

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

History of the Youngstown Diocese

Personal Experience

O.H. 1522

SISTER CONSOLATE KILME, H.M.

Interviewed

by

Stephanie Fisher

on

October 26, 1992

SISTER CONSOLATA KLINE

Sister Consolata Kline was born October 8, 1916 in Cleveland, Ohio. She attended high school at Mount Marie in Canton, Ohio, then at Lincoln High School in Cleveland. In January of 1943, after working in an office in downtown Cleveland for several years, she entered the Villa Maria Convent in Pennsylvania. Before choosing Villa Maria, Sister Consolata was considering missionary orders. In 1949, the Villa Maria became a Papal Congregation. Its sisters can work in any Diocese by invitation of the Bishop.

Sister Consolata went to Youngstown State for two years and transferred to St. Louis University where she received her B.S. in Commerce (1957) and a master's degree in Hospital Administration (1959). As a requirement for the M.H.A., she did her residency at St. Vincent's Hospital in New York. Although Sister Consolata presumed she would be a teacher or child care worker, she became involved in hospital administration.

In 1945, Sister Consolata started to work for St. Elizabeth Hospital in the admitting office. She later would move up as an assistant and finally the administrator of St. Elizabeth. Her other assignments have been: sabbatical at Notre Dame University, Superior of the Blue Nuns, and Catholic Charities in the Youngstown Diocese.

Presently Sister Consolata is Vicar for the Social Concerns of the Youngstown Diocese. She coordinates the department of Social Services [Catholic Charities], Social Action and Appeal/Development. She is the Bishop's representative to the Catholic Charities Advisory Board. She is chairperson of the

Health and Human Services Commission which is composed of the three Catholic Hospitals, the Catholic Nursing Homes and the seven social service agencies within the Youngstown Diocese. The Catholic Charities Board determines how money raised in the Appeal should be used to oversee the health care of the poor. In recognition of her service, Sister Consolata has received the Ohio Women's Hall of Fame award, the Youngstown Chamber of Commerce Honoree of the Year, and the Health Care Field Recognition Award.

Stephanie Fisher

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

History of the Youngstown Diocese

INTERVIEWEE: SISTER CONSOLATA KLINE, H.M.

INTERVIEWER: Stephanie Fisher

SUBJECT: Cleveland, St. Louis, Villa Maria

DATE: October 26, 1992

F: This is an interview with Sister Consolata Kline on the History of the Youngstown Diocese for the Youngstown State University Oral History Department, by Stephanie Fisher, on October 26, 1992

K: I'm Sister Consolata Kline. I'm a sister of the Humility of Mary. Our mother house is in Villa Maria, Pennsylvania. It's right over the Pennsylvania border from Youngstown. I entered the community in January of 1943. That was the same year the Youngstown Diocese was formed. I'm from the Cleveland area.

Formerly, this diocese was part of the Cleveland Diocese. The first bishop was Bishop McFadden. He was a bishop from the Cleveland Diocese. I worked in the downtown area of Cleveland. I would see him as he would go to his office which was in a building close to the office where I worked. I didn't have much contact between 1943 and 1945 because I was in the Convent Novitiate. That was located in Villa Maria, Pennsylvania.

My first assignment was at St. Elizabeth's Hospital in Youngstown. That was in 1945, which was very early after the diocese was formed. In those early years, my contact with diocesan structure was rather minimal,

although I had occasion to meet Bishop McFadden. I knew of some of the things that were going on. For example, he was very interested in going around to the institutions. The hospital was one of them. He also, as I heard about it, rather than having first hand information, that he visited all the different places in the diocese. It is a six county area. So, I felt that I knew a little bit about him having known him prior to my entering the convent. In thinking back, I try to think of some of the things that went on during that period of time.

Some of the things that came to my attention, when I first heard about this project was the different areas in the diocese between 1943 and 1949 that Bishop McFadden started. Among those were several parishes. It was the natural growth that was taking place in the area, because this was following the war years when there had not been much growth in buildings. For example, St. James parish was a large parish that was opened in Trumbull County. I remember some others. I looked up some of this material.

Monsignor Prokop was Bishop McFadden's secretary. I'm not sure if he was chancellor, but he was very attentive to Bishop McFadden. Then, in his last illness, Bishop McFadden spent a considerable length of time at St. Elizabeth's Hospital where I was working. He was a very friendly person who would tell us of his desires and ambitions. His tenure here was rather limited. It was just a five or six year span. He was probably busy only about five years because he was quite ill in his last illness. We were glad that he was a patient at our institution.

I remember more vividly Bishop Walsh. He came in 1949. Interestingly enough, when I was working before I entered the community at an office in downtown Cleveland, I used to go over to the cathedral which was St. John's Cathedral. It was quite close to our office. On more than one occasion, I remember hearing Bishop Walsh, who came from the south on mission trips, seeking funds for the people in the south. He was a very young, energetic priest. It was interesting then, in 1949, when I heard that he was coming here as our bishop. He lived at the hospital for two years after he came. He was most interesting. [He was] a wonderful storyteller and he had many interesting things to relate. He was very young when he was made a bishop, but he was also, as he called it, one of the "horseback bishops." His diocese was quite rural and many of the places he had to go, he went by horseback. So, we would just love to hear his stories of the south.

One interesting thing that stuck in my mind that he

told us. . . . We were very interested in many of his tales, as we felt that he had such a breadth of knowledge. [He told us] that when he would go to Rome for his visit with the holy father, probably his five year visit, the question the holy father would ask [would be], "How do the different nationalities and the different races really get along in the United States?" You have to remember this followed World War II. Possibly, he was going over there at the time of World War II, and there was so much dissension and tension and all. We always remarked among our sisters that he would be a very good representative of the United States, because he had come from the south and had a true appreciation of the need to abolish some of the systems that were in existence in the south. He was very interested when he came north, as he talked about it, that there would be no vestige of discrimination. One of the first things I remember about him was that he was very interested in what had gone on prior to his coming. He would often ask us to tell him things about the diocese as we knew it. Most of us knew the Cleveland Diocese better than we knew the Youngstown one because it was so very new. He was also a person that liked to go around and find out for himself all of the different things--why things were going on. In the last two years of Bishop McFadden's tenure as bishop, he was quite ill. In fact, in his last year, he was very ill for a long time. So, I'm sure there must have been a tremendous number of things that people were just waiting to be able to talk to a bishop about. This was impossible when Bishop McFadden was so ill.

The other thing Bishop Walsh is very interested in [is] the growth of the total Youngstown area. Not just the Youngstown city. I took a look at the various parishes that were developed during his time which was between 1949 and I would say about 1960 when Bishop Malone became his auxiliary. The records will show that there was a tremendous number of parishes that were started. Every county had some. Ashtabula had three. Stark County had three that I just could pick out. Portage had two. Trumbull had four, and Mahoning County had about five. That was a demonstration that the people had moved in the 1950's. They were moving out of the inner cities into various suburban areas. Bishop Walsh was very much in tune with needs. In fact, at the hospital, we had not had any opportunity to do anything about taking care of the expansion of the hospital during the Depression. There wasn't any money. During the war times, there wasn't any support for any building because everything was going to support the war. Our census kept growing and growing, and still our facilities were the same. So, in 1949 we had been wanting to build for a long time. I was not the administrator at that time, but I knew one had been wanting

to do something about an expansion. Some of the people that were on our advisory board at that time kept saying, "When are we going to do some expanding?"

The first thing that we asked Bishop Walsh was that we would like to expand the hospital. We invited him to come to an advisory board meeting. Rather than give an explanation, I remember distinctly his question was, "Why don't you do it, if that's a need?" I think that was his approach. He was people-oriented. [He felt] that if something is going to be done, then people ought to take the initiative.

Parish-wise he saw the need for expansion. Facility-wise he saw the need for expansion. I think he was very interested in young people. Mooney High School was opened. There was expansion in the southern part of Youngstown during his reign. The Bishop moved his residence to a home on Fifth Avenue after living at the hospital approximately two years. He was a very charming person. For example, if we were walking along the hall with him in the hospital and we came to an elevator, as you would for a person of his dignity, we would momentarily step aside. He would say, "Oh, no, sister. I was a gentleman long before I was a bishop." He was that type of person. He had a very keen sense of humor and a hearty laugh. He's a very lovable and a very well-loved person. Unfortunately, his health did not hold up. Although he had, I would say, ten or twelve years of very active and busy life. Then, he became ill in his later years.

When Bishop Malone was made auxiliary, it wasn't too long after that that he was appointed the administrator, recognizing that Bishop Walsh's health did not permit him to carry the total burden. Bishop Malone was appointed the administrator of the diocese. He had been ordained a bishop just six years prior to that. Before that, he was in the school system. He was very active. We were so proud of him because he was one of the first that got his Ph.D. as a very young person. He came back and did a tremendous job. I'm not as familiar with the school system as I am of health care, but what I would be familiar with is his great love for the children and his desire to have--even though the diocese was small--an exemplary educational system. I would say that's one of his shining lights. He's always seen education as a way out of poverty. If the children are educated and educated well, they will have an opportunity in life. I think he was a champion of that.

An unfortunate and devastating thing in the diocese was the fire. I don't know what the cause was--the documentation will show that--of the fire at the St. Colum-

ba Cathedral. There is a striking picture that I hope they can locate that was taken at that time of Bishop Walsh standing out in the dark. It happened during the night. He came out and was watching the cathedral go up in flames. The picture shows his profile. There are tears that stand out on his cheek watching the flames. It was a picture that, if you see it, you will always remember. I think it symbolized for him not only the devastation that any fire causes, but all of the people of that area.

St. Columba--even prior to its becoming a cathedral--was looked at as a mother church. It was in the city for many, many years. It had a long and rich history. I just assumed that all of these things were in the forefront of his mind. It meant a tremendous amount to the people to see something that they loved and valued go up in flames. I think though, that the present St. Columba Cathedral was built around that time. I'm not sure of the dates but I know it was built at the time Bishop Walsh was bishop. During the time that the cathedral was not able to be used, St. Patrick's Church on Oak Hill was used as the temporary cathedral. There were some prominent people that normally would have been buried from the cathedral. Mr. Cuswa Sr. was one. I remember going there for his funeral. He was buried from St. Patrick's because the cathedral wasn't able to be used. He probably was originally from there anyway, but there were many instances when St. Patrick's was used as the cathedral.

What seems singular to me, when I remember seeing the new cathedral, was the recognition by Bishop Walsh and the planners of the rich ethnic background of this whole area. The whole backdrop of the mosaic behind the altar represents just about every nationality that made up this whole Youngstown Diocese, because it was a rich ethnic diocese. I give tremendous credit, even without saying it, but in my own mind, to someone like Bishop Walsh and any part Bishop Malone had in that. The recognition--there wasn't any one nationality that stood out above the others. The diocese was made up of many, and they all had a part. This was true in other parts of the diocese. I think that is symbolic. We appreciated the diversity of the people that make up this area. It's got a rich background.

I remember, during the course of this time, Cardinal Josef Mindszenty came here for a Labor Day Mass and celebration. He talked at the cathedral through an interpreter. He happened to stay at the St. Elizabeth's Hospital while he was in the city. My recollection is that he also appreciated and gave recognition that the diocese was made up of people of many nationalities. He and the Polish people were suffering for

their faith, because after he went back to Poland, he was in house imprisonment. He was a victim of the communist that did not want to recognize the rights of people. There would be a record of what he said. My recollection of it is that he appreciated the people that would peacefully be able to work together regardless of their racial or ethnic background. I think the diocese has exemplified that in many ways

The other recollection is that tremendous things have been done under Bishop Malone throughout the diocese. Not only has he been very active in the education program, but also in the development of the social services. They really blossomed in the last twenty years. I think that is a real recognition of the Church in service to the poor. The church is known for its social teaching. I think he brought it to the forefront . . . the care of people who are in need. I know in Catholic Charities, he has taken that as a personal task; to make sure that every parish in the diocese recognizes that it has an obligation to support those who are in need in a variety of ways. Some of it is done through the agency. Some of it's done through other ways. He is the champion of that. So, it's not only education but social services. He's been extremely interested in our various health care concerns. For example, every Christmas, one of the bishops would come and offer the Midnight Mass. I would say both Bishop Malone and Bishop Fransetta are well known in visiting people that are ill. Not only just the priests and religious, but if they hear of a family, especially someone that has difficulty, they are concerned.

One time I remember was when Bishop Malone himself was ill. When he first was hospitalized, he was diagnosed by Dr. C. Raupple, one of the family physicians. He had to go to Roswell Memorial Hospital in Buffalo for further work. There [was] a tremendous outpouring of concern and affection that people had. When he came back after that harrowing experience, he went on television and talked about his experience. [He said] that he appreciated what people had done, their prayers, their cards, their offers. I think being up front with it, and not having people waiting for them to hear it from someone else. . . . They actually saw him and heard him say that his health was improved. He was given a clean bill of health by his physician. He was back to work on a full-time basis shortly after his recuperation. That meant a tremendous amount to people that somebody of his stature didn't send someone else to say, "I feel better, and I'll be back on the job shortly." He stood in front of the total television audience and gave his own message of hope. I think that helped a lot.

During the war years, I was not in Youngstown for that. I came, as my dates will show, after it. It was a time of high employment in this area. When the steel mills began to cut back, we would have five and six thousand people laid off at one day. It was Bishop Malone that took the reins and really gave people a sense of hope. It cannot be explained adequately. There again, I think it demonstrates the way that he was exemplifying Christ's love for those who have any kind of unfortunate experience, whether it's losing a job, being ill, or needing education. That had a big impact on the diocese and the way people felt. It was so devastating to feel that the mainstay of working in the Northeast part of Ohio was really just pulled out from under them.

He [Bishop Malone] and the Episcopal Bishop tried--and I think the records will show that too--to almost, in a sense, rejuvenate the steel industry. This was not a possibility. I don't think that not being able to do it is as significant as that it was tried. Having tried it and demonstrated to the people, "We will try to save our valley," gave a real boost. I don't think that has been done any place else that I know of. [I don't think] that anybody has actually gone out into the work area to see if they could form a coalition with the steelworkers and others. He was known all over the country for this.

Another thing of significance, that I think the type of priests and pastors and bishops have been, is that Bishop Malone was selected head of the National Council of Catholic Bishops. It's usually been a Cardinal or an Archbishop chosen. I'm sure this will come out and be written up in some way, because it was a real honor. I think his interest in education, his interest in the social services of people, his interest in the people that lost their jobs through the decline of the steel industry in this area, were recognized. I think there are a lot of other good things that happened in the Youngstown area. I don't know if you have any particular questions

F: Could you tell me the good things that kept the Youngstown Diocese very strong and able to grow? What examples can you give me?

K: Well, I think the development of the parishes in suburban areas has helped. I think they kept pace with the people as they moved around. The diocese tried to provide for them. Many of the inner-city schools had to combine or close. There has always been a good, strong base of Catholic education throughout the diocese. It is very difficult to maintain because of the cost.

I think another major thing. . . . I don't know if I have all the figures, but with the bishop's support and the skill and leadership of Father Frank Lehnerd, who was Vicar for Social Concerns and Director of Catholic Charities for sixteen years, the assistance given to the poor increased five-fold. In 1976 the Catholic Charities Campaign collected four hundred twenty one thousand dollars plus. As of 1991, we are up to one million nine hundred thousand dollars. All of that money goes so that people who are in need to have counseling or other assistance. It means that every parish donates to Catholic Charities so that people who are less fortunate will have something. That money goes not only to Catholics, but to people of any race, creed, or color that have needs. They come into our social agencies, and we are able in some way to help them. It also demonstrates in the depressed economy that these people are not able to take care of themselves. Now, the money includes funds for social services, family life and ministry, and social action programs approved by Bishop Malone.

Bishop Malone was recently recognized for his work with the Jewish Community. He's been recognized for many different kinds of things in service to the community, so it's not ever just confined to his own church. Even when he was working with the steelworkers, he wasn't looking at it like, "We will only take care of people who are from our own particular faith." Instead, he was looking at it like, "We will take care of anyone who is in need." You see some of the people that rally around him, which is good.

Another thing that happened as far as activity was the tremendous growth in parish activity in the last twenty years. This would be following Vatican II. I don't have the documentation, but it's available on the activities of the lay people of the parishes. The only thing when I was growing up was the parish would have a parent-teachers' association. They had a holy name society, but they had very little else. Now, any parish, even a very small parish, [has many social groups]. That's because of the involvement of the lay people and the wonderful leadership that they've had. You can go to a small parish, and they will have many organizations that will take care of a variety of needs. For example, they have the liturgy committee. These are made up of people that are very interested in how the services are going to be conducted. You have, within some parishes, a bereavement committee [for] people that have suffered a loss. The people that come together are supportive. If you don't have leadership that supports that, the people lose interest.

I think Bishop Malone and Bishop Fransetta were able to let the priests take the lead and work with the people. I think it's a lot more work for the priests today. Even if they don't do anything else but go to either a committee or to a commission and say hello to this group of lay people. . . . When the priest has a parish council and many meetings over a month's time, it becomes very time consuming. There has been a dramatic change, I think. Certainly, I recognize the lack of a sufficient number of priests, but I think the priests that we do have, especially here in this area of the Youngstown Diocese are very hard workers. I think that would be just one little way to demonstrate that. If you have many organizations within a parish, and each one of them says, "Well, at least the pastor can come over and say hello or sit in at our meeting," it can be a burden for the priest to take part in many meetings in addition to his own responsibilities. Those, to me, are growth factors the involvement of the laity.

F: Instead of growth. . . . There is always something that can hinder an organization. What, do you believe, has hindered growth in the past besides economic factors?

K: I think the economics has had a tremendous effect on the composition of the different cities within the diocese . . . the towns and all. Violence, I think, hinders the growth because people are fearful. I really feel part of the violence is due to the lack of opportunity of jobs. Within a family, child abuse is often a result of the lack of a person having a job. The family culture is different. The people, at one time, had the extended family. If the mother had to, for economic reasons, go out to work, there was a grandmother in the home. In the culture of our times, there usually isn't anyone to take care of children, so it is a big change.

We've always had, in our church, some social resources. We started out with having orphanages or child care. Many of our service agencies. . . . The reason they started was for foster care started by a pastor in a parish. Instead of wanting children to be in orphan asylums, they wanted them to be in a home situation, which is very good. But, now there are so many homes where there are single parents. That's why I think the growth is just the people donating more to the Catholic Charities over the years, because those are the kind of needs that we're servicing.

I don't ever remember, except during the Depression, that you heard of soup lines. When I was growing up, you didn't have such things as soup lines. Well, now

you have places throughout the area that have to have them. Part of that is the economy, but part of it is many people have just lost a sense of hope. That's why I think it is so important when Catholic people know that their leadership gives them a sense of hope even in the worst of times. Bishops, priests, and laity demonstrate that by the things that they've done. They continually try--even if there is a minimum of funds for education--to educate the children. They work very well with the public school system, because they feel education is so important. They work very well with the health facilities.

F: So, the diocese does not appear to be having a lack of donations?

K: Oh, yes. It has a lack of donations. I think you have to look at it in perspective when you think of the numbers of people that are without jobs. Still in the parishes have been willing to support others that are worse off than they. I'm sure they are called on for many things. But that is a tremendous thing. If we are able to get close to two million dollars in donations from a six county area, and then all of that goes out immediately, that is very good. You can't always meet the total need. Our expenses are increasing. All the money that we get to help the poor comes from the people in our own parishes. Now, the agencies also get help from United Way. But, I was looking at the documentation from some other areas, and they don't begin to get comparable funds from their parishes. The parish is not the bishop. It is not the priest. It's a combination of both with the people who are willing to sacrifice themselves. It's a real tribute. I think a lot of it is because of the mixture we have of people. There is not just one ethnic group.

There are many different ethnic groups that have come in even in the last fifteen years. I remember the Hispanics came originally from Puerto Rico. Later, we got a lot from Mexico, both here in the Youngstown area and from here to the different cities. They followed the steel mills. There was a tremendous growth in employment. Well, we may not have everything that they were looking for, even after the steel mills closed, but they saw it as so much better than what they had any place that they came from. They were welcomed.

I think that is a credit, not to one, but to the feelings that have been generated throughout the years about welcoming other people. In some places, people feel that others come to take our jobs, the few jobs that we have . . . and we don't want you. I don't think, as a total diocese, that this has been as prevalent. We also have some migrant workers up in the

Ashtabula area along the lake which is part of the diocese. Some have chosen to stay. The Diocese has been giving some help now in trying to get them settled. Another thing is that there is a need for better housing in the area. All of those things tie together. Through funds from the campaign for Human Development there is a system to try to help them to get low-cost housing.

F: I'm going to go back really before the Youngstown Diocese became separate from the Cleveland Diocese. This area was predominantly composed of Protestants due to the steel mills' ownership and other business. Why do you think there seems to be more Catholic faith in this area? Like the DeBartolo's, powerful people, who are really able to help the diocese, help the Catholic faith in this area. What do you think happened?

K: I think it was the recognition that these people have a rightful place in society. While there were many poor among immigrants when they first came--this would be true of any place--they worked hard to improve their situation. Maybe these are ones that you are talking about. The particular non-Catholics, if I could put it that way, were well-established.

So, having been here prior to the newcomers and the immigrants . . . they were the ones that set up the jobs, and they were the ones that ran the steel mills and all. I wouldn't take a negative attitude about them. I think people that provide work for others are to be commended. Because they had funds, the owners were able to provide them with work and have more money. They did employ a lot of immigrants. Once the immigrants got an education. . . . That's why I think, once the Catholics became an educated group, they prospered.

When they came, many of them had a language problem. The churches wanted the people to learn English and to become well educated. It's people like the DeBartolos and the Cafaros. Their people came from way back. They probably didn't speak English. But, once they came and understood--because they have a lot of abilities--it was recognized that they could be leaders. I think it was the credit of the church that recognized that. Sometimes, maybe, some people feel today that we've lost our heritage because only English was spoken. They insisted on English in many of the schools, but it was for that reason. Today, they want the child to learn both languages, not lose what he has if he is Hispanic or whatever nationality he is. In the early days, in order for the immigrants to get along--if you think of the steel mills--if there was a white foreman that only understood English, he didn't want to bother

with somebody unless he could understand what he was trying to tell him. I think it's the leaders that we've had that have encouraged, in a variety of ways, anyone that would be willing to work for the good of others to develop their own skills first.

F: All I can imply from what you said is education is becoming Americanized, really. It may be the fact that you need a population the size that we have, first of all, to expand like the diocese needed to and to become so strong and a dominant force in this area. Do you think we would still have that if the steel systems had not closed?

K: I think that the ethnic groups, as they became acclimated to this area, would maybe have taken over some of the steel mills. There were many factors why that could not have happened. But, I think they took over in other ways. You have to start with having good leadership. You have to start with pushing education and recognizing a good social service system. I credit the church. I'm not as knowledgeable about any other particular faiths. Not that they didn't do it. I'm only saying what I know what was done in the Catholic entities--the parishes--to encourage the faithful people to be of help to each other. That's how a lot of these different committees developed in the parishes. It isn't just a case of coming to church on Sunday and going off, and just having services only once, and then forgetting about it. I think it's sad that some things have not continued to grow. But, there are so many factors that make that. Sometimes, these things come in cycles. We don't know. It's a global economy that we are dealing with today. Why things are down, I don't know. I think we have a lot going for us in the Catholic Church as an entity.

Are you a Catholic or are you not?

F: [Catholic] and Methodist.

K: Yes, that's good.

F: I have both.

K: You understand it then.

F: What do you believe has been the biggest change, besides Walking Together, in the diocese?

K: Well, I haven't given that much thought.

F: To me, I think the Walking Together Program is a very significant change.

K: It's significant because it's unique. Now there are other places that have something similar, but what I would say, even the title. . . . No priest stood up and said, "Well, tomorrow we're going to close this church, and you are going to have to go to another church." It was well thought out and well planned. The people were very much involved. They had an opportunity to come together and talk about what it was designed to do. It didn't come as a dictum from on high. It was not a total shock. The people were given the tools to examine what their situation was by having meetings and asking series of questions. They also had plenty of time to really reflect on what this means. For example, there were two or three churches in the same neighborhood that started because, in the immigrant mentality, each little group that came developed, and they had their own church.

As these people moved away from their center, they still would come back only for Sunday Services. Just letting the people sit down and say, "Are we in a situation where this is good sense, that we can continue to say that the church is a building?" The church is made up of people. Where the building is located now, everybody loves their church that they've had a part in building up. I think the way Walking Together was handled, knowing what went on in Detroit and Chicago and even in Pittsburgh . . . not to be saying that they didn't do it the right way, but it didn't come across to people that I've heard talk about it. They were taken by surprise. They felt they didn't have an opportunity to tell their side of it. They didn't call them together in the same way. Now, maybe the people I happen to hear that from didn't go when they had a meeting. But, this is unique how they developed this Walking Together in our Diocese.

When you have . . . I can't remember how many thousand people came together over the total diocese in the two year period. They at least heard about it. I wouldn't look at [the program] as radical. When you are part of something, it might be. . . . I've had an opportunity that I think it ought to be done this way, or I think it ought to be done that way. You begin to reflect on it and say, "Well, let's work together on this." So, we're walking together. I remember hearing, "We got to keep this church, because it's the only one of our particular nationality in the whole city." Well, is the church that way, or is it the people wanting to come together? So, if you have less than a couple hundred families, it's very difficult to meet expenses.

I think some of the big differences have been the lack of employment. When I first came to Youngstown, the

hospital jobs were considered very low pay compared to the mills. That is why they would take anything but that. Now the hospitals and the university are the biggest employers. That's a big change. If we can keep a good educational system, you have a good health system, and you can service people, the people will rise up and

Youngstown will not deteriorate. I think the power is in the people coming together.

F: Now, you didn't mention much about yourself. What was your first assignment in the diocese?

K: In the diocese, my first assignment was St. Elizabeth's.

F: Were you a nurse?

K: No, I was not. I worked in an office before I entered the community. I suppose because of that, I went to the office. We didn't ask at that time for special work. I didn't know, when I came to our sisters, what I would do. I knew the sisters were in school . . . in teaching. I didn't give it a whole lot of thought. I was more interested in really becoming a sister and just being dedicated. I presumed I would either be in teaching or in some type of child care. I also knew that we had a child care center in Cleveland. I thought perhaps, because I was very interested in children, I might work there. But I never thought of being in the hospital.

F: Is that where you stayed?

K: I stayed there. I just went up the ranks.

F: Do you have a bachelor's degree in teaching?

K: No. My undergraduate work was called a B.S. in Commerce. I went two years to Youngstown State on a part time basis. I took accounting. Most of my accounting is from there. Then, I got a bachelor's from St. Louis University after two years. Then I went on for a master's in Hospital Administration. I had a residency in New York at St. Vincent's Hospital. I have been very active in all kinds of health care.

F: I'm from St. Louis.

K: Are you?

F: Yes.

K: Well, then you know St. Louis University.

F: I grew up in Florescent.

K: It's a nice section. There is tremendous growth in St. Louis.

K: I went back this summer. I couldn't believe it. Now, so being in administration . . . that's probably why you know so much.

F: No. I've just been around awhile.

K: So, after Vatican II, you were able to choose your assignment?

F: I suppose that was true. I started out working in the admitting office. About that time, we went into a building program. I worked with the administrator. She was the administrator at the time in the building program when we built the west building. We had just north and south buildings. Then, I was the assistant for a couple years. When I became the administrator, we went into a couple other building programs. I was never in the same kind of a job very long, although I was at the same institution. My job was different all the time. I just happened to like people. I loved our employees. Then I became interested at the State level in the Catholic Conference of Ohio. There is a lot of activity there. Then, I was in health associations at the National level.

F: So, when did you come to Catholic Charities?

K: I came in July of 1990.

F: From St. Elizabeth's?

K: No, I was in leadership in our community for eight years. I was elected in 1981, and then I went to Notre Dame University for a year sabbatical. While I took courses there, I became interested in social services. I worked during my sabbatical in some homeless shelters there. I've always admired people who took care of those in need.

F: So what is your job now? What do you do?

K: I'm considered the Vicar for social concerns. That's more or less to be a coordinator. I don't pretend to have any real high powered job. It would be like a department head of the particular social concerns we handle. All the different Catholic agencies are separately incorporated, but we coordinate them. We have a man that is full-time in Catholic Charities. We have social action director. He deals with the social

teachings of the church, and also active in pro-life communities, women's commission, and the minorities commission. You name it. He has been active in a lot of things. This is the office where our annual appeal is done. A lot of our activity is trying to encourage parishioners to donate and try to explain to them what the money is used for. What we use it for is published annually

Then, we also have a commission that's made up of three Catholic Hospitals, three Catholic Nursing Homes, and the seven Social Service Agencies in our diocese. We come together and try to see that the health care of the poor is provided. If the agency knows that somebody needs some kind of care, we try to work together. It's the three different entities. We have a very active Catholic Charities Board. It's an advisory board. It is made up of people from throughout the diocese. There are thirty-one people on that board. They are the ones that help us to respond to the appeal. They also find out how the money is used so we can demonstrate what is being done.

F: So you are from Cleveland?

K: I'm originally from Cleveland Yes.

F: I'm surprised you didn't stay with the Cleveland Diocese.

K: I was. I thought I was staying with it. When I entered, it was the Cleveland Diocese.

F: They told you that you were coming to Youngstown? Is that what happened?

K: When I entered the convent . . . See, our mother house is in Villa Maria, Pennsylvania, which is right off of Route 422. We started out as a Cleveland religious group. We didn't become papal until the end of the 1940's. But, when I entered, I thought I was entering a community that was very active in all north-eastern Ohio, which was true. I was interested at one time in looking into the different missionary orders. But, I chose this congregation because I knew them. The Cleveland Diocese, at one time, also had Toledo and all of Youngstown. I don't know whether Steubenville. . . . I think that came off of the Columbus Diocese. When the Youngstown Diocese was formed, our sisters were working here. Our mother house is actually located in the Pittsburgh Diocese, but we never looked at ourselves as being a Pittsburgh congregation, because we came out of the Cleveland experience. When we became papal, it meant we could work in any diocese where we had a relationship with

the people of that area.

- F: I'd like to ask you two things. At its worst and at its best, could you describe working in the diocese?
- K: At its best, I've enjoyed being at the hospital. I feel very much a part of the diocese in my present position. I never looked at anything as at its worst. I don't know what you mean when you say, "at its worst working in the diocese."
- F: Have there been any negative moments for you? Any regrets?
- K: There would be negative moments in anything. Getting dark too early at night is a negative for me. No. I can't say that there have been traumatic types of things.
- F: When I ask this question, I always assume that one of the sisters, especially a sister would tell me maybe at the best would be after 1963 due to Vatican II. So many of the changes. . . . If I said at its worst--not saying it was so bad but maybe [it was worse] before Vatican II.
- K: You have to remember I grew up in that period. I was surprised that some felt it was a bad time. I wanted to be a sister very much. If there were any things that were to be considered by others as "bad," I thought well, that was all just part of the game. I didn't look at them as negatives. I wouldn't want to go back to some of the restrictions that we had, but I didn't look at them at the time as unusual. For instance, we had restrictions . . . if you visited your home, you had to be back at the convent at a very early time. That was a real difficulty for the people that had to bring you because we didn't have cars. We didn't drive. But, if you came from the kind of family I did, they understood that. They just made sure that they were the ones pushing me out the door to get to the convent on time. Now, I suppose you could look at it that it shouldn't have been.
- F: But you don't think of that?
- K: No. No. You grow up. I'm sure you did things when you were a child that when you look back now, you'd say, "A child today wouldn't put up with that."
- F: Also, I would think at its best to me, from these interviews, would be the opportunities that the sisters have been given now for administrative work.
- K: See, I had that before Vatican II. So, some sisters

would. Although, we always had sisters that were principals of schools which would be a key administrative position. I think I would look at it more as the church recognizing the signs of the times when Vatican II came along. "Signs of the times" is sort of a little phrase nowadays. I don't want to use it in that sense, but things have changed. I belong to what is called an apostolic community. We were always active. Now, we didn't all drive cars. We didn't do a lot of that kind of thing. There were always some sisters that did. Otherwise you couldn't get around.

But, once they saw that things were changing, our community made changes. I think having English in the Mass and things like that were significant changes for me. I really appreciated that. I liked the Latin, but having that kind of thing made it that you really understood, and you felt a part of it. I can't honestly say that I felt abused in any way. If anyone did, they left. But we didn't have a real difficult time. We were not considered a community that had unusual customs. I think there may have been. I've heard of some. The restriction on time. . . . The restriction on going home. . . . When you are young, you are almost glad to have something, because you have so little that you can offer. If it's approached that way, that this was something that was real special, you do it for God. That's the way I look at it. I wouldn't say everything is rosy, but I don't know of any major problems. I just thank God for my health and the ability to keep going.

F: Is there a mandatory retirement age of seventy for the sisters?

K: No. If you are healthy and you are able to work, you may.

F: Can you stay in this job?

K: Not necessarily. They usually don't have the sisters teaching in a classroom or doing something too strenuous when they are older. I wouldn't advise somebody older to stay in a classroom. I think your ability to react with children may be stressful.

Administrative type work is not time bound or age bound. I wouldn't want to be in it if I or anybody else felt that I would make it difficult for somebody else. Why waste all that knowledge and not serve?

F: Is there anything else you think we need to discuss?

K: I don't know if that's any help to you.

F: You are so impressive, I think, with your knowledge.

Maybe it's because you are on the administrative side [of things]. Well, thank you very much for the interview.

K: You're welcome.