

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY
ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

History of St. Edward Parish

Pastoral Experience

O. H. 71

MONSIGNOR JOHN J. LETTAU

Interviewed

by

Wallace J. Dunne

on

June 4, 1975

MONSIGNOR JOHN JOSEPH LETTAU

The pastor at St. Edward's Parish in Youngstown, Ohio, Monsignor John Lettau, was born in Youngstown on February 7, 1920, the son of Joseph and Katherine Welsch Lettau. After graduating from Ursuline High School in Youngstown, he attended St. Joseph's College in Indiana from 1938 to 1940 and then was accepted at St. Mary's Seminary in Cleveland studying philosophy and theology for six years.

Monsignor Lettau was ordained a priest May 26, 1945 at St. Columba's Cathedral in Youngstown. He assisted at St. Anne's Parish in Brier Hill for one year and then was sent to St. John's Parish in Canton for five years. Returning to Youngstown as secretary to Bishop Emmett Walsh in 1951, he spent fourteen years succeeding to vice-chancellor, chancellor, and vicar-general of the diocese.

In 1965, Monsignor Lettau received an appointment as administrator and then pastor at St. Edward's Parish. In 1970, he celebrated twenty-five years in the priesthood at St. Ed's, where he has served since his arrival in Youngstown.

Therese Belloto

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

YSU Parish Project

INTERVIEWEE: MONSIGNOR JOHN J. LETTAU
INTERVIEWER: Wallace J. Dunne
SUBJECT: History of St. Edward Parish
DATE: June 4, 1975

D: This is an interview with Monsignor John J. Lettau, pastor of St. Edward Parish, for the Youngstown State University Oral History Program by Wallace J. Dunne. The interview is being done at 211 Redondo Road, Youngstown, Ohio on June 4, 1975 at 1:00 p.m.

Monsignor, you've been pastor at St. Edward's for how many years?

L: Since 1965, about ten years now.

D: And before that time you were stationed here?

L: I was chancellor of the diocese from 1955 to 1965 at the office down at the diocese on Wood Street.

D: Could you tell us something about your background, where you were born?

L: I was born in Youngstown on the south side in Mill Creek Park. I went to school at St. Joseph's, which is now the Newman Center down on Wick Avenue. St. Joseph's Parish was a parish for German-speaking Catholics. Then in the Depression, when I was going into the eighth grade, we transferred to St. Patrick's Parish on the south side, which was a lot closer and didn't have to ride the bus or the streetcar. I finished at St. Patrick's School in 1934 and then spent four years at Ursuline High School.

I signed up to study for the priesthood for the diocese of Cleveland then, and studied two years at St. Joseph's College in Rensselaer, Indiana. Then I was accepted at St. Mary's Seminary in Cleveland and spent six years there studying philosophy and theology.

Because of the Second World War, the classes were held summer and winter so we were ordained in five years. I was ordained on May 26, 1945 at St. Columba's Cathedral in Youngstown. Then my assignments: I was assistant at St. Anne's Parish in Brier Hill for one year. Then in 1946, I was sent to St. John's Parish in Canton for five years, and then came back to Youngstown as secretary to Bishop Emmet M. Walsh in 1951. I spent some fourteen years there as secretary to the bishop, as vice-chancellor, chancellor, and vicar-general of the diocese. Then in 1965, I was appointed administrator and then pastor of St. Edward's Parish on the north side and here I've been ever since.

- D: Do you still maintain the post as vicar-general of the diocese?
- L: There are two vicars-general. Bishop William Hughes is one vicar-general, active vicar-general in the chancellery and then I am a second vicar-general. They have had, for a number of years, two vicars-general to the bishop. He and I both are vicars-general.
- D: After you came to St. Edward's, you must have known quite a bit about the parish when you first arrived and I'm sure you've learned quite a bit since you got here. Could you tell us something about the founding of St. Edward Parish, what were the backgrounds to it's establishment?
- L: If you look at the present main building, that is, the church and elementary school, the cornerstone has "1917" on it. Now the north side of Youngstown had for many years, one parish, St. Columba's Parish, which is now the Cathedral. The north side was growing quite extensively, so in 1916, Bishop Farrelly of Cleveland established a new parish on the north side and purchased property on the corner of Ohio Avenue and Benita. He appointed Father Maurice Griffin as the first pastor. Father Maurice Griffin was assistant to Monsignor Mears, the pastor of St. Columba's Parish.

Ground was broken in 1917 on the first building, which was a temporary church and school. The plans were that this was to be a temporary church and after some years, they would build a permanent church on the corner of Ohio and Tod Lane and turn this church into a hall, a parish hall, around which the school was built.

The first class opened up September 2, 1917 and was staffed by the sisters of the Holy Humility of Mary. Now that was the beginning of St. Edward's Parish.

- D: Was Rayen School in existence at that time?
- L: Rayen School existed at that time downtown where the present Board of Education building is. That was called the Old Rayen School. From what I understand, the present Rayen School, across from St. Edward's, and St. Edward's Church and School were both built the same year, in 1917.
- D: I notice a lot of similarity between the brick and this sort of thing in the buildings. It was the same coloring. Was there some background to that?
- L: I'm not certain whether it was the same architect or the same builder. One or the other. I believe it was the same builder who built both and the materials, of course, are quite similar. If you study them, you'll notice that they're quite similar.
- D: As the parish grew, were there any changes or were the plans for the parish changed in any way?
- L: Probably the best way I can explain that would be that the first pastor was Father Griffin, Father Maurice Griffin. In about 1933, Father Maurice Griffin was transferred to Cleveland to a big parish on the east side, St. Philomena's Parish. Father Maloney, who was pastor at St. Patrick's, Hubbard, was made pastor at St. Edward's. But he couldn't cope with the parish and he resigned within a year. Father William Nash, later Monsignor Nash, became the pastor in 1934. He remained pastor until his death in 1965 when I succeeded him. During that time, of course, they went through the Depression years, but in that time the parish gradually grew and he was quite interested in education. One of the first things he did was to

build a junior high school down on the corner of Redondo and Ohio Avenues.

The back history of that founding was in 1939, when Father Nash started a ninth grade at St. Edward's in the present elementary school building. His purpose was twofold: One was that most of the children were going to Rayen High School and Father Nash wanted them to go to Ursuline High School, which was a Catholic high school on the north side. He was successful in this because since that time about ninety percent of the children go to Ursuline. The second reason for the ninth grade was that he wanted to save the first year's tuition, which they would have to pay at Ursuline High School and they could attend another grade at St. Edward's School free.

The Bernard family purchased the old Yale School on the site of Ohio and Redondo and presented it to the parish and Monsignor Nash for a junior high school. The junior high school, then was transferred to this building. Then in 1954, I believe it was, Monsignor Nash, without a drive, but simply through the generosity of the people, built the present junior high school on that site. The old Yale School was demolished and the junior high has been on that site ever since. So the parish developed in that way.

Then on Monsignor Nash's fiftieth anniversary as a priest, and I'm not sure as to the date, the parish asked him what he wanted as a gift. He said he wanted a four-room school, so they had a campaign and in his honor on his fiftieth anniversary, they presented him with fifty thousand dollars. He built the present Edwardian Hall behind the main building, which at that time was used as a first grade.

The development of the parish continued and when I became pastor in 1965, the actual north line of the parish was Gypsy Lane. The area known as Liberty Township officially belonged to St. Rose Parish, Girard. When I came, there were some three or four hundred families out there who were going to St. Edward's, although they really belonged to St. Rose, Girard. The explanation was that St. Rose didn't have room. They went to the pastor of St. Rose, Monsignor Kelly, who's now retired, and through his

permission and the Bishop's, Monsignor Nash took these families and their children into the school.

Bishop Malone, who succeeded Bishop Walsh, then called me in and Monsignor Kelly and Father Roach, from St. Vincent DePaul, Vienna, which was a north parish, and asked who was going to take Liberty Township. St. Rose Parish, through Monsignor Kelly, indicated that they couldn't handle it. And Father Roach had no school, so I agreed to take all of Liberty Township all the way to Tibbetts-Wick Road with the understanding that we would take all the children who wanted to come to our parochial school in the fall. This was agreed upon.

Then St. Edward's northern line went from Gypsy Lane to Tibbetts-Wick Road, which if you look on a map, tripled the size of the parish. And the first year our school was jammed because we took the children from St. Rose. But after that, through many reasons the enrollment declined somewhat and so we have taken all those children in our school without any problem whatsoever.

- D: I notice, of course, with the extension of the boundary you pick up quite a few other families. From what you've said about the development of the parish, it seems as though the parish would have had a pretty firm financial basis to have presented Monsignor Nash with a junior high building and another building on his anniversary. Is it true that they have had a more or less well-to-do class [of families] at St. Edward's?
- L: Yes. There were four or five families who were quite well-to-do. The majority of the parish, during those years I would say, would be middle class. But Monsignor Nash had quite an influence on the people and on their contributing. He raised their level of giving every year. He also was quite mission-minded. By that I mean he helped other parishes and missions.

One of the important organizations in the parish is the Mission Club. The Mission Club has a clam-bake every year, a charity clambake. This was started in approximately 1938 or 1939. The profits from this clambake for years were given to parishes in the diocese that needed help, including convents, and so forth. This continued until I came as pastor and I continued to give the profits, which amounted

to four or five thousand dollars a year, to new parishes, small parishes, mission parishes, until because of many reasons, we began to run short of money.

Afterwards, the Mission Club said that rather than ask the people for more money we would give the parish the profits from the clambake. That is the way it was handled. We still have the clambake. We serve about five hundred men each time, and the profits are given to the parish now.

I think the parish always had about five or six well-to-do families, a great majority of middle class families and then some poor families. Today it is even more varied. We have four or five well-to-do families. Quite a number of suburban families are mostly middle class and middle class in the city. Then we have quite a few very poor families. Today it is much more difficult to raise the money than it was then.

- D: Was there any certain ethnic group that helped in the founding of St. Edward's or was it more or less a variety of ethnic groups that came?
- L: Just looking over the history of St. Edward's Parish, the majority of the people who were chartered members of the parish were Irish. The parish remained heavily Irish in character until, I suppose, the Second World War. Then other nationalities joined St. Edward's Parish.

One of the stories that is told is that Father Kenney, pastor of the Immaculate Conception, which was an Irish parish [on the east side], worked with the city administration for a long time to build a bridge from the east side to the downtown area and the north side. When the bridge was finally built, he found out that it went both ways. Instead of the people coming to the east side, many of the Irish families from the east side moved across the bridge and up on the north side to St. Edward's. So many families have joined St. Edward's Parish as a result of that. They came from the east side of town. Among the old-timers, it's sort of a humorous story that Father Kenney, in building the Oak Street Bridge found out that it went both ways.

- D: As the families changed up here and as the ethnic makeup of the parish changed, did the school change at all? Do you have any recollections of that?
- L: The school really grew. It grew, probably to a high of somewhere between nine hundred and a thousand students. Then about ten years ago, it hit its peak when I recall we registered 135 children in the first grade. There were nine grades and three rooms in each grade. Then it began to drop, not because of people moving away, but apparently because of the [decreasing] birthrate, I suppose. Each year then, we have dropped one room. So the school declined to where now it has about 630.

The families that moved in, I would say probably second to the Irish families, would be Italian families, and very possibly we have more Italian families in St. Edward's Parish than either St. Anthony's or Mount Carmel, which are Italian parishes, whose people live on the north side within the limits of our parish. They're nationality parishes and we're territorial.

There are quite a number of German families up here who came from St. Joseph's Parish, which was our home parish and was closed to become the Newman Center. Therefore, those who lived on the north side transferred here.

We have also, quite a number of Slovak families, Polish families, and Lebanese families who have joined the parish. So the parish which really began as predominantly Irish, now has mostly all nationalities.

Another interesting thing: As a result of St. Elizabeth's Hospital and North Side Hospital and Osteopathic Hospital we now have quite a number of families from the Philippine Islands, from South America, from Puerto Rico, and from Korea, mostly doctors who are interning and some remained on the north side to practice medicine. So it is quite cosmopolitan today.

Actually, I would say that the parish is probably bigger now than it ever was in its history, that is, by reason of number of families. The parish [boundary] is, of course, below Gypsy Lane in Mahoning County, above Gypsy Lane in Trumbull County. Right now I would say about two-thirds

of the parish, maybe about 1100 families, live in Mahoning County and about 500 to 600 live in Trumbull County. So about two-thirds live in the city, one-third in the suburbs. And I also believe that in accepting the large area in Liberty Township, we probably saved the parish from being shut off and dying because as people move out from the city, they move into the county and they still remain in the same parish. So I think it was a good choice when the Bishop offered us Liberty Township.

- D: When the parish was founded, were Catholics in a minority on the north side of Youngstown?
- L: Oh, I would say so. I would say they were in a minority. St. Columba, of course, was the Irish parish. St. Joseph's, which is two or three blocks away, was the German parish. St. Cyril and Methodius was the Slovak parish. For the people of Youngstown, the predominant religion, of course, was Protestant. And so Catholics were in a definite minority and certainly on the north side, I would say so. Now today, I don't know what the percentage would be, maybe forty or forty-five percent Catholic all over the city. But they were a minority, yes.
- D: As the parish went into the Depression, do you have any recollections of how the parish made out during that period? Was the parish sustained by a few well-to-do people or did it falter or grow?
- L: This was while I was in high school. At that time there were no well-to-do families in the parish. And I recall looking at a contribution sheet in about 1933 and the highest contributor might be \$3.00 a Sunday and most of them \$1.00 or \$0.50. Comparing that to today, you wonder how they ever existed, but with the Depression and low wages, there were low costs, too. So I would say the parish wasn't supported by any well-to-do people because they had very few in those days. It was mostly everybody together.
- D: Monsignor Nash was pastor at that time.
- L: Yes. He, I think, got the men in the parish to excavate under the present church and put in the hall and the classrooms we have today, at that time with the help of some of these people who

were out of work.

- D: You're really the fourth pastor then of St. Edward's?
- L: Yes. Father Griffin--he was later Monsignor Griffin--died in Cleveland. Father Maloney just stayed a year. Monsignor Nash died here. And then I would be the fourth pastor since 1917.
- D: What kinds of things occurred that made it difficult for Father Maloney to cope with the parish?
- L: I've heard different stories. He had been pastor at St. Patrick's in Hubbard, which was a small parish. When Father Griffin was moved to Cleveland in 1933, we were in the middle of the Depression. St. Edward's Parish was growing and they had financial problems. And I understand there were some factions in the parish, too. All these things together just proved too much for him and so then he resigned.

Father Nash came down from Immaculate Conception Parish in Willoughby and very quickly and very competently took the parish in hand and led them to where he was able to build a junior high school, which at that time cost \$450,000, and a little school that cost \$50,000 without any professional drive. He unified the parish and with a heavy emphasis on education. His complete emphasis was on education.

While the original plans were to make the church into a parish hall and build a church on the corner, the Depression in 1929 and 1930 stopped it then. Monsignor Nash told me that he was thinking of building the church, when the need came for education and instead, he sold the parish on the idea of building a junior high school where it presently stands.

Then when I came as pastor, the people brought up again, "Are you going to build a church?" And by that time, the thinking in the diocese was that building an expensive church was not reasonable. So we decided rather to renovate and beautify the present church, which we have done. Also, it wasn't necessary because we have another chapel at the junior high which seats about three hundred people.

We felt that it was not financially responsible to build a church with the setup we had and with the future of city parishes. We simply decided then that we would not build a church. We abandoned the idea completely. We were probably very wise, because if we had, we'd have been heavily in debt and we'd have a much more difficult time to get along than we have now.

- D: Obviously, you cope very well with the problems of being pastor at St. Ed's. You've been here now for quite a few years. Do you have similar problems that Father Maloney may have had? How do you find being pastor, is it difficult?
- L: It's a very difficult task. In fact, I find it a more difficult job than being chancellor of the diocese because supporting the chancellor, is the bishop. He is the one in charge and he makes the decisions.

I would say the problems are probably the same today as they were in Father Maloney's time and magnified. The parish is a fine parish. One of the assets of St. Edward's Parish is the fine people that belong to it. The problem, probably much like his, is a question of finance. It's similar in a way: The cost of maintaining a parish was a problem then and is a problem now. The cost of maintaining a school today is as it was then. Salaries are larger and, of course, the wages are higher, too. So, I would say the problems are quite similar.

Father Maloney was quite a bit older when he came. I suppose all those things together and then coming from a small parish just proved to be too much for him. This is what the people have told me. He just decided it was too much and he resigned.

And, of course, Father Nash came. He was 55 years old when he came here, which is the same age I am now. He was here 31 years as pastor and died at 85. He was thinking clearly in his eighties, as clearly as a man in his forties. He had a way with the people and certainly could raise money and could accomplish what he wanted to accomplish.

D: Probably any pastor at St. Ed's would have difficulty maintaining the parish and providing the services without assistance. Has there been a large number of priests who have been assistants?

L: Yes, there certainly has. It started out with Father Griffin and then he was assigned an assistant and then as the parish grew, they had more and more assistants. At one time, in the 1950s, there were so many assistants at St. Edward's that some priests called it a monastery. Then with Father Nash's death, the diocese for various reasons, for example, shortage of priests, began taking priests away. Where once they had four or five assistants here and three assistants when I came here in 1965, now there's only one assistant. We're running the parish with two priests fully assigned here and two priests who live here but with jobs downtown, and they say Mass. It's just a question of the parish growing larger and the priests, in number, growing smaller.

D: Do you think that that same problem is shared by other parishes?

L: Yes, I would say so. All over the diocese, they have been taking away priests. I think St. Edward's felt it more because they had more assistants in the 1950s than the other parishes. But this happened all over. We probably lost more than anyone else.

Of course, when you have to run a parish with two priests, you run it with two priests, but you have a lot of help from lay people and it can be done. Now they have quite a number of priests and they're starting to give priests to parishes again.

D: How did it happen that the Holy Humility Sisters came to St. Edward's? Have you ever heard that story told?

L: I never did. Of course, the sisters of the Holy Humility of Mary had their motherhouse at Villa Maria, Pennsylvania, which is maybe ten or twelve miles from the city limits of Youngstown. So they were quite close to the north side of Youngstown. I've never heard the story, but I presume that Father Griffin or the Bishop at that time asked if they wanted to take this new school and

they accepted. They have been here ever since.

At one time we had up to fifteen to twenty sisters teaching in the school. Now we only have two. The convent has rooms for approximately 22 sisters and at the height of the growth of the parish, Monsignor Nash put an addition on the convent, on the chapel and on rooms. This is when the convent was full in the 1950s when the parish was at it's height, that is, with respect to the school.

Now as I mentioned, though, with regard to the growth of the parish, the parish itself is bigger today than it has ever been in it's history. But for many reasons--the shortage of vocations--there are not the sisters available that there were. Now we only have two. At the school, we have carried on through our lay teachers who have taken their place and that has been another development.

We appointed the first lay principal in the diocese when we lost the last sister in our junior high school and since then appointed a second lay principal, Mr. Dunne. When our first lay principal, Mr. Rozzo, became principal in Niles, Mr. Dunne took over both schools.

This is an interesting development because now it is becoming a fact all over the diocese that not only in elementary level, but in high school level the diocese is appointing lay principals. This is partly because of a shortage of nuns and secondly, because many of the nuns or religious do not want to be administrators. So that has been another change in this parish. The school is just as fine because of the dedication of the priests and nuns and the lay people who have taken their place. In that respect, things are very optimistic. The pessimistic side is the finances.

- D: Is there anything that is outstanding in your mind or some incident or year, perhaps, that you would cite as being one of the finer moments of St. Edward Parish?
- L: There have been many moments. I think one that I enjoyed was when I celebrated my twenty-fifth anniversary as a priest in 1970. The school children had a Mass in which they honored my twenty-five years in the priesthood. Then at the

insistence of the assistants, against my wishes, they had a Mass and a reception for me in the parish hall. Not knowing what they would say in the sermon, I preached the sermon myself. That was a very enjoyable year, the twenty-fifth.

The parish has had it's ups and downs. I would say that the people in the parish are the finest people I have met. I've had the opportunities and have been asked to go to other parishes and I've refused because of the spirit of the people.

I would have to give the credit for that to Monsignor Nash for what he instilled in them over the 31 years. They are mission-minded, namely, and are interested in other parishes and other people outside their own parish. They want to have a parish and a school that is second to none. That's the spirit of the people in St. Edward's. While there are always some who are difficult, the vast majority of them are very good.

D: Has Vatican II had any effect on St. Edward's Parish aside from the liturgy?

L: Actually, the liturgy would be part of it. St. Edward's Parish is a very traditional parish. They resisted the changes that were brought about by Vatican II as I, myself, did. Most of the priests who were out twenty years or more found the changes very difficult.

But through gradual education of the people, and through the use of the parish council, we have brought the parish along so that they have accepted the changes: The idea of the liturgy, the Mass in English, the altar facing the people was accepted rather well. The question of folk Masses was opposed until through the parish council we proposed a Latin Mass and a folk Mass and they voted this and the people accepted it.

The redecorating of the church; these things were all worked out slowly, chiefly through the parish council, which was elected by the people. We found that when there was a change that was good and it was proposed in the parish council, and they voted for it, the people accepted it even though they might not have liked it. So I would say that while it was slow here because the parish is quite traditional, that today this parish is probably as

far along as any parish there could be as far as the changes recommended by Vatican II. We have it all.

- D: Monsignor, we were talking about the effect of Vatican II on St. Edward's Parish and, of course, that's had it's effects on the diocese in general as well. Has St. Edward's been in some way involved in a key faction in the development of the diocese of Youngstown?
- L: Yes. Because of the leadership of Monsignor Nash, for example, and the people of this parish. They have had quite an effect upon the development of the church in Youngstown. As one example, when Bishop Walsh, in the early 1950s, decided to enlarge Ursuline High School and to build a new high school on the south side in honor of Cardinal Mooney, who was a Youngstown resident, he had to organize a campaign of quite considerable dimensions.

There was not too much interest among the parishes and really, it was through the leadership of Monsignor Nash and a small group of dedicated men from St. Edward's who really spearheaded these drives that the campaign was successful. Then, in the midst of this, the Cathedral burned and with the raising of money for the two new high schools, they had to add the raising of money to build a new Cathedral. Again through the leadership of Monsignor Nash and these gentlemen that I referred to in St. Edward's Parish, they gave the leadership to the rest of the city and got other men and other parishes interested.

During these drives for the high school and for the Cathedral, St. Edward's Parish raised sometimes twice and three times the quota assigned to them on the basis of their income. Certainly, I would say that without the leadership of Monsignor Nash and the parishioners up here that those drives would never have been the success they were. It would have been much more difficult to put them over. That's an example of how they provided the leadership then. Even today, if you look at laymen and laywomen who are in posts of leadership in the city and in the diocese, there are many of them from St. Edward's Parish because there is so much dedication and talent in this parish.

- D: It brings up the point of stability in the parish. Has there been a large change among the founding families or are there still some founding families in the parish, some of the older families?
- L: Yes, there are. Until recently, we had honor rolls in the sanctuary from the Second World War, which is some 35 years ago. In looking over this honor roll, I was surprised to see that of the boys who served, for example, in the Second World War, many of them are still in the parish raising their families here. So the parish has an unusual stability.
- Many times, families have moved from St. Edward's Parish and have come back because they miss the atmosphere of the north side and the parish, and the friendliness of the people up here. So the parish has remained very stable. It's really surprising in view of the way people move today.
- D: You're certainly qualified to sight the stability. You've been here at St. Ed's for how many years?
- L: Actually, I've been pastor for ten years, but when I came to Youngstown as secretary to the bishop, I had no place to live and Monsignor Nash invited me to live at St. Edward's. Since my first love was parish work, in exchange for living here, I began to help them. I've really been helping them through saying Mass each day, through teaching the ninth grade, through doing other parish work along with the work downtown. So I really have been working at St. Edward's for 25 years now.
- D: I understand that the ninth grade will be transferred to Ursuline High School next year from St. Edward's. With the end of the ninth grade at St. Ed's this year, how many years of teaching does that mark for you at St. Ed's?
- L: It will mark 25 years teaching ninth grade religion each day. That's a long time.
- D: I would imagine that many of the people you had in ninth grade then, you found their children reappearing in school at the lower grades?
- L: Yes, and in the other direction, the parents of the children in school today, I taught in the ninth grade and at least six to ten of our teachers

in the school now and previous to this are boys and girls whom I had taught in the ninth grade here at St. Edward's School.

D: That adds to some of the stability in itself, then doesn't it?

L: Yes. When you see them and you have their children and then you remember when they went to school here and in some cases, one or two instances, younger grandparents who had gone to school here.

D: Would you care to cite any of the people from the parish who have had outstanding roles in the community?

L: I would say probably one of the greatest was Charles Cushwa, who died recently. He was active in St. Edward's Parish, in community affairs, in city affairs, in the hospital, diocesan affairs; you name it, he was involved in them all.

Another man was William Lyden, Sr., founder of the Lyden Oil Company, who has been active in this parish and in the Mission Club since it's beginning.

Another is A. P. O'Horo, the founder of the A. P. O'Horo Construction Company, who in many ways was active in diocesan and parish affairs and in charity to other people and helping young men get through college.

Another would be John Coakley, for example, whose family had the Automatic Sprinkler Corporation. He is quite active in the parish. You could go on and name others, but those four come to my mind who have been in leadership roles in the parish here.

D: So St. Edward's could be termed a very civically involved parish.

L: Yes, civically as well as religiously.

D: Are there any other things you would like to add to this brief oral history of St. Edward's that you think might be pertinent?

L: Well, I think one thing: In the field of education in recent years, parochial schools have been closing, and as they closed, St. Edward's Parish and the Immaculate Conception Parish, to mention two, have absorbed the children from these schools as they closed.

I would mention, for example, when St. Columba's Cathedral School closed, when St. Joseph's School closed, when St. Casimir's and Sts. Peter and Paul closed, St. Edward's Parish and the Immaculate Conception Parish on the east side absorbed most of the children so that they could continue to enjoy a Catholic education. Of course, as I've already indicated we absorbed all the children from Liberty Township from St. Rose Parish in Girard. Still we are keeping our school on a high quality and high caliber of education.

D: Education is still one of the main functions of St. Edward's Parish.

L: Yes. One further aspect of this, of course, that as a result of Vatican II there is a great emphasis on adult education. So, in educating our children we are carrying this on but we are now concentrating on adult education for adults, parents, and others in the parish, in their faith.

D: I want to thank you very much for your time this afternoon, Monsignor. I know that this has been a very interesting interview for me and I'm sure it will be for any who listen to this tape. Thank you very much.

L: You're welcome.

END OF INTERVIEW