

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

History of the Youngstown Diocese

Personal Experience

O.H. 1565

SISTER LUCILLE MARIE NUNCIA GEISE

Interviewed

by

Stephanie Fisher

on

October 17, 1992

SISTER LUCILLE MARIE NUNCIA GEISE

Sister Lucille was born in Youngstown, Ohio on Nov. 14, 1913, during a snow storm. She was baptized two days later with her cousin, Lillian Beil. When Lillian grew up, she became a Dominican Sister, while Lucille joined the sisters of Notre Dame. She had a strong Catholic upbringing and wanted to be a teacher. In 1933, Sister Lucille joined the Notre Dame order, a teaching order.

Her religious training was at Sisters' College in Cleveland, Ohio where she received her B.S.E. In 1967, after six summers of classes, she received her M.A. at The Catholic University of America in Washington D.C. Her assignments were: St. Peter's, Canton, Ohio; St. Mary's, Massillon, Ohio; St. Mary and St. James, Warren; Immaculate Heart of Mary, Austintown; St. Joseph, Randolph; and St. Aloysius, East Liverpool.

Sister Lucille has been a teacher and administrator at St. Mary's for over twenty-three years. She has taught grades four through eight. For the last twenty years, she has been principal and administrator of C.C.D. [Confraternity of Christian Doctrine]. She also enjoys working with the R.C.I.A. [Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults].

In recognition of her work, she has received the "Sister of the Year" award in 1992. The organizations that she has been involved in are the Parish Council, the Liturgy Committee and R.C.I.A., C.C.D., and the Adult Education Committee. In her spare time, she likes to keep updated as to what is going on in the Church today, read, sew, garden, and write.

Over the years, Sister Lucille has seen many changes in the Youngstown Diocese, such as the need for day care centers and latch-key programs. She would like to see an honorary list of important people in the diocese who were or are its builders and pioneers. For her years of service, she would like to be remembered as a woman of the Church and as a teacher.

-Stephanie Fisher

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INTERVIEWEE: SISTER LUCILLE MARIE NUNCIA GEISE
INTERVIEWER: Stephanie Fisher
SUBJECT: St. John, St. Mary, involvement in Diocese
DATE: October 17, 1992

F: This is an interview with Sister Lucille Marie Nuncia Geise, for the Youngstown State University Oral History Program, on the History of the Youngstown Diocese, by Stephanie Fisher, on October 17, 1992.

Okay, Sister Lucille, I need to know a little bit about yourself. Could you tell me where you were born and when?

G: I was born in Youngstown, Ohio on November 14, 1913. There was a severe snow storm at that time. My dad was the motor man on a streetcar, and he couldn't get out of the streetcar that night. He couldn't take it back to the barn, so he had to stay in it all night when I was born. I was baptized almost the very next day. I was born on the fourteenth and baptized on the sixteenth. My cousin was born about two weeks before that. Both of us became religious. She became a Dominican Sister, and I became a Notre Dame Sister.

F: So, how many brothers and sisters did you have?

G: I have three brothers and one sister. We went to St. Joseph's School up on the Northside, I guess, because all of my relatives went there. My cousins were all there, and my mother and dad were married there.

Although I lived only two blocks from St. Patrick's, I did not attend that school.

F: So, did you have a very strong Catholic upbringing?

G: I would say I did. I not only went to Catholic grade school, but I also went to Notre Dame High School in Cleveland for four years. Then I attended Sisters' College for training to be a teacher. Those were all Catholic institutions.

F: So, what do you believe lead you to become a nun?

G: I would think one of the things was the fact that I liked the sisters and teaching school. As a matter of fact, next door to our house was Monroe School which was a public school where they taught the blind and the deaf plus normal children. I went there for kindergarten. I always wanted, even as a child, to be a teacher. I said to my sister one day, "You've got to be the religious, because I'm going to be a teacher." She said, "Any old day." It turned out that I became a sister and a teacher. I always enjoyed teaching.

F: What was your religious training like once you decided to become a nun?

G: I went to Notre Dame convent. I entered when I was a senior in February of 1933. There, I was trained to be a religious and to be a sister. I had gone there as a young girl after the eighth grade. I was with a group of other girls who also wanted to become sisters. We were called "aspirants." We lived a religious life: getting up early in morning, going to prayers, listening at conference, et cetera. We weren't allowed to go out for visits or even to go home. We had only certain vacations in which we were permitted to go home, but we did manage to get an excellent education.

F: So, what made you choose this particular order--the Sisters of Notre Dame?

G: I guess I chose it because I had these religious as teachers, and I admired them very much. I had some very progressive teachers who were far ahead of their time, especially Sister Magdela who was very creative. We did all kinds of activities in her class: [We did] much more than ordinary classes would have done at that time.

F: So, she was in the same order that you joined?

G: That's right. I had an excellent eighth grade teacher who was an artist. She taught us all kinds of things in art. Her name was Sister Elizabeth Burke. She was

from Canton. She was sent to California to teach. That's why I went to Notre Dame, because I had wonderful Notre Dame sisters. My cousin went to the Dominicans because, after the fourth or fifth grade, she went out to St. Dominic's in Youngstown. The Dominican Sisters taught there, so she became a Dominican.

F: Do you know roughly what year the order was established?

G: It was established in 1850, in Germany. If you recall something about the people in Germany . . . Austria . . . they're very much for their own country. Two German teachers wanted to become sisters. They asked a priest what to do, and he suggested that they couldn't join the order that was already in Holland, but they could have somebody teach them from Holland and establish their own order. That's what they did. Then, about 1870 . . . sometime like that, they had Kultur Kampf in Germany, and the sisters were forbidden to wear their habits. Much of their property was confiscated. So, our sisters left over there and came to the United States. We were invited to stay in Cleveland at St. Peter's in Cleveland. That's downtown around East 17th Street. It's a little east from the cathedral. So, they established themselves there and very quickly had many schools to teach, because there were many Germans who came over at that time.

F: So, educationally, where did you receive your bachelor's degree?

G: From St. John's College--but at that time, it was Sisters' College.

F: Were you on a full scholarship?

G: No.

F: You didn't have to take care of that part? Was it provided by a businessman or outside of the community?

G: It was provided by the community. They did give us tests and things like that to put us in groups, because those who were from a foreign order couldn't do as well because of the lack of English. The Polish St. Joseph's sisters had a hard time. We didn't.

F: Were you able to teach in the Catholic school system while you were working on your bachelor's degree?

G: Yes, because we had two years of full college. We went everyday. The rest of our college--the other two years--we had to make up with Saturdays and summer courses. We finally made it, but it took a long time.

F: Did you advance past a bachelor's degree?

G: Yes, I went to The Catholic University of America and received my M.A. from there. This was done in the summer. It was very interesting. I became acquainted with Washington D.C., its politics, the center of government, et cetera.

F: Did it take four summers?

G: It took six summers.

F: Throughout obtaining your bachelor's and master's degrees, were you with the Youngstown Diocese?

G: Yes, most of the time, because I was counting the years I spent in the Youngstown Diocese. [It comes to about] forty-eight years.

F: What year did you start with the Youngstown Diocese?

G: In 1939.

F: Okay.

G: I started then, and I came here. I was here for one year; then I went to Canton. I was there for about four years. I was back and forth with St. Michael's and St. Boniface, Cleveland, but I wasn't up there very long.

F: So, that time was with the Cleveland Diocese?

G: Yes.

F: How did you feel when you heard that the Youngstown Diocese was formed?

G: I was cheering, because it was going to be our town that had a diocese. Even though it was poor, we thought it was a great blessing. I remember I was in the school yard at St. Peter's in Canton, and one of the priests--I think it was Monsignor Habig--came across the yard, and he said, "You know we belong to the Youngstown Diocese?" I was so happy about the fact that we belonged to the Youngstown Diocese, my hometown.

F: Was there a big meeting where everybody. . . . I heard it taped from Monsignor Prokop that they announced the Youngstown Diocese, who would be in charge, and who would be running everything. Were you present at this time?

G: I wasn't present at that, but I knew Bishop McFadden, because he was out at Sisters' College quite often. I knew his sister, Mrs. Gotton, and I had his niece in school. We'd put programs on, and he was there.

F: How was it . . . the early Youngstown Diocese in 1943?

G: Well, first of all, they had to find a building. I remember they didn't have a new building. They did try the one they have there on Elm Street. They worked hard, and little by little they fixed it up. I remember going down the hall, and they had one of these tanks for water. You put your little cup underneath and got your drink of water. It was poor in the beginning, but they worked hard.

The outstanding thing, I think, about the Youngstown Diocese was its spirit. It was always a friendly spirit. Everybody wanted to come here, because it was friendly and progressive. People seemed to get a lot out of Youngstown. The teaching sisters who came here liked the Youngstown Diocese.

F: What year, do you believe, [was the start of] the development of the Catholic Schools for the Youngstown Diocese? You started off with one school, and I believe, two busses. That's what I was quoted before. Do you remember?

G: No. All of the Catholic schools in Youngstown at the time in 1943 belonged to the Youngstown Diocese. They developed rapidly under the direction of Bishop Malone when he was superintendent of the Diocesan School in Youngstown. Every one of them. So, it would be like St. Joe's, St. Columba's, Sacred Heart, any Catholic Church which had a school belonged to the new diocese.

We were talking the other night with Father Brentgartner. I said, "How did your priests feel?" Because, when it was cut off, those who were from Youngstown didn't get a chance to come back or choose. Did they want to stay in Cleveland, or did they want to come to Youngstown? Some of the Clevelanders wanted to go back, and some of the Youngstown people wanted to come back here; because at that time, we had a lot of vocations--principally, I would say from the Southside. Just like I showed you that article. Quite a few.

F: What was your first assignment?

G: My first assignment in the diocese was St. Mary's, Massillon in 1939.

- F: One year you stayed here?
- G: One year, I stayed at St. Mary's, and then, went to Canton. I came back in 1971, and I've been here ever since.
- F: What was your first assignment in the Youngstown area?
- G: I was to teach the sixth grade at St. Mary's, Massillon. Another job was taking care of the choir boys. On Sunday, they would sing with the men. The men weren't too good about discipline with the boys. They let the boys do what they wanted. Then the organist, Professor Maurice Snoeck, asked for the sisters to come to the choir to watch the boys. That was one of the extra things I had to do. I also had the church. I decorated the church and kept things in the sacristies in order.
- F: What school systems did you teach in Youngstown?
- G: I taught in the Youngstown Diocesan school system. Bishop Malone became the Superintendent of Schools. He would visit the schools. I know at The Catholic University of America, when I was there, they always wanted to see what we had in Youngstown, because we were so far ahead of some of the other places. Our manuals, our course of study, and things like that [were more progressive]. I remember bringing them to class, and they said, "This is marvelous!"
- F: What else made you jump ahead of everybody else . . . aided the diocese in it's growth?
- G: Just the way they studied. Another thing I noticed was that when I was going to Catholic University, Bishop Malone sent a lot of the young priests there to study. I remember going to some of them and asking them questions, "What did you get on a test? What are some of the questions they asked?" Mostly what were the questions. Father Leonard was there at that time. Do you know Father Leonard?
- F: No.
- G: There were numbers of priests that were there. Maybe about six of them at the same time. They' stayed at Caldwell Hall. That's a hall for priests. We had other places where we stayed. I was at Shield's Hall.
- F: What grades have you taught?
- G: I taught every grade from fourth to eighth. I taught one college class during the summertime. [I taught] high school once in a while.

F: What age do you prefer to teach?

G: I think intermediate is most interesting. That's what I have taught most in my life. Teaching adults is rewarding, also.

F: Have you done a lot of administrative work?

G: Well, I've been doing it since . . . I would say the last twenty-five years. The administration of C.C.D. [Confraternity of Christian Doctrine]--the school of religion. When I was in St. James, Warren, I began administration work. I've been doing it ever since.

F: But, when you were in Youngstown, you just taught fourth through eighth, and you weren't involved in any type of administration?

G: No. I taught at Immaculate Heart. Most of the time, I had the eighth grade there.

F: Do you have a favorite assignment?

G: I guess I really don't have any particular one. I enjoy the work I'm doing now, adult education, which is different. I enjoyed teaching. I always did. Of all the places I've been, St. Mary's, Massillon is my favorite.

F: Now, Massillon is with what diocese?

G: Youngstown.

F: Oh, it is?

G: It's the Youngstown Diocese.

F: You've basically been in Massillon, Ohio for fifty years . . . for twenty years.

G: There's ten years at St. Joe's, Randolph that's out in the country. Have you ever been out there in Portage County?

F: No.

G: They had a grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes that they've built similar to the one in Lourdes, France. I took care of the grotto. They had a country school. But, from the time I got there until the time I left, the school grew from about 150 to about 360 students. Now, it's back down to its little country status. I enjoyed working out there too.

F: What, do you believe, a typical day has been like for you over the years?

G: A typical day?

F: I'm sure it's changed a lot since Vatican II. Could you tell me what typical life was like before and after Vatican II?

G: Well, before Vatican II, you would get up sometime around five o'clock in the morning. You would get dressed, come downstairs, and probably have morning prayer in the chapel. Then, you would go to church for Mass. You weren't permitted to eat or drink anything before receiving communion. You had to fast. Then, you would come back from Mass and have breakfast usually in silence. Then, we went to school. There was a regular school program that you followed . . . like recess, dinnertime, and class time. [There were] different times for reading, English, spelling, and all the subjects. Then after school, you would clean your room and do some preparation for school. After that, you would go home at about 4:30 or 5:00 p.m. You would have a little "holy hour." There would be supper at six o'clock. After supper, you would study. That was your day. [There was] no television.

Now, you get up on your own. You say your own prayers in the morning--at least I do. We get our own breakfast--whatever we want. Then, we go over to church for Mass. But, first I come to school and unpack my school bag, then [I] go to Mass at 8:15 a.m. After Mass, I usually come over to the office and take care of the correspondence that has to be done, ordering things needed. I set up the programs for the R.C.I.A. [Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults], which is a class for adults who wish to become Catholic. It's held on Wednesday, but it takes a whole day or more just to get things put together. In the afternoon, I continue this work. I come home at about 4:30 p.m. At about 5:15 p.m., we have our prayers, and that lasts about fifteen minutes. Then in the evening, we have supper, at 5:45 p.m. After supper, there are many meetings. I attend the parish council, liturgy committee, adult education and R.C.I.A. On Wednesday, Sister Barbara will go to Indian River School, which is a correction school for young boys. There's always something that must be done. We are glad when one evening comes along and we can say, "Oh, I can stay home." But, all this is very interesting. I feel that I am doing something for the Church, and that's the most important [thing]. Now, we go to bed when we want to, but we always remember, "I have to get up early in the morning." Some go to bed about twelve. When I think back to the olden days, you were in bed by a quarter to ten; but now,

it's up to us. We have to live our life.

F: Do you feel that Vatican II was very positive for everyone?

G: I think it was, especially when you look back at our life as it was. It was very pressurized, I would say. You couldn't do the things that an adult ordinarily would [such as] buying things, having your own money, and deciding what you were going to do. Superiors would appoint you for a place, and tell you, "This is what you're going to do this year." They don't do that anymore. You have to discern where you're going to go and what kind of a ministry (or mission) you will do. You are educated accordingly.

F: Did you have the freedom to choose your own assignments?

G: I do now, but I didn't formerly. Even going to college . . . you had no choice whether you went to college or what grade level you taught. You were told, "You'll be an intermediate teacher. You'll be a high school teacher. You'll go on to college."

F: Did you ever question this in your mind, or was this just something. . . ?

G: Well, there were times that I would've preferred, probably something else, but I followed along as best I could because I felt I was doing what the community needed at that time. I remember being transferred from St. Joe's, Randolph. I went to the Provincial Superior, and I said, "Why are you taking me from Randolph? I'm the only one who likes it out there." She said, "I didn't know that." "Well, it's true," I said. She said, "Well, I really needed you at St. Boniface, Cleveland. I'm sending two young sisters out there. They have to be trained how to teach school." One was in the fourth grade, and one was in the fifth grade. One was a novice, and the other was a first year junior.

So, I went there, and every day I would get their books out, prepare them, get the lessons ready, tell them how to do it. In the meantime, I had a double grade of fourth and fifth graders. So, what I taught in the fourth grade, I could help the fourth grade teacher. What I taught in the fifth grade, I could assist the fifth grade teacher. It was really lots of work. I taught double grades for many years. At St. Joe's, Randolph, I had double grades most of the time. That would mean about sixty-five students in one classroom. The largest class I ever had was at St. Michael's, Cleveland, and that was seventy-five. It was inter-

esting to teach school in those days.

F: The standard class size today is how many?

G: Today? They don't like to go over thirty if they can possibly help it. Just correcting all those student papers . . . it's awesome.

F: Parent-teacher conferences. How were they with that many students?

G: They didn't have a whole lot of conferences.

F: They didn't?

G: No. You called a parent to come for a conference if you were having a problem or if a child was having a problem, but ordinarily, they didn't come on a regular schedule. The first parent-teacher conference I remember was in the seventies. One lady walked all the way from her home in the snow, freezing rain, and cold for this parent-teacher conference. I just admired her for doing that.

F: Who do you believe was the major figure in the formation of the Youngstown Diocese?

G: I think that all of the bishops were important. One of course, who has spanned the years and did many things, is Bishop Malone. But, Bishop McFadden did a marvelous job getting it organized.

F: Do you believe it ran smoothly in the beginning, and does it still?

G: I think it did. For instance, when the cathedral burnt down, the Shutrumps put up the new cathedral. One of the contractors was John Shutrump who was a personal friend of our family. As he was working, he would give us the background on how far the church was and how it was being built. He would go around and try to get the latest ideas and put them in. So as far as I can see, everything ran smoothly as you would think or expect. If they had any "ins and outs," I don't know. I think more difficulties have come probably during the time that so many left the priesthood after Vatican II. I think that was pretty heart breaking for Bishop Malone. Another hard time was the closing of the steel mills.

F: Do you think there was a peak year?

G: I don't think there was a peak year. Over the years, we have been losing priests. I think that was very heart breaking.

F: What do you believe has been a weakness of the Youngstown Diocese?

G: A weakness? I don't know, but I think financially. . . . They could do a lot more if they had more money. I think that they have the talent. We have many gifted priests. Among the most gifted priests I have worked with are Father Coward, Father Pentello, Father Polardo, and Father Nuzzi. I don't think you know them. Father Pentello is at St. Ambrose, Garrettsville. He works with the college students at Hiram College. He has a progressive parish. He's both musical, a liturgist, and an artist, and can give the finest homilies. He is an outstanding priest. His father lives in our St. Joan of Arc, Canton parish. His brothers and sister attend here. If you've never met him, you should. He's a very talented priest. You don't often come upon all these talents being in one person. Administration . . . wonderful! I would say, probably, the lack of money would be the greatest weakness in the diocese.

F: Is there anything else that could have hindered the diocese in its growth?

G: We need more priests. Sometimes, I wonder if we had our own seminary . . . if that would help. See, some way or other, I think vocations, especially to the priesthood, have to be fostered. What I see today is the priests don't have that much time to be with people. One person who takes time with young people is Father Nuzzi. Right now, he's in Dayton University studying for his doctorate. He had a great love for the young people--the students in high school. He'd take them out to different places. The result of his work, we haven't seen yet. [We don't know] how many will become priests.

F: What do you feel aided in its growth besides. . . ? I've been told by many that education, undoubtedly, has aided in its growth because it's so strong. The Youngstown Diocese Catholic School system is so strong.

G: What I see is, the Bishop, being the Superintendent of Schools before he became Bishop; and also attending The Catholic University of America where, at the time when he was there, we had a campus school. The campus school was the training ground. Any person that was in education from around the world would visit that school, see how things were done, and carry them back to their own country or their own place. Bishop Malone was in that kind of framework of education, so he had a strong liking for education. He promoted it, therefore the Youngstown Diocesan School System has been outstanding. I would say our education still is among

the best.

F: What else, besides education, do you think has kept the diocese strong?

G: I would say that the diocese is quite strong in the ministries of today. For instance, Eucharistic ministers and lectors, and all the different ministries that the church is trying to do today are promoted. I find the Youngstown Diocese to be quite progressive. It promotes good liturgy. I would say ministry work has to keep the diocese strong. Also, the Bishop has promoted women's cause and has helped them to take on more important roles in the church.

F: How has the diocese coped with the economic hardships since the closing of the steel mills?

G: As far as I can see, Bishop Malone has tried very hard. He's called together important people who could promote industry. When you look at it, some of them . . . many wealthy people in the United States live Youngstown. Why they can't do something for that city is hard for me to imagine. The DeBartolo's could help. If I'm not mistaken, they own part of Belden Village and different malls like that. I was thinking that if they are that wealthy, couldn't they start establishing some new industries and new places where people could get a job and save the city? When you go to the Southside. . . . We won't even dare to go there anymore, because it's too treacherous and too hard to see how it has gone down. I said to my brother, "How about seeing our old home?" He said, "Oh, no. Not down those streets." It's a shame that the wealthy can't use their money and do something to make the town better . . . to give people jobs.

F: What about today? What's going on economically?

G: As far as I can see, people expect poor President Bush to do too much. He's only one man. No matter who's in charge, they can't change it. How could you do it? Just ask yourself, "What would I do if I were president to make this better?" You can ask for votes from different people that are in charge, but they're not going to do it unless there's something in there for them. I feel that there are people today who lack a conscience. That destroys [them]. For instance, May Company is being demolished in a way. All those people's jobs are gone. They might be able to go to another May Company someplace else, which will become Kaufmann's, but it won't be the same. They were saying last night on television that the loss of the May Company isn't just the May Company, but a lot of other stores and places of work around there. I just see

that some people have all the money and don't seem to care about other people.

F: So you see a definite difference between contributors to the diocese in the past as with wealthier people today?

G: I don't notice that too much here at St. Mary. I don't know what it would be like in some of the other places. As far as I can see, we have this stewardship program. Three different things are being asked for: money, talent, and service. I see many people making their pledges, using their talent, and offering their services. Every time we were in a real pinch, like when the teachers' salaries went up, Father Kolp would say, "What am I going to do?" I answered, "Trust, you'll get it." Sure enough, he does. The people contribute, especially if they see the money being used properly. [They contribute] if they see improvement, which they have seen around here [such as] putting up this building, fixing the organ, opening up a latch-key program, and all kinds of things. I think some people will come across. Then again, there are people who feel that they have to have all the wealth. I had a man who teaches at Walsh College and Jackson High School here this morning. He was talking about how the United States had all the wealth, until now. Now it is being taken out of the United States into other countries, making them better off than what they were.

F: Sister Mary Ann told me yesterday that the diocese in Youngstown has lost at least a thousand people. Are you seeing the same thing in Massillon?

G: No, I wouldn't say that. Massillon is holding steady. Right here in our parish, we have a steady number of people who come. Some move away, but not that many. When they do, other people move in. Again, I think you might look at the R.C.I.A., which is the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults, and see all the people coming into the church. This year we have twenty-one. Down in Dover, I think they have twenty-one. If you ever go to the "Rite of Election," which takes place the first Sunday of Lent--it will be held in the cathedral and at St. Joseph's in Canton--you will see all those new converts who take the place of the people who may have left the church. Among these converts are people who have left the Church earlier and are coming back. They are in their thirties or forties. So, I wouldn't be too down-hearted because of the people leaving. I remember when I went to school, Sister would always say to us, "If someone loses the grace, someone else receives it." So, if they leave, someone else will come and take their place. There's a story about ten legionnaires a long time ago in Europe. They

all are saints now, but, they were on the water being frozen to death. There was a warm place where they could go if they wanted to give up their faith and save themselves. Only one gave up. Someone else . . . one of the guards came in and took his place. He saw angels coming down with wreaths for each one, so it's something to think about. If you refuse grace, someone else will receive it. It's not lost. We never had that many converts before.

Now, when you think of a former one to one basis, there weren't that many converts as there are today. Not only are you bringing them to the church, you'll have their children. I have a whole class of children who were not baptized that came in this year. In the R.C.I.A. this year, there's one very tall man. He's a fireman. He said to me on Wednesday, "Do you think I could bring two friends along? They're looking for a church, and they want to get married." I said, "Bring them." So, there's two more coming next week. I told him, "You're a convert converting other people." He hasn't become a Catholic yet, and he's reaching out to other people. I wouldn't be too despairing because people left. Someone else is going to come.

F: The Youngstown Diocese is composed of six counties. Which county do you believe is the weakest?

G: Which county is weakest?

F: Say, it doesn't have a strong support group within the community.

G: I don't know. I get the feeling that [it may be] Columbiana County. The reason for that is that they only have one or two churches there. For years, that country hasn't grown much. I taught down there one year. It's very difficult, I would say. I don't see them making many converts. Portage County has its growth. Summit County and the rest of them seem to be doing well. I notice many people who ever taught in Stark County or ever worked here, want to come back. It seems to be very progressive. You can see many things happening. As a matter of fact, all the adult education groups in the five parishes in this area like St. Joe's, St. Mary's, St. Barbara's, St. Clemen's, St. Theresa's, Brewster, St. Philip's, and St. James' parishes have formed an adult religious education commission.

On Sunday, we're putting on a program on parent issues or family issues. Anybody in those parishes may come and join us. We all represent the different parishes. I see them working together very well.

F: Do you think the progressiveness of this particular community has helped it along?

G: Yes.

F: What else do you think are some of your more progressive programs?

G: I find Walsh University over in Canton doing a fine job helping Catholics. Malone College is there too, but it's not Catholic. I find the colleges doing much to educate. The priests who are in the parishes do much. We have some talented priests at St. Barbara's and St. Michael's, and we have quite a few wealthy people at St. Michael's in Canton.

F: What are the biggest changes you've seen in the diocese?

G: The biggest changes? I would say, putting in the middle schools. That's the big thing I saw as the change. I'm not exactly in favor of the middle school. I feel that, if you have kindergarten to grade eight in the building, you're doing a far better job in promoting a spirit in your parish. Whereas if you have a middle school, the children leave too soon to form a spirit for their own parish. I think that a spirit is important. A parish must have a spirit. If it doesn't have one, the parish is rather dead.

F: [It's] disruptive.

G: There's nothing much going on. People lose interest. Someone has to get them doing something for the betterment of the people.

F: What changes would you have liked to have seen that you haven't? Are there any?

G: High school?

F: Within the diocese? Are there any changes that you have yet to see that you wish you have?

G: The one thing I often question is . . . we have a number of priests who are teaching in the high schools. I thought--probably, it's my way of thinking--if these priests were out in the parishes rather than the high school, would they be doing more for the church than what they are in the high school? The high school needs priests, but I think the priests could come in and help out. I know in the high school I went to, the priests came once a week. Now, that school moved out to Chardon. Cathedral Latin, a boy's school, joined this school. So, right now, we have a coed school.

[It's called] Notre Dame Cathedral Latin. It's very progressive.

The parents have helped to build up this school. We had to add to our building and put in many sports and things for boys. There are a couple of schools that moved together. For instance, Villa Angela was a girl's school that moved with St. Joseph's, a boy's school.

I think a strong system of education is important. I don't know exactly how to keep Catholic education going. The price of education is so much higher than it used to be. People look forward to sending their children to college. They're not sure about that because of the cost; therefore, they don't attend Catholic high school, either. It's difficult. You think, "Something should be done so it wouldn't have to cost so much, especially in college." Many of our boys and girls go to high school. They attend Jackson, Washington High School, or Massillon High School. This is a football town, and most of the people look forward to trying to get a scholarship through athletics to go to college. Chip Hare, who is at Dayton University, isn't even Catholic. He went all the way through our school, did everything that Catholics do, and chose to go to Dayton University. With him is Steven Brown who is also very good in athletics. Two boys of ours are down in Dayton helping this college. I guess they're in athletics, but they have scholarships.

F: Do you see that more now, than in the past, with non-Catholics coming into Catholic schools?

G: In some places, you find them coming in if they can afford it . . . which is good. I think our schools should help the Catholics. I don't know about the people who aren't converted. For instance, it's hard to convert the Black people. They'll go to both churches. We think it's okay, but then who's going to be left someday to keep the church going?

F: What has been the best part of working for the diocese?

G: I think Catechetical-Liturgical day. [It's] when everyone who teaches religion gets together with the rest of the diocese to talk about what they're doing and how they're doing it. I think that means much.

F: Has there been a worst part?

G: The worst part is sometimes a misunderstanding. Some of the difficulties we have here are, as you found out today, the long distance that we have to travel to go to Youngstown. They have almost everything at Ursuline

Mother House, and we try to get down there and back in the evening--forget it! It's too far; it's three hours on the road.

So, we were hoping they would start something here in Stark County so that. . . . The people here could do things and have workshops, et cetera, but most people here can't drive so far at night, especially in the winter time. The icy roads, the snow, and the storms are too threatening. If we want to keep our people, we'll have to do something about meetings held in Youngstown and Stark County.

F: What would you like to be remembered for in your service to the diocese?

G: I would like to be remembered as being a "woman of the church." In other words, I promote church ministries wherever I can and work for them. I was sacristan for years and years, and I still do this work. R.C.I.A., liturgy, teaching school, helping converts, and C.C.D. are important to me. I'd always like to be remembered as a teacher. Teaching more or less runs in our family. I have cousins who were teachers. It goes back, more or less, on my father's side.

F: Is there anything else you think we should discuss that I may not have mentioned?

G: I don't know. Just what you think would be important. Do you have some ideas?

F: Anything about the diocese that you think we may have missed about its formation or its growth over the years?

G: I would like to see a list of important people in the diocese. There are a lot of people who have donated their lives and everything they had to the diocese. I think it's important to remember those people who are the builders and the pioneers of our diocese and keep them in mind. I notice whenever we get the letter from the Department of Worship in Youngstown, at the end of the letter, they have listed the priests who died [including] the year, and the date. In November, they have all of the names of the priests who died in November and the date, so they're not forgotten. Every once in a while, they pray for the deceased sisters, brothers, and everybody who was in the diocese. I think one of the--this is my opinion--big things the diocese didn't do that maybe should have been done was to buy Brunnerdale Seminary--a seminary for the Precious Blood Fathers. They couldn't keep it anymore, and I was hoping the diocese would buy that property and build it up for our priests who are retired. It had all the

facilities.

But, then some developer bought it. You should see it now. They have all these million dollar houses there. I wouldn't want to live there, because you can't do things you would like to do. You can't hang out clothes or do ordinary things that you would like to do. It's just one of these high [class] places. I would have like to have seen the diocese buy it so our priests would have a nice place to go. I think they deserve that. Now, I notice our priests are building their own home. They either buy one or build one, so they have someplace to go.

I also would like to see them disregard that law about being in a parish for so many years, and then you're transferred. I don't think that's good. I think if a priest has endeared himself to a parish and he likes it there, then let him stay. Don't move him around without his consent, or say, "Your six years are up." The diocese should give them some kind of a choice for openings in parishes. It doesn't seem to me to be the most effective way of doing it. They began to consider that in communities, because later on we find people who have breakdowns. You go back and trace through their life history--what has happened to them. I think it's the insecurity, and I think our priests need more security.

F: Would you like to see the diocese become larger than it is, or do you think it's large enough?

G: Well, I think the larger you get, the more talent you get. I wouldn't want to see it chopped off, though. Maybe into Akron--that's what I'm afraid is going to happen some day, to Portage County; but I hope it doesn't. Youngstown needs these outside places, because it's so poor itself. Canton does a pretty good job, but most of our people work someplace, like in Akron or Canton. There's not a lot of jobs right here in Massillon, but it's like a bedroom to people who work in Akron or Cleveland--if you want to call it that. It depends upon what they cut off and add to. It makes a difference.

F: I think that's it unless you have anything else to talk about.

G: No.

F: Thank you.

G: Thank you.

END OF INTERVIEW