ice cream cone for 5¢. I can also remember, selling on weekends a bus pass for 10¢ on a Saturday or 5¢ because it was \$1 for the whole week. I used to look forward to picking up a few nickels on a Saturday evening. These are all memories of Hazelton.

The Hazelton Confectionery which was run by Hector Haydus and Nick--I can't think of his last name, but he was the last owner of the building on the corner here near our church property-- these are memories of Hazelton area and the church area and the good times we had in the basement of the church when I was a Boy Scout there of Troop #53. Our first scoutmasters were Joe Hallas and Steve Truhan of our parish. We used to have scouting classes on the dirt floor of the church basement. So those are some memories I have had in my youth about the parish. There was a lot of warmth and a lot of love amongst the parishioners.

S: You emphasize that this is the Hazelton area. There was a Hazeltine family here originally, right?

- G: Right, the Hazeltine family owned the property where the church is located now. Of course, that was purchased in 1918, if my memory serves me correctly, for the fabulous price of \$15,000. I can't remember. The parish purchased the property. Of course, they built the church in 1919. I don't know whether you know this, but this church was patterned after the church in Czechoslovakia that was the cathedral church which they called Uzhorod. Our first priest of that particular parish was in 1914; I think it was Father Papp. He came, and after him came Father Lipecky. But these are some of the memories that I have. I don't remember these priests. The first priest that I remember in the parish by name was Father John Krusko; he was the first priest I remember as being a part of the parish.
- S: From your memories.
- G: From my early days, right. I don't remember Father Papp or any of those others.
- S: I'm going to get off the subject of your own personal memories for a little bit. I want to ask you about the research that you did as part of the fifty year celebration of the parish. I know you did a lot of it in conjunction with putting together the Jubilee book. I was wondering if there was anything you could tell me now that you came up with at that time?
- G: Again, thanks to the blessed memory of Father John, young Father John W.--because I distinguish the both of them; one was Father John W., and his father was John S. I was on the program committee with some of our other leaders of the parish who were here at the time such as Nick Fabian, some of the earlier parishioners, Al Vrable. We worked on this program book with Father Rommack. Just for my own sake, I learned quite a bit about my parish before I was born. During my early years, realizing that our people in the early 1900's used to, of all things, either take a trolley or walk to the west side, which was St. Mary's on the westside. If you had a large family, it was very expensive to ride the trolley; so they used to walk back and forth to church. Organizers of the church in conjunction with Father Medvecky, who was the pastor of St. Mary's at the time, had their first fund raiser. I think they raised \$60 from what I learned. The enthusiasm was high, and, of course, the new parish was organized in January 7, on Christmas Day of the old Julian calendar of 1912. Later on in 1912, they purchased a building. If you have a congregation, you must have a parish, I mean a church. So the parish had to have a church, and they purchased a Swedish congregation church across the street which used to be our hall which is now owned

by a painting contractor. We purchased that church, and the first pastor of our church was Reverend Alexander Kossey. Alexander Papp came after him and Basil Lipecky, and as I mentioned John Krusko was the one I remembered, and after them came Father Shabow and Father John S. Rommack.

The cemetery that we own on Hyatt Street, which used to be East Youngstown, Ohio which is now Campbell, was purchased in 1914. Father Papp made that purchase. We built the church that now is on Hazeltine property in the year 1919. We had some trying times as we faced reality; in 1929 we had the crash and the Depression. We were able to weather the storm so to speak. Today I think we are in fairly good financial status.

S: I think so too.

G: But there are memories also in the 1930's where we had some conservatism versus liberalism in the church and the so-called controversial English mass and English sermon. Father John S. Rommack in 1932 gave the first English sermon in our church. Of course, we started catechism in English then at the same time. We used to have it "Po Nasumo". I can remember a song very vividly; if I may?

S: Go ahead.

G: I sang it when we honored Cantor Horvath. This was a song he taught us. "Mumko; Mumko!" That is the memory I have from Cantor Horvath. It was just to learn how to sing in our language. He taught that with that ticker that they had as far as the timing is concerned. Of course . . . the high mass we have now is in Rusin or "Po Nasumo" and; of course, the English mass which we have is at 5:15 and also at 11:00 a.m. the low mass on Sundays.

Another thing that was controversial in our parish in 1946 . . . We made the drastic change of going from a January 7 Christmas to December 25. I think it was a very good move to this day. It was controversial. It was very difficult to explain to people sometimes. How can you be a Greek Catholic when you don't speak Greek? We changed that to Byzantine Catholic at the same time.

S: Oh, that same year that you changed the calendar?

G: Yes, we went from Julian calendar to the Gregorian calendar. I think that was a wise change. Since that time I think our church has prospered. We have made some purchases. Father Rommack had the wisdom and the foresight, I guess to someday build maybe for a church or maybe a school or a hall. We

purchased some property on Shady Run Road which is today known as Shady Run Road. That was in 1937. In 1938 we purchased these three lots on this side of us. That was supposed to be a school that we envisioned across the street from Hazelton Motors for the church. That was Father Rommack's dream, but that never materialized. We were negotiating with some nuns to take over that particular school. That lingered so long that we lost out. Then in 1940, we remodeled the basement of the church. We sold the hall across the street. I think we got \$15,000 for it. The people had it for a while and after they bought it from us, G&G Contracting, or whatever they were . . . we built some other stuff, for example, around here which . . . We now have a parking lot beside the church.

Our parish got to the point where Father Rommack still had visions of a school. Through the wisdom of Father Rommack and the bishop, they were able to come together with the five parishes and organize and put together and purchase the Ole's estate on Youngstown-Poland Road. I think they purchased it at that time . . . I think they paid \$75,000 for that in 1952. They negotiated with the Sisters of Mary Immaculate to teach, which are still there, and, of course, the school got underway in May 1953.

S: I think that the order of St. Basil is there now.

G: Oh, I thought it was Sister Immaculate. See, that must have changed. That is how much I know about the school since I was there. The first school administrator was appointed in 1955, and that was Father John S. Rommack. Of course, our parish priest, because of the extra duties, needed assistance. So our first assistant pastor or priest that we ever had was Father John Pohorlak, who is now in Newton Falls. He has a parish in Newton Falls at St. Mary's; he is the pastor over there until this day. One month later in 1955, on June 10, after Father Rommack became the administrator at the school, he expired due to a heart attack. He was attending a special event over in Pennsylvania. He had a beautiful last day on earth on account that he was surrounded by priests and bishops. He was a priest for twenty-three years at our parish. His wife Marie Rommack and his sons, John and Gregory and Tom, were all part of the so-called Hazelton family. They were all wonderful people and are still remembered.

S: Sure, I just recently met Mrs. Rommack.

G: Wonderful person.

S: Gracious lady.

G: In fact, she was instrumental.

I've been either a church usher, or a church trustee, or a church collector, or a church sign maker or a church "this" or a church "that" now since I was twelve years old. I just turned sixty-one; so for fifty years, in some capacity, I have been here. There was one point in time where I used to be the church treasurer. It was my duty to count the money and also to write checks. I used to come to the parish house to work with Father Rommack. I was dating my wife in 1952. Of course, in 1953 Father John Rommack married my wife and I on September 26. Mrs. Rommack went through my whole courtship. She has a lot of memories about my courtship.

S: What do you mean?

G: Well, I used to come here and talk about my new . . .

S: Girlfriend.

G: My new girlfriend. She was very pleased; she was very tickled for me, and she was one of my strongest supporters when I got married. To this day, I have a lot of love and affection for her.

S: So do a lot of people I know.

G: Yes. And Father Pohorlak, at that time, was our first assistant pastor. Since that time, I think some of our other assistants that we have had here at the parish were Father Yarnovitz in 1957 and 1959, and we had Father George Lasky in 1959 to 1961; we had Father Leonard Hollick in 1961; we had Father Edward Lucas who was here to 1962. There was another Father Lucas; I can't think of his first name, but he also was here for a short time.

S: Oh, really?

G: After Father Rommack had died we had the likes of Father Lavkolic; we had Father Anthony Koval, and after Father Anthony Koval, we had the now Monsignor Russell Duker. After Monsignor Russell Duker, we had the likes of Father Mihalik. Of course, today we have the infamous Father Dennis M. Bogda, who we all love.

S: You are answering all of my questions for me.

G: Well, I'm just trying to be accommodating.

S: One thing going back to the early days now, somebody mentioned that there was a problem and Father Lipicky

was asked to leave the church. Do you know anything about that.

G: That was before my time, seriously. I wouldn't know if there was any controversy. At one time, they used to have what they called a president of the parish and a vice-president.

S: Yes, and the trustees . . .

G: Well, they were church officers and they used to have elections. These elections were . . . I think, and honor to serve and not to be a demagogue, like some people want to be, once they become power.

S: Right.

G: But that got to be sort of a political thing. It was very special, and it was an honor to serve at the time. Although, I can remember some early days of bickering. Maybe this had to do with something about a presidential election or some officers or some trustees, or maybe it even had something to do with the church calendar, or maybe it has something to do with the fact that the "Holy See" frowned on the ordination of married priests. As a result, a lot of people left the church and went to churches around the corner.

S: Split to the Orthodox.

G: They split to the Orthodox and that was it. I do have something we are blessed with in our parish. We did have, when I was growing up in the 1930's and 1940's, we had six who went to the sisterhood, and we had seven who went to the priesthood. Of course, we had three others at the time who were attending the seminary. So we had somewhere upwards of about sixteen who were in the vocations in this parish.

S: You were blessed.

G: Right.

S: These controversial things such as the celibacy issue and the church trustees controlling the parish and these types of things, we are so far away from that now that some people don't even realize what went on, especially in my age group. Now when you were doing your research twenty-five years ago, was it difficult at that time to even talk about these things with people?

G: No.

S: Was it still a controversy?

G: No, no.

S: No, not then?

G: No, it wasn't then. This was only 1962 when we celebrated our fiftieth anniversary.

S: Right.

G: I will be honest with you.

S: It was all blown over.

G: It was all passe. There is nothing you can do about the past. Actually we were blessed to have the growth that we did have. I think that we didn't have to split because I know some families that did split and became Orthodox especially when we changed the calendar in 1946. We had people get upset about that. We took a vote; it was a vote, and it was voted to change the calendar. I don't think anybody regrets the fact that we have almost everybody just about now who follows that same pattern except for maybe really severe Orthodox and maybe that is about it.

S: When I interviewed Mr. John Kohl, he did tell me that was a close vote when they took it, but it did change over.

G: Yes, well, John too--bless his memory--would have stronger and closer memories to that than I do.

S: I believe he was even president of the congregation that year he said.

G: Was he?

S: I think so.

G: I didn't know that.

S: You said that Cantor Horvath, especially, influenced you in your childhood. Was there anybody else who especially influenced you?

G: Well, there were some church parishioners who I became identified with and worked with very closely. We used to have bazaars, and they used to always lean towards Joe Garancovsky to paint the signs or to make the signs. Edward N. Fiffick--they called him Nick Fiffick--was a strong influence on me. Some of the other parishioners were John Kovalchick who is also of blessed memory. Another gentleman who is now living in retirement in California, or

I should say in Arizona, is Michael Senda. He was a church officer at the time. These fellows were grooming me as I was growing up in the parish. They were there, and, of course, Mr. Haladay who lived right here to the rear of the parish and his wife, Mary Haladay were lovable people, and the Koly and Kohl families; Joe Koly, Andy Kohl and Tony Koly were all strong people for me and, of course, my Uncle John Gran. Of course, my father died in 1928 when I was only three years old. So I don't have too many memories of him, but I do have some memories of some of the other Garancovsky's and the Gran's. Those are some of the ones who had an influence on me. The biggest influence on me was John Horvath as far as one of our parishioners. He was our cantor. I idolized that man. He had a beautiful voice, and he was a very, very affable . . .

S: I saw on your biography sheet that you were in the U.S. Army Air Force.

G: Yes.

S: Can you tell me a little bit about that?

G: 1941 was when we were supposedly in our war effort. In 1943 I graduated from high school in Campbell at Campbell Memorial, and I enlisted in the U.S. Army Air Force. I went to Detroit, Michigan to enlist. We were disappointed as far as getting into the Navy. A very good friend of mine and I who went together, we decided to enlist in the Air Force, since the Navy didn't want us, inasmuch as when I was a youngster, I had put an eraser in my ear. I guess it must have put a mark on my eardrum. I didn't have any difficulty, but I went to the U. S. Army Air Force, and I was passed. Maybe they were in dire need of some recruits. This was in 1943 in November. Just around January 6, I went to the service. I went to what they called the cadet program. I was in the service from 1943 through 1946 when I came back. I never left the country. I was always in training either in electronics or in what they call ground control approach which had to do with guiding airplanes in through what they called zero-zero visibility weather. We were destined to go overseas in 1945. But at that time, V-Day came along, and we had enough people in the group that I was in, that had enough so-called points to be considered for discharge; so they disbanded the group and gave us state-side assignments. I wound up at my last place being Andrews Air Force Base in Washington, D.C. That was my tenure. I came out at a staff sergeant in the U. S. Army Air Force. At that time it was called the U.S. Army Air Force. Today it is called the U. S. Air Force.

S: I see. I wondered what the distinction was there.

G: So I came back in 1946.

S: Then what did you do at that time?

G: In 1946?

S: Yes.

G: Well, I worked here locally for Mr. Nick Fiffick. In fact Nick Fiffick gave me my first job when I came back, at the Lee Tire and Rubber Company. I was the assistant in the office, not a manager but just an assistant, in other words a clerk in the office. I did a lot of building; I did a lot of inventory control work. Then I used to also work as a theater usher at the Palace Theater. I worked there for many years. I got well-acquainted with a lot of stage show people. We had a band of our own in 1946. I played a saxophone.

S: You did?

G: Oh, yes. We were called "Music of a Different Slant, by Kenny Grant." I put a "t" on the end of my last name.

S: Just to rhyme.

G: I will never forget when we were playing at the Cactus Bar on South Avenue which was called the Prairie Room. Of course, we just got the booking because a relative of mine owned the place. I had a sign made; I made it myself, "Music of a Different Slant, by Kenny Grant." This fellow who was slightly inebriated was on the floor with his girlfriend. He looked at my sign, and he was sort of weaving back and forth. He said, "Music of a Different Slant, by Kenny Grant, try to dance to it, and you can't." That was a memory I had of the band. I became press agent and talent scout for--this if before your time young lady--Horace Heidt.

S: Horace Heidt.

G: And His Musical Knights. We used to broadcast nationally on Sunday nights at 10:00 to 10:30. We were sponsored by Philip Morris Cigarettes. My only claim to fame was that I auditioned while I was in New Orleans. We auditioned . . . Not only did we look for talent in places . . . In other words not only amateur talent but professional talent who were being paid but never got national recognition or some kind of exposure for a break.

S: Yes, they weren't well-known yet.

G: We went down to New Orleans. During the whole time I traveled with Horace Heidt I traveled thirty-three states,

all the provinces in Canada, and we were in Europe for two weeks. My only claim to fame as I started to tell you was the fact that we were positioning . . . Not only did we audition in schools or various other places, but we went to night spots at night to look for talent. We went to this place called Eddie's Place on Bourbon Street in New Orleans. There was this trio, a trumpet player, a guitar player, and I think, a piano player. We were impressed by the trumpeter because he used a triple-tongue, and this is what Horace Heidt used to feature in his theme song. So we asked the waitress to have him come over and join us for a drink and we wanted to talk to him after the intermission. He came over and this big fellow sat down in the chair. He introduced himself as Albert Hirt. Needless to say, he didn't win our contest, but Heidt was impressed with him and he asked him to join the band which he did. But he wanted to get home as often as he could because he was the father of six children.

S: Is that right?

G: So when Heidt went into silent retirement in 1950, he got a shot for Al Hirt on Dinah Shore Chevy Show. Do you remember?

S: Sure, I remember her.

G: Since that time he became a national prominent figure in show business, Al Hirt.

S: Oh, that is really neat.

G: He is one of my pride and joys as far as my memories are concerned.

S: How long did you stay with Horace Heidt?

G: Well, I came back in 1951. Of course, almost everybody I had been in contact with around here I had lost contact with because I was gone for four or five years. It was an education, "to say the most" of that experience. When I was an usher at the Palace Theater, I can remember a lot of the big bands that used to come to town. I was familiar with the big band era, and I still have a lot of love and affection. I have a collection of big band cassette tapes and also big band seven inch reel tapes such as Glen Miller, Tommy Dorsey, Jimmy Dorsey, Duke Ellington, Claude Thornhill, which is a name you probably don't remember, Charlie Spivak. There are quite a few, Louie Prima, Stan Kenton, who I also was with for a short time as a publicity man in 1951, also Fred Waring, which I was with him for a short time; he was out of Pennsylvania. He just died here not too long ago. Also one of the big talents we had in the Horace Heidt

show--and he is still living today, but I don't know if he is still performing--was the "Rudoplph Valentino" of the accordion and better known as Dick Contino. He was one of the first talents that won the so-called quarterly contest, and he won the big prize which is on the same level of power as "Star Search" that Ed McMahon has now on television. We weren't on television; we were on radio ever Sunday night on national broadcast from 10:00 to 10:30.

We used to travel throughout the country looking for talent. Horace Heidt used to put these shows on. Then, of course, when he went into retirement, he gave me the choice to either come back to New Castle, Pennsylvania which was my last stop or go to California and that would be it. So I chose the lesser of two evils, and I came back to New Castle. That was my last stop when I came back to Youngstown. That was in 1951. Of course, then shortly after that, two years later, I got married to Mildred Holecko, my wife. We have three children.

S: How did you meet your wife?

G: I only dated my wife on New Year's Eve ironically; that was all.

S: Is that right?

G: That was all. I was introduced to her by a cousin of mine who was a church parishioner here. She is married to Dr. Richley now at the university.

S: Your cousin?

G: Mary Richley, she is married to Dr. Victor Richley. Of course, she is the one who introduced to me my wife because they were girlfriends. They were going to Youngstown College together. I got married in 1953. I finished my degree work in 1956, and also in 1959, I went for my master's over at Kent State at the Kent State program, and in 1960 I taught at Youngstown College and at Youngstown University and then at Youngstown State University until 1978. I was a limited service faculty member in the school of business. From 1960 until 1978 I taught up there for eighteen years in the school of business mostly marketing, sales promotion courses, salesmanship, executive protocol, business letters and reports, insurance, real estate. They are all in the school of business, which I enjoyed immensely.

To this day even . . . Ironically, just two days ago I ran into some of my students. I was over in Canfield at a town hall meeting for a job I identify with now, which is the county commissioners. We had a town hall meeting in Canfield.

Two men in the audience came forward and said, "You know, we had you as an instructor in 1970," or "we had you as an instructor in 1972," was the other one. They still have memories of the class that they related to me.

S: I bet that makes you feel good.

G: It makes you feel good; it makes you really feel good. So I have some pleasant memories of those days.

S: Very good. Just one question going back to your broadcast that you were doing on the Sunday nights. Where was that broadcast from?

G: Usually from a theater.

S: Oh, it was live?

G: It was live like, for example, when we came to Youngstown, we played at the Palace Theater. The broadcast was from the stage of the Palace Theater. Or if we played in New York City, we broadcast from the Capitol Theater on Broadway. Or if we were in Rochester, New York, it was also the Keith-Albee Theater which at that time you had the Keith-Albee chain. or it was the Warner Brothers Theater or something like that. In the summertime if we played engagements, we had what we called units. We played fair dates like they do at the Canfield Fair or any of the other small county fairs that you have throughout the country. But that was not Horace Heidt himself. These are what we called the units that Horace had put together which were called the youth opportunity program winners. He put a show together, and it was called the "Horace Heidt Youth Opportunity Winners". Somebody like Dick Contino would head one up, and maybe Al Hirt would head another one up, and maybe Pat Theriault, a banjo player, would head up another one. We had about fifteen pieces of talent who would go traveling and entertain people. It became professional in that way.

S: It was a good experience then.

G: That was quite an experience. Of course, like I said, when I came back here was when I made up my mind to go back to college and get my degree. Of course, we got married in 1953. I have been in the political arena since 1966.

S: Is that when you started in the mayor's office?

G: No, I started with . . . Yes, it was the mayor's office. But, the mayor at that time was Anthony B. Flask who also is now of blessed memory. I started out as what they called a community renewal program coordinator which was to study the community for the next ten or twenty years as to where

we were going. I will never forget Dr. Bonser, who used to be a student at Wilson High School which was his alma mater, but he was a professor now at Indiana University. They called it the Bonser Report. He made an economic study for us in the community of Youngstown and the greater Youngstown area. Everything that is happening today . . . he predicted.

S: Really?

G: The demise of the steel industry, the deterioration of the central business district, the affluency going out to the suburbs with the suburban shopping centers--which some of them were already in place at the time, but everything he talked about in his report, the Bonser Report, came true. Maybe we didn't have that foresight, and maybe we didn't believe such things as the steel mills closing in 1977. Those are memories that nobody wants to believe, and it is very difficult to believe. It already has been nine years. In fact I know that when I became the water commissioner in 1978, the year before that was when Mayor Hunter had his last year of his term for the city of Youngstown. September 19, 1977 was when they announced the closing of these steel mills. Of course, it was very difficult. Nobody would ever think that the steel mills would ever close in this valley.

It is very difficult even for me to this day to comprehend such a catastrophic deterioration of an industry. Of course, we did rely on one particular industry, and that was steel. Maybe the same thing might happen to us if we don't do something about bringing in smaller industries and diversifying. We always try to preach diversification at that time, but for whatever reasons you had to overcome a lot of political entities. It just made it difficult especially, for what it is worth, when the steel market and the chamber of commerce at that time were steel oriented. Of course, they wanted to keep any and all other industries out of here who competed for the skilled labor force. Now we have the skilled labor force but nobody to put them to work.

In all of my travels, and I have traveled quite a bit in the service and with Horace Heidt--maybe it is because of my hometown and because I always have the urge to come back and back and back--but in all my travels, I have never seen an area that has people who are warm at heart, dedicated to what they want to do as far as a family unit is concerned. They have what we called comradeship. Maybe it is because of the influence and because this is my hometown, but I noticed that in almost everywhere I went that Youngstown always had something to talk about, although we didn't have a good reputation because of some of the element that persisted in this valley. But I think we have a lot of

good people here, and I think we will make a comeback, but it is going to take some time, maybe in the next ten years.

S: With what you just told me in mind and relating to the Bonser Report and the community renewal, what do you see as a future for our church in this area right around here?

G: I have always been a think positive person, very optimistic.

S: Me too.

G: I'm not exactly a pessimistic person. I'm a fellow who looks at a half a glass of water and says, "Half full," instead of "Half empty." We have some problems in our parish; let's face reality. We have a dwindling parish. Just recently I was talking to the southside funeral director, and they have been in the business now for forty-one months under new management.

S: Kubina-Yuhasz?

G: Yes, well, the young boys.

S: The ones that took over.

G: The ones that took over, young Mike and his brother. In the forty-one months that they have been operating . . .

S: Just a little over three years.

G: They have had sixty-two deaths from our parish. You see less of father, time and time again, on the baptisms we have. So we have had a declining parish population. How long that is going to continue before it takes a change for the better. I was just talking to another person yesterday or two days ago in Canfield. They started out with one hundred families at the St. Michael's Parish in Canfield. Now they have grown to the point where there is almost 1,000 families in that area. We have become more and more--of course, Father Dennis advocates the same thing--a cosmopolitan parish instead of a national parish where he is trying to encourage that you don't have to be a Slovonian to be a member of this parish. We have a lot of ethnics in this parish. We have a lot of people from other countries who belong to our parish. We are more cosmopolitan.

This past Sunday the father was talking about this youth mass that we are having . . .

S: Yes, right. I'm involved in that.

G: In fact, this Sunday . . . I thought that was music to

my ears because I have been preaching that for the longest time. I'm tired of being an usher in church to be to be honest with you. I would like to just come to church and sit down and enjoy that mass and enjoy the young people. I like to see the young people become church ushers, church collectors. In fact if I hang around with them, they will probably make me feel younger too. Father mentioned about this church mass, this youth mass as they call it. They are going to sing, and they might introduce some songs into the parish which have never been sung before. Hey, let's face reality. You have to change with the times. I think it is a blessing, and I think it is going to be very successful. We are hoping that we can generate enough interest to keep the parish where it is at.

You can't duplicate this church. Some people say, "Well, forget about it. Why don't you demolish the church and build a new church for yourself out there on Shady Run Road." It is easier said than done. The neighborhood down here has become stable. It is not anything to be afraid of. We have a nice setting. In fact, those who have surrounding properties, business people, people have improved their property to a point where we sit in a nice area. We are not in what they call a really totally blighted area. In fact it has been rejuvenated. We have been in the process of renovating the exterior of our church. It is very expensive; let's face it. I think with the proper guidance of our pastor and the proper guidance of those who are interested in this parish, we can probably renovate the church and have it last for another number of years and keep it here in this area. It is nice to say, "Let's build another church," or it is nice to say, "Well, I would like to take this church and put it on a "truck" and move it to the picnic grove.

S: I know about that.

G: But you can't do that; you just can't do it.

S: I have become real attached to it myself.

G: And you are . . . How old are you?

S: I'm thirty-five and I have only been a member since we have gotten married fourteen years ago.

G: I have a lot of memories here, and, of course, I want to see it stay here. If they felt they could put this on a "truck" and move it, fine; but it can't be done. The only way you can do anything about moving the church is to let this thing deteriorate and have it demolished and sell the land off to somebody and build another church; for example, like St. Matthias had a beautiful church. Of course, it

was demolished.

S: Because of the freeway, right?

G: Because of the freeway, it was right near the freeway. Now it didn't affect them. That church could have still been standing today, but why did they demolish it? I don't know. I guess they were able to sell the land after that. Today they have the church that they have up there on Cornell Avenue, off of Shady Run Road. You hear some of our younger folks, all "Gung ho!", "Let's build a church at the picnic grove. We have a lot of room up there." I would like to see it up there if I could--I mean a new church, but there is nothing wrong with the church we have here.

S: And there are too many memories attached to this church, and the history is just beautiful. It really is.

G: It has a lot. The dirt is not here anymore, the smoke pollution, the steel mill pollution . . .

S: No.

G: We have lived with it for so many years, but I think we are becoming a cosmopolitan parish. I guess what father is doing now is the only way we are going to do it is to try to introduce youth participation into the masses, into the singing, into whatever functions we have in the church, into the operating of the church. Get them involved. I'm not saying I was remiss in raising my three children because we did everything we could to keep them interested. But there were--and I hate to say this--we have had some priests who didn't give a "tinker's damn" for the youth, so to speak. This one here, for what it is worth, I think he cares about them.

S: Sure, I know that.

G: It is necessary, but we took everything for granted before. We thought the church would be here forever. It is here, but we are struggling. We are struggling today not financially at this point; we are struggling with our declining and deteriorating population of our parish. I see a bright future.

S: Good.

G: If we can get the youth involved. They are the future. I'm still a young man as far as I'm concerned.

S: You have a lot of good years.

G: A lot of good years ahead of me. There is one thing I have

to mention about the church. We have some priceless paintings on the ceilings in that church and on our walls.

S: The murals, yes.

G: Which were painted back, I think, in 1946 by Paul Daubner. They were beautifully restored by Rudolph Rohn when we had our fiftieth anniversary.

S: Oh, they were?

G: They were restored, touched up, cleaned up, and painted by Rudolph Rohn in 1962.

S: They were restored.

G: That was when we had our fiftieth anniversary. That is something we have to be very proud of too. Of course, you don't have those types of paintings anymore in churches.

S: I know.

G: A lot of churches are getting rid of all their statues and paintings and whatever.

S: Because of that contemporary look, yes.

G: In fact I sort of miss the communion rail at our church. We used to have a communion rail at our church. Of course, there was talk at one time of putting up the gates.

S: The icon screen?

G: Icons for the front. I don't know whatever happened to that. We were at a point one time where we were going to do that. We never did.

S: Do you remember why the communion rail was taken down?

G: Well, we have the "line" now where you stand in "line" to go to communion. At one time you used to stand in "line" to go to communion and have a communion rail. Father would go back and forth, back and forth. When you were in communion, you were kneeling at a communion rail, but then they took the communion rail away. I don't recall who it was. I think it was Father Rommack, Father John, before he passed away. But that has been a number of years ago. I think we have a nice parish. We have some nice, beautiful grounds. Of course, it takes money to keep it up-to-date. We have done wonders with our parish house. Our parish house has been restored beautifully.

S: This is an old home too, isn't it?

G: Yes.

S: About 100 years old or so?

G: Oh, yes. The exterior has been redone thanks to some of our volunteers in our parish who administered the work such as Nick Yacavone who takes a keen interest in our parish. We have a lot of men who still take a keen interest in the parish and are dedicated and work for gratis. We have come a long way. Of course, we still struggle with the bingo game and pirohi so that we can support the school.

S: Fund raisers, yes.

G: I don't know . . . Never once was there that I recall we had to pay a tuition at that school. I always taught myself to be dedicated to my church and to make sure I was appreciative of the different needs. All three of my children went to school there. Of course, I have one now who teaches there.

S: I know.

G: Debbie. Of course, Karen was a student there. I can remember graduation. Kenny was a student there. They went the full eight years to a parochial school there. I have a lot of memories in that respect too. Of course, our picnic grove . . . I think we have one of the nicest properties as far as a picnic grove is concerned anywhere.

S: Yes, we do.

G: We should be proud of it. That was when we organized in 1970. I was the president for eight years of the St. Nicholas Byzantine Men's Association. We also organized the St. Nicholas Byzantine Ladies' Association called the B. L. A.

S: That was one of the questions I was going to ask you. You said you started it in 1970?

G: Yes.

S: What was the purpose of organizing that group?

G: Father Levkolic had a steak dinner. He wanted to get together to show some interest to develop the property to what it is today. All we had out there was the pirohi house-- I don't know if you knew this or not--the pirohi house used to be on Youngstown Poland Road. First it was in a house. I forget whose house it was. Then we moved into the building which is now Grace Roof Clenaers.

S: In that little plaza?

G: In that little plaza.

S: Yes, I know where that is.

G: Then we built the pirohi house over at the picnic grove. Everyone thought we made a big mistake. I'll tell you one thing, I think it was one of the best moves we ever made.

S: Oh, sure.

G: The B. M. A. wanted to expand it more and also try to raise funds for the church for the property. We dedicated ourselves to the property to improve the property. Any money that we had we also told Father Levkolic and later Father Koval that whatever money we had would be available to the church for whatever needs were necessary. We were able to raise sufficient funds to take care of the picnic grove. We maintained the picnic grove from the standpoint of utilities. We took and still take care of the taxes and, of course, the insurance on the grounds. Of course, the improvements recently were done jointly with the parish because originally we had done some other improvements about two or three years ago. Today I think we have a beautiful edifice out there. You couldn't replace that property I don't think for half a million dollars.

S: So your purpose originally was to improve that property, the Shady Run property?

G: That property, and to maintain any and all financial obligations to the church and the needs for whatever was necessary at the church and also any other properties that we had. Anything that we did we did for the church. All money was the church's money. They didn't want any one specific organization or club to be in control.

S: No, it wasn't an independent type of thing.

G: Of course, the Byzantine Ladies Association (B.L.A.) to this day always come up with a donation to our treasury of \$1,000 sometimes or better. Then we have the Byzantine Youth Association (B.Y.A.), the Byzantine Youth Association which was functional until we organized the youth ministries here under Father Dennis when he first came here. So we don't have the B.Y.A. anymore.

S: It changed over.

G: Yes, it changed over to a different philosophy and thinking. I have a lot of memories myself, pleasant memories of going on some trips.

S: With the youth group?

G: With the youth group on trips that were unheard of to places like Orlando, Florida for vacation. They were some of the things the kids worked for when they were doing car washes or rummage sales or paper drives or what have you. Of course, you had to earn certain points. I also was the president of the B.M.A. (Byzantine Men's Association) for eight years, eight consecutive terms.

S: From the beginning of it?

G: In 1970 when we organized it until 1978 when I relinquished it. Since that time we have had other officers serving in that capacity.

S: Was that when you were honored as Byzantine Man of the Year?

G: I was honored Byzantine Man of the Year in 1978. I think it was 1978. In fact I happen to have the wristwatch on my wrist. It was 1979 when I was honored as Byzantine Man of the Year.

S: Was that the first time that award was given?

G: No.

S: No?

G: The first award was 1975. We had two honorees at that time. The first honorees were Mike Zackasee and Nick Hryeyk. They were the first two honorees. The second year we only had one honoree, and that was Andy Plucninsky. The third honoree I think was Steve Slavins and then Nick Yacavone and then Ken Gran. Since that time we have had others who have been honored. Of course, this year we will have our affair in February when we will pick another honoree. Now the honoree this year will be picked by the past honorees.

S: Oh, I see, that is what you do.

G: We meet together. There are nine of us now, I think. We vote; we cast our vote for one person, and that is it. Whoever has the majority . . . We try to evaluate those who participate not only at the grove but throughout the entire church. Sometimes you don't make friends because you don't appoint some people right away. Eventually we will get to them all.

S: Is that limited to the membership in the B.M.A.?

G: No.

S: It isn't?

G: As far as the man of the year?

S: The man of the year?

G: Man of the year, yes.

S: Does it have to be somebody from the group?

G: Yes, because it is called the Byzantine Man of the Year. Of course, it is from the B.M.A. I don't see why it couldn't be by anybody else, but it has been from the Byzantine Men's Association so I would assume. I don't think it is one of our criteria, but it has happened that way. Let's put it that way. It has happened that way. That doesn't mean that somebody else can't be.

S: I didn't know if there was a restriction on that.

G: Then we also started the St. Nicholas Day. We never had a St. Nicholas Day Dinner.

S: Oh, you started that?

G: Oh, yes, we started that with the St. Nicholas Byzantine Men's Association under Father Koval. Our first chairpeople or chairpersons for the first annual St. Nicholas Day Dinner Dance were Mr. and Mrs. Michael Gozur. They were our first chairpeople. I appointed them to be when I was president of the Byzantine Men's Association. I asked Mike and I asked his wife to become our first chairpeople, and they did a beautiful job. Of course, it has been an ongoing thing ever since.

S: Do you remember what year that was?

G: Let's see. I'm trying to think. I would say it is about the tenth one. It is about the tenth anniversary right now. So it started in 1977.

S: You said Father Kival? Maybe even before then.

G: No.

S: Did you say it was under Father Koval?

G: Father Koval was here. 1975 was the first one. I will tell you why. His father was our main speaker. He was Monsignor Koval from Hazelton, Pennsylvania. We had it at the school on Youngstown-Poland Road. It was a beautiful affair. It has been an ongoing tradition ever since.

S: Yes, that is a nice custom. I like that. Did you have the traditional singing of St. Nicholas at that time?

G: Yes.

S: Even at that dinner?

G: Well, I don't think for the first one we did, but ensuing years was when we started to do that. We had what we called a jaslichkari. Then also in the men's organization, we used to go caroling every year taking the bus, either getting Mike Zackasee or Joe Valko, who were bus drivers for the school system at that time . . . We had our own buses when we used to bus the kids to Byzantine Catholic Central School and each church had its own buses. In fact to this day they still have their own buses.

S: Yes, at least one from each parish.

G: We used to go caroling.

S: On the bus?

G: On the bus to the old folks or the shut-ins and also we used to take into consideration the pirohi workers. We would start out in the evening at the grove about 7:00 and get back about 11:00. We would cover anywhere from twenty to twenty-five homes. We would get out of the bus and go up to the porch and sing and not accept any contribution or anything. We just sing and wish them a happy Christmas and leave. Of course, when we got back to the grove, we had some coffee or some refreshments for the folks. There were a lot of memories there. Plus we used to see Christmas trees.

S: Tell me about that.

G: Oh, we used to sell Christmas trees of your choice at \$5 apiece. We used to go down and get them. I think we also started that back in the early 1970's. We used to go down to East Palestine to a very good friend of mine's farm, Joe Baytos, and cut our own trees down. I used to get the check and take it down to him or the money, cash. We would pay him \$3 at the time for a Christmas tree. We cut them ourselves. Then we would sell them for \$5 and make \$2, a big, big purchase. Then they finally went up to \$7 and your pick was whatever pick you wanted. I think when we finally stopped selling them, I think we were getting about \$8 or \$10 a tree.

But it got to a point where we were running out of Christmas trees for one thing. We used to get all the Christmas trees for the church for the manger, and for the

lighting and decorating of the church itself. I still think some of those same people like Nick Hrycky who was a fantastic man in our parish and Andy Pluchinsky still go out and cut those trees. I think they go somewhere out in Lake Milton and bring them in here to decorate the church with and not to sell. You have to give credit to people like Emil Kraynak and those folks who decorate the church along with Mary Hlivak who used to be very much involved with that and also the Bosak's. They were involved and still are involved. You have to give those kinds of people credit for what they do. Nobody ever pats them on the back so to speak, but I think in the eyes of God they feel that they are doing the right thing.

I will be honest with you . . . I don't walk across water. I'm not that pious, but I have a lot of love and affection and deep feeling for my church. I do all I can for my church and I will continue to do it until I expire. It is just a situation where I would love to see my grandchildren come here, but they don't live here. They are of the Roman rite now because they have married Roman rite husbands. There is nothing wrong with that. Even my wife doesn't come to church very often because she is Roman rite. She has a lot of love and affection for her parish although she came here when the kids were growing the whole time.

There were some strong feelings by some priests who were here before about people who were supposedly . . . If I am, for example, a Byzantine, that belongs to this parish, regardless of what my wife is, she should come to this parish. They made me feel uncomfortable and that it was sinful. My wife goes to church every Sunday. She comes here with me when she can, but she goes to fit her schedule sometimes. Some priests frowned on that.

S: They weren't very tolerant of that.

G: No, no. Father Dennis is very understanding in that respect.

S: Yes, he is.

G: I like to see my wife and people come to church here, but I'm not going to force anybody to go to church as long as they go to church.

S: Ken, is there anything else that you feel is important that we didn't cover yet?

G: Since 1962 we have had various priests here as we mentioned before after Father Rommack passed away. Of course, I have to give a lot of credit to people like Father Levkulic who came in here with some bad times. We had some strong financial...

S: Obligations.

G: Obligations. I can't fault Father Rommack because he was sick and he tried his best. But we did run into some problems to the extent that Father Levkulic put us into a situation where we were able to recuperate some of our obligation to making the parish more stable from the standpoint of finances. Then Father Koval . . . Well, you would have to understand Father Koval, and I think you do. He was here and, of course, he was a priest who may have had some shortcomings but he was still a pretty good priest. Then, of course, the other one, Father Duker. People didn't have too much respect for him, because he was sort of a "loner". He put us on the financial path that we are on today. After Father Duker we had the likes of Father Mihalik and, at present, we have Father Dennis.

We had people in the parish who were dedicated to doing things for the parish which also kept us going. For example, I think we can be proud of our cemetery. It is a beautiful cemetery out in Campbell. I think we can be proud of our property that we have on Shady Run Road. It is well-kept; it is well-maintained. We can be proud of the pirohi house and the women or the ladies who work in that pirohi house. We can be proud of the Byzantine Ladies' Association. We can be proud of the church groups that we have here at the church which are the Hazelton and Lansingville Political Clubs, the Women's Political Clubs, and the Ladies' Guild and so on and so forth. I think our coffee socials are great. We don't have that much attendance, but those who attend get a chance to socialize. Those who don't attend don't know what they are missing because I think that it is a good thing. Our St. Nicholas Day Dinner Dance has become very successful over the years. I have been a steak fry chairman for the Byzantine Men's Association at the grove. We don't make a ton of money, but we make a few dollars where people always keep coming back for our steak fries because they get a good product and they get good comradeship and they get a good atmosphere and we give them their money's worth so to speak. We made a few dollars to boot. So the fund raisers we have, like our turkey raffle, I think are great. The festival that we have in the summertime has been a tradition for many years although they are probably not as children-oriented as they maybe should be with children's rides and stuff like that. For whatever reason we seem to forget those. It is very difficult I guess to get rides.

S: Yes, it is.

G: We seem to fall away from picnics. We don't have anymore picnics so to speak.

S: We have tried a few years back.

G: Yes, we did. All we have is that festival now. I think all of these are pluses for our parish. We try our best. I think the one thing we miss is the choir. We don't have a choir. I can remember . . . I have a tape at home which I would like very much some day for the father to hear and even yourself. I have Father Myron Horvath's first mass on tape.

S: Oh, you do?

G: With his father singing it is just beautiful and the men's choir singing. I have an Easter mass where the men's choir are singing the Easter mass. I have it at home on tape, on a seven inch reel--it is not a cassette. So I have a lot of memories.

S: Good.

G: We have a lot of dedicated men today. Mike Gozur is a very dedicated person. "Red" Vrabel is another dedicated person. Joe Bayus has taken a strong dedication for his parish and giving a lot of time. Mike Zackasee, Andy Kotyuha, you name them, we have got them. Women, not to mention Mary Lou Shirilla, and a few others . . . We have a lot of people at the parish like Sophie Yacarone and Marge Kohl and Doris Slavins.

S: And many others.

G: And many others, many others. My mother, Mary Kohl, worked at the pirohi house for a long time until she could no longer go because of her age. They all have a lot of memories out there. Of course, that is what is important. I think the future is very delightful for St. Nicholas Parish, St. Nicholas Byzantine Catholic Parish, because sometimes we have to more or less identify where we are at. Of course, I think 1898 Wilson Avenue will be here for many, many years to come.

S: Do you have any words of wisdom for the future generation?

G: Words of wisdom . . . Think positive is the best words I can come up with. I know I advocate that in city government and now in county government. You have to think positive that the parish is going to go along. That is what we are doing. Hopefully, we will be able to restore our mobility to the point where our young people will be able to carry on maybe more forcefully.

I can't understand when I was growing up . . . Like you have in this youth mass now, we never had those considerations for the youth at all. Yet we were strong. I guess it was because tradition was demanded. My parents never said, "You got to go to church. You got to go to church. If you don't, we are going to beat you." I went because they went,

and we enjoyed it. In fact we would go to mass and everything was in Rusin, or Russian. I don't understand all that singing myself. Even to this day I don't understand all of the . . . I know the songs. I can sing the Slovak songs or the Rusin songs. But what they mean, I was glad when English came when we started the English mass because we participated.

For whatever reasons I still enjoy the Byzantine Slavonic mass at 9:00 on Sundays. That is why I go to 9:00 mass. I don't consider myself an "old fogie", but I enjoy that mass and parts of it, like the songs that we sing. For whatever it is worth, I enjoy that. Those are memories that I have that I just want to keep. I used to go all the time to the 11:00 mass, but now I go to the 9:00 mass and I enjoy it. I really enjoy the 9:00 mass. Now, I'm not too keen on the 5:15 mass or 7:00 mass on Saturdays. This is my own feeling. I have gone for utility purpose only. That is about the only reason. I think Sunday's mass should be Sunday and that is it. Of course, with the dwindling parish that we have now, I don't know whether the 7:00 mass on Saturday is . . . I guess you have those who will probably leave the church if you give up that mass. With the 9:00 mass there are only about one hundred people in church. When we had the 10:00 mass in the summertime, we had a full church.

S: Right, they would come to that to be combined.

G: Let's face reality. We are not the big parish of yesteryear. We have had too many people die off. I think that if we think positive and give Father Dennis the support that he needs . . . I think our parishioners are giving him the support that he needs. I think this celebration that is coming up which will be "taking-off" December 6 with the St. Nicholas Day Dinner Dance and the one year celebration of the Diamond Jubilee or Diamond Anniversary will hopefully restore some pride in some people and maybe even get them more involved. In fact I understand that--I haven't had the opportunity to go to one of those family type things that you folks have organized--the attendance has been fantastic and it has been very supportive and very encouraging. Maybe that is it. You have got to get a priest who has the enthusiasm that this one has.

S: Yes, like the one we have right now. He really is.

G: I don't think that many of the former priests--don't get me wrong . . .

S: I know what you are saying.

G: Maybe Father Dennis isn't perfect either, but I think he

is on the right track in my opinion and thinks positive, just think positive. For yourself, Mary Lou, think positive at Y.S.U., and you will get your degree and you will be teaching school very soon. What is your ambition? To teach school?

S: I already have my teaching certificate. I did teach. Right now I am going back into the counseling program.

G: Oh, the counseling program. So you have your degree?

S: I just got accepted again.

Is there anything else you want to say in relation to this?

G: That is all, except that think positive.

S: Thank you. I will.

END OF INTERVIEW