

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

St. Nicholas Byzantine Catholic Church

Personal Experience

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Rev. Dennis M. Bogda

Interviewed

by

Mary Lou Shirilla

on

November 4, 1986

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INTERVIEWEE: REV. DENNIS M. BOGDA

INTERVIEWER: Mary Lou Shirilla

SUBJECT: Byzantine rite in America, Byzantine
theology, priestly duties

DATE: November 4, 1986

S: This is an interview with Father Dennis Bogda for the Youngstown State University Oral History Program, on the history of St. Nicholas Byzantine Catholic Church, by Mary Lou Shirilla, at the parish house, 1898 Wilson Avenue, Youngstown, Ohio, on November 4, 1986, at 7:00 p.m.

Father Dennis, before we begin talking about your own background, can you give me some historical background of the Byzantine rite in America, particularly from the aspect of the clergy?

B: When a priest first came here to this country, they were not always accepted by the Roman rite priests because most of them were married, and they thought they were not Catholic. One of the documentation that was documented on this is when Father Tothe, a priest who came here from Europe, came here to Archbishop Ireland, in Minneapolis. Archbishop Ireland wouldn't accept him into his diocese. So as a result, Father Tothe went to one of the Russian Orthodox diocese of America. It is called the O.C.A., the Orthodox Church of America, right now.

Priests at that time had to struggle for their own existence and for their own survival in this country because they weren't considered Catholic. They weren't

Orthodox. As a result to that, they began to take over some of the Western customs in the churches to prove that they were Catholic and to accord their allegiance to Rome. It was very difficult because there was a great amount of the trustee system at that time. Most of the trustees controlled the church very much. Sometimes it was justified, and at times it was not. They weren't allowed to move; they weren't allowed to do anything practically at all with regards to that. The churches that were formed first here were. . . . Basically in Freeland was the first church to come to this country. Freeland is celebrating their 100th Anniversary.

S: Freeland, Pennsylvania?

B: Yes, Freeland, Pennsylvania. Yes, they are celebrating their 100th Anniversary. There were churches in Shenandoah, Hazleton, and all those areas. Gradually, the people settled in most of the mill towns where there was mill work and coal mines. Where they had work is where the people settled. When they settled here, they brought their church and came to this church. When they came to this country, it is funny because all of the other churches are by railroad tracks or by hillside or steel mills or whatever you want to call it. Where they worked is where they settled. They were like little ethnic communities.

This area right here, Hazleton, was [with] all people who belonged to the Catholic church until a while ago when they started moving out. But the priest had it tough. He had to survive. They had to learn to be accepted. They wanted to be accepted as Catholic priests in this country. They had to work hard. It was very difficult.

S: What were some of the concessions that they had to make in order to be accepted?

B: Well, one of the biggest concessions was that eventually when they came into this country, they were forced by the Roman rite priests who had established celibacy, which came in about the 1930s and that area, when Bishop Tockasch was formed by the degree Cum Dat a Forwit to enforce celibacy on the priests. To serve in this country from that time was mostly at the instigation of the Roman rite priests, because they were jealous. They thought they weren't allowed to get married; so why should these other people, these other priests, be allowed to get married.

That was one of the basic and major concessions that was made. That caused a lot of difficulties in families and in churches. In fact, many of our churches

have a split from the original church. St. Nicholas does not. I don't know, but St. Nicholas doesn't have a split. St. Michael's is split. St. Mary's is a split church. All of them were churches that have broken off from our churches and have eventually formed what is known as the Carpathian-Russian Diocese of Youngstown. Today, it is probably one of the biggest. Then, of course, the structures of the church began to change, too. They began to take out the incoustisis, put the cross in and those kind of things, shorten the liturgy, make it short, cut out some things and those kinds of things, taking on a lot of the devotion of the Western church to prove that they were Catholic.

S: Someone else had mentioned the introduction of the confessionals as opposed to the face-to-face confession.

B: Yes. Confessions, sure, that was also one of the things. Confession has always been in front of the icon of Christ, and that is where it is now all the time in our church. You just came up to the icon of Christ and the confession was right there.

S: Now, can you give me a little background information about your own family? Where were your parents born?

B: My mother was born in Homestead, Pennsylvania. My father was born in Scarbro, West Virginia. He is a hillbilly. He was born in Scarbro, which is near Charleston and Beckley in that area in West Virginia. He came up here to this area. My mother and father were married in 1940.

S: Where were they married?

B: In our cathedral church.

S: St. John's?

B: St. John's Cathedral Church, yes.

S: Did your mother belong to St. John's all of her life?

B: My mother belonged to St. John's. In fact, my grandparents were one of the original founders of the parish.

S: Did they ever talk to you about the time of Father Malchaney, the pastor there?

B: Oh, yes, yes, they talked a lot about him.

S: What do you remember about that? I just read something concerning that.

B: Father Malchaney came as an assistant to Father Hulichtni. Father Hulichtni was a European-born priest. Father Malchaney was a young priest who I just found out belonged to this parish, St. Nicholas Church here in Youngstown. I didn't know that myself. I knew he had relatives here, but I didn't know he was originally from here.

S: And ordained here, too, right?

B: Ordained here, too, and had his first liturgy here, too. I guess it was that time when the celibacy issue was coming in. Father Hulichtni was an older priest. He couldn't speak the language that well. He just spoke the Slovak, Russian tongue. Father Malchaney was a young priest. He and Father Paragzaggi--Father Paragzaggi was originally from across the river, Rankin and Father Tornyak was in Bridgeport, Connecticut. People said, "No, we are not going to follow this. We are going to break away from the church and form our own church, our own kind of thing." They didn't want to follow the priest of the church. One of the reasons was that he didn't want to be transferred, too, because he liked the parish. My mom and dad told me that. My grandparents told me that he didn't want to move.

S: He had gotten that directly from the bishop to go elsewhere?

B: Yes, and he didn't want to move. So, he got a whole group of the people to follow him. There was a liturgation in the church. The church did not go towards the diocese, but the church went for the Byzantine diocese. As a result of that, they formed their other church a couple of streets away. Father Malchaney just retired as a pastor maybe a year or a year and a half ago.

S: Oh, he is still living?

B: Oh, yes, he is still living.

S: Oh, okay.

B: He is still living somewhere in Homestead. I'm not sure where.

S: What was the name of the church they founded here?

B: St. Nicholas Church. It was an interesting thing because that is what they told me, that he didn't want to be moved or he didn't want to follow the dictates of the bishop. As a result of that, lots of the people

left the cathedral church. In fact, for a whole there in liturgation, they used to go to church, to the library up there or to St. Elias, which was down the street from there. Gradually, one of the three families--my grandparents, the Kurty family, which Father Kurty is now pastor of in Chicago--stayed and one other family, but I'm not sure who they were. Those two families stayed and went to the church.

S: Just three families?

B: Those three families.

S: How did it get built up after that?

B: Gradually, people started coming back when they saw that the other church's litigation was settled. The church went into the diocese, and all the difficulties started subsiding.

S: So, that was your home parish, too?

B: St. John's Cathedral, which is the cathedral of the diocese.

S: Is that where you attended grade school?

B: I attended grade school there, yes.

S: Could you tell me about that?

B: I served as an altar boy in grade school. In kindergarten through eighth, we were taught by the Byzantine Sisters. That was grade school. I had all the procession to a priest and all that kind of stuff.

S: You were part of all of those?

B: Oh, yes.

S: What were those processions like?

B: The ones at Easter time, we dressed up. You would either have a white shirt and black pants. Then, the sisters would make these black capes, and they would put these black capes on you.

S: Oh, this was the whole school?

B: This was the whole school for Easter Sunday. Then you wear white, and they put gold capes on you, and they had processions that were going on in church. We had a lot of that kind of stuff like plays at the school in front of the sisters, and a lot of times if he stayed, for the pastor. Once a year, we did it for Father

Hilo, who was the pastor at the church at that time when I was going there, when I was a young person. We used to love doing those things for him. He is now dead. We did a lot of things for him.

S: Was there any kind of youth group at that time?

B: Strictly speaking, no, [there was] no youth group. For grade school, we got together; that was all there was to that. We had processions and plays and stuff like that. We served together, but we didn't do any specific activities together.

S: Were there any people in particular who made any impression on you at this early time?

B: Yes, Monsignor Hilo made an impression on me, because he was nice fellow, nice man, nice priest who fought a lot for the bishop during the break.

S: What bishop?

B: He fought a lot for Bishop Tockachin. He ruined his health and eventually died from that kind of stuff. He was just a nice person and worked nicely with the people and the families and everything.

S: When did you feel that you had an interest in the priesthood?

B: I decided that I was going to be a priest when I was a sophomore in high school. I decided that I was at least going to try it. So, I went. I was a sophomore in high school. I was going to St. Michael's South Side High School, and I decided that I was going to try it. The holy week was when I made my decision. I was at the church, and I remember that I wanted to try it. Then, I did after I finished high school.

S: Then, you went directly into the seminary after high school?

B: I went right into the seminary after high school, St. Cyril and Methodius Byzantine Catholic Seminary.

S: What year was that?

B: That was 1959.

S: And the seminary had recently just been built right in that time period, in the 1950s?

B: No. The seminary was open already before that.

S: Yes, but not too many years prior to that.

B: Not too many. I don't know exactly when that was built. Maybe it was the early 1950s. It could have been then. But, it was 1959, yes, because I graduated in 1959.

S: Did you also attend a secular college at this time?

B: Yes, I attended Duquesne University at that time. I went there for undergraduate studies for Latin, Greek, things that we needed to graduate, business, chemistry, history, and that kind of stuff.

S: Then, the seminary was the theological aspect?

B: Yes.

S: During the time when you were in the seminary, what was the major emphasis there regarding the Byzantine rite?

B: Well, we probably went through a couple periods of emphasis. When we first came here, it was very much Western oriented. I guess, maybe the first three or four years it was. Then, we got a new rector. There was kind of a like the spirit changed. We wanted to figure out who we were, because we weren't really Roman Catholics and we weren't really Byzantine Catholics. We were like the bastards who didn't know who they were, so we had to figure out who we were. So, we decided to search back into a lot of the names and find out what we were. We had to go back into a lot of the Orthodox materials, Orthodox learnings, because we had nothing. We had nothing at all. It wasn't written at that time, at our church.

S: It was a spoken tradition.

B: Yes, what was written, was written by one of the older priests. Father Shareggi used to do a lot of writing, [and] Father Hamula. Father Hamula was in Cleveland at one time. He did a lot of writing. There wasn't too much about that kind of stuff. Of course, Bishop Ralco was the bishop at that time. He was very much Western-oriented in his thinking and in his orientations. He tried to bring the diocese over to that kind of framework. There were quite a few battles. We had quite a few battles over all of that. We were in the seminary with him. There wasn't too much to listen to. We almost thought we were going to get our need at one point.

S: Really?

B: Yes, a whole bunch of us. Almost all of the theology was . . . we weren't sure whether we were going to get ordained or not.

S: Well, who stuck up for you, then?

B: We did.

S: You said you got a new rector who changed everything.

B: We got a new rector who changed the emphasis, yes.

S: Who was that?

B: Martino Smartzko was the director. He kind of allowed us some freedom to search and look around, because he was a European-born priest. He knew basically what the Eastern church was, because he was born in Europe and they pretty well follow it pretty much, I think. He introduced things like the liturgy to us as opposed to stations of the cross. He showed us how the Jewish celebrated. He showed us a lot of different things. He showed us some of the things.

S: To do the research.

B: Yes.

S: So basically, it was the theologians who were going back to their roots and looking.

B: Yes, yes.

S: Who were some of the other ones who were in your class around that time?

B: We started out in my class with 16 of us. We ended up with nine. Some of them are. . . . My one classmate was Father David Petris, who is now in the Cleveland Diocese. He is in Akron. My other classmate was Father John Bahlog, who is in Florida. My other classmate was Father Michael McRusta, who is in New York. There was Father Jay Fulton who is in another city. Another classmate is one who just left recently about five or six years ago. He is now a priest in the Ukrainian Orthodox Diocese, Father Benjamin Manuska. There have been a couple who have left here after we were ordained. But those are my classmates, basically. They were people who were with me. Father Steve Vassalana was a Brazilian Father. Another classmate who left and went to the Orthodox was Father Hubol. Father Hubol is in California, Pennsylvania. He is at the church there, a suey generous church.

S: A what?

B: A suey generous church, a church that doesn't belong to anybody. It is just there. It doesn't belong to any diocese. It is just there.

S: Independent?

B: Yes, independent.

S: About your ordination, what can you tell me about that day?

B: What can I tell you about that day? Well, I was ordained April 32, 1967, at 11 o'clock. I was ordained by Archbishop Koscisko, who was at that time the bishop of Kusake. They had to bring him over here and get him to ordain us, because our Bishop Alvoce was over in Rome. He was over there in Rome because they were having some difficulties there.

S: On a leave of absence or something?

B: Whatever you want to call it. We were ordained at 11 o'clock or so--five of us were ordained. There was me, Hubol, Papasky, and Vassalanik--four of us. Two of us are still here. Papasky left. He belongs to a church in California. We ordained at the seminary chapel, a Byzantine Catholic Seminary Chapel.

S: Can you elaborate about the sacrament of ordination itself?

B: Okay, the sacrament of the ordination was laid on the hands of the bishop. He lays his hands on you and says that prayer that the holy spirits supply whatever is deficient to you. Then after that, he puts the vestments on you, the priestly vestments. And then, you celebrate the liturgy with the bishop.

S: Do you recall any feelings on that day? What was it like?

B: Well, I think it was a lot of fun on that day. It was a happy day because finally I reached my goal. You find that you are no longer little kids, and that people treat us as human beings. I was very happy to be a priest. I wanted to go out and function in church.

S: Did you receive an assignment right away?

B: I received my first assignment. . . . No, not until June because there was this kind of uncertainty as to whether Bishop Alvoce was going to come back. There was not that much . . . was made administrator of the diocese, because up until then, he wasn't. He was in

another diocese. He became administrator of the diocese, and he assigned me to assistant pastor at St. Steven's in Ohio, and also to teach at the high school in Cleveland.

S: I didn't know that.

B: So, I taught there. I was assistant pastor at St. Steven's in Euclid, Ohio.

S: How long were you there?

B: I was there one year. I was one year in Euclid, and I was one year in . . . I was moved to Brownsville, which is by Uniontown, Pennsylvania. I was an assistant there for one of the married priests.

S: Who was that?

B: Father Demitris Zascanish. Father Demos, they called him, Demitris Zascanish. When I was there, the father was sick. He had a couple of strokes. When I was there, he died. I went there in June, and he died in February. So from February until the next June, I served the church myself.

S: And his wife was still living at that time, too, right?

B: His wife was still living; his family was living; his daughters were living. It was very nice. It was nice, homely atmosphere, very, very nice. I learned a lot from him. I learned it wasn't a sin to relax. It was nice just being able to talk with him and sit with him. He was a priest who was born here in this country. He went over to Europe. He went to a seminary in Europe and came over here and was married. He was married before the split over the celibacy issue. Then, he served the churches in this country. In fact, I was an assistant to two priests. I was assistant to Father Loya. After I left Brownsville, I was assigned to do organizational work in Monroeville, and also to be assistant pastor at St. Peter and Paul in Duquesne for Father Steven Loya. Father Loya was also a married priest. Seventeen children, he had.

S: Seventeen?

B: Seventeen children, he had. Fifteen of them are still living. Father Zascanish had about seven children.

S: You said you were involved in organizational work. Was that organizing the parish in Monroeville?

B: Yes, I was given the responsibility of organizing a church in Monroeville, because there was no church

there. This was a suburb of Pittsburgh. There were a lot of churches in the inner cities, like Braddock, East Pittsburgh, Wall, and New Kensington. There were a lot of people living there; so they wanted a church there. So, they gave me my assignment to organize a church in Monroeville. I spent my first year doing both being an assistant pastor at St. Peter and Paul, and organizing a church in Monroeville. That started, I think, in the year 1969, in September or December. We celebrated our first liturgy there in the fire hole. We had maybe 100 people, 35 families there. We gradually built it up and bought property. When I left there--I was there for 13 years--there were about 150 or 160 families.

S: Quite a growth.

B: Yes, it is still doing okay.

S: Backtracking a little, who chose the name for that parish?

B: Me, I did.

S: You did?

B: I chose the name "Church of the Resurrection." I never knew why. The archbishop wanted me to name it St. Nicholas or St. Mary's. I said, "No," because there are too many St. Nicholas' and St. Mary's. There are enough to choke a horse. I always wanted to name it the Church of the Resurrection, because the resurrection is the center of our Eastern theology. I also knew that there was another Church of the Resurrection, and he allowed it to be named that, too, which was in Smithtown, New York. So with our church, he couldn't say "no" to that. I figured I would get him with that. I wanted it to be after the center of Eastern Christianity. That was it. There was no extra Jesus Christ. It was the Church of the Resurrection.

S: Are there any events that stand out as being major and significant during that period?

B: During the 13 years I was there?

S: Yes.

B: Oh, yes. Probably the first major thing is just organizing the church, getting a place to say the liturgy. It was kind of like putting your shingles out and saying, "Hey, we are here. Come on." Spending two and a half years in a fire hall, doing catechism between liturgies, paying \$50 a Sunday to rent the fire hall, having some fund raisers to make some money and that

kind of stuff. Getting to know the people there really well was a real good experience. I knew practically everybody. We had a nice youth group. They were a real nice group of kids. When I first came, there was a group of high school kids who tried to organize and work this out. We worked it up and gradually built it up to where it is. When I left, there were about 30 or 40 kids quite active in youth work. We did a lot of socializing together; we had catechism together. There were just all kinds of activities that we did together and that kind of stuff. We went through a lot of difficulties, too. Probably the biggest mind blower to me was when somebody left the church because of me.

S: Really?

B: Yes, there were some.

S: Why was that?

B: Well, personally, they left the church because of me.

S: Do you mean totally left the church, or just went some where else?

B: [They] left the church for a while and went somewhere else, and then, came back and that kind of thing. It was a real mind-blowing experience. Of course, you have to be prepared for that kind of stuff. It could have been something you said or something you did. But it is interesting how it went around in a circle. A family left for a while, and then they came back. That was my battle with cancer.

S: Did he die of cancer?

B: Yes, he died of cancer. I helped the family along. We were the best of friends. That is interesting how that happened, very interesting.

S: It is. Is there anything else that you can think of from that time period?

B: Oh, yes. We did the things which I was able to do, which I dreamed of doing, like forming a community which was Byzantine rite. The church that we built was a two-story building where we tried to do it in a little bit of iconostasis, with what we could afford. I tried to get into a community which loved Eastern Church and to present that liturgy through the fasting and prayer for the season. We had a really good educational program. It went from kindergarten through twelfth, all the way up.

S: How did the catechism receive their training?

- B: The catechists received their training. . . . Well, when we started out then, I did it, first of all, with them. Then when the educational office was formed, we went into the courses. We had a real good active group. They were a good bunch of dedicated people, especially the ladies. We had a faculty of about 15 or 16 people.
- S: Are they still active that way?
- B: No, some of them still are, but not all of them anymore.
- S: At that time, were you also the youth minister for the diocese?
- B: Well, it wasn't until about 10 years when I got the job as minister of the diocese. I kind of just got my feet wet in the idea, and then I was moved. So, I didn't do too much of that. I fought for it for a long time, but I didn't do too much about it when I was in there, so I just had to resign. It was just too much.
- S: Was it under your direction that some attempt was started?
- B: Well, no. Father Karl started that. He wanted to do that; so he tried out. A couple of years there and it was moved. He went down to Texas.
- S: So now, we are up to the time that you are pastor of St. Nicholas. When were you transferred here?
- B: I came here in 1982 on July 1. Yes, July 1, 1982, I was moved to St. Nicholas Church.
- S: What were your first impressions upon coming here?
- B: I didn't know what to expect, because I hadn't moved for 13 years. That was a long time. I was settled and situated, but I figured that it was already time to go. After you reach a certain period--13 years I think it was--I figured it was already time to go. My first impressions here was that this was a bigger place. I didn't know the people all that well. I didn't know too much about the area, although what I did kind of like was Youngstown. [Youngstown] was the area where my grandfather first came when he came from Europe. He said that he had brothers here. So, I had some kind of. . . .
- S: Oh, on your mother's side or your father's side?

B: My mother's side. In fact, my grandfather still has a sister in Campbell.

S: What is your mother's maiden name?

B: Gora. The lady's name was Gora. Mary Gora was her name. That was his sister. My mother's maiden name was Kushner. My grandfather's name was Kushner. So, I didn't really know what the place was like or what the people were like. I was a good breath of fresh air, my first impression.

S: In the beginning?

B: Yes, a good breathing of fresh air. It was a different place with different people and a good deal of different things. There were no money worries here, none whatsoever. That was what I worried about over there. I had a lot of money worries there. It cost us a lot of money over there. We were in debt. When I first started the church, we were in debt \$480,000, which has gradually come down since then. Here, there were no money worries.

S: Everything was paid in full.

B: Everything was paid in full. It was a nice church; it was a beautiful church. I loved the church; is really beautiful here, a beautiful building. I didn't know what to expect. It was just a nice change. I got some fresh air. It was something new and something different to work at, to do with different people, to work with and that kind of stuff.

S: When you came to St. Nicholas, what did you see as the strong points of the parish here?

B: A strong point was that there were a lot of people who came to church. A lot of people came here on Sundays for Holy Grace. That surprised me, because there wasn't a lot of that at Monroeville. They came in the evenings, but this is a stronger morning parish when I came, which was good. A lot of the people were willing to do things here. That was a strong point, too. They were willing to do a lot of things around the church. Another strong point that I like very much was this beautiful church. I like the church; it was pretty nice. This is a beautiful building.

S: Very traditional.

B: Yes. Another strong point was that this was a bigger congregation, too, which is necessary to do more things.

One of the weak points was that they were very set in their ways, which was kind of hard for me to deal with. I wasn't used to that kind of situation. I was used to a more flexible mentality. That is what I would call one of their weak points. The organizations here are strong points, too. People get together for various reasons, which is a strong point.

S: Were there any other weak points that needed improvement at that time that you saw?

B: I just like to try to get it to be a strong Christian community, which was a point of mine that I liked to do. I tried to do that.

S: Were there any other goals that you set for the parish at that time or for yourself?

B: Just to get to know the people. I wanted to do that. I guess the first thing I wanted to do was to learn all of their names and that kind of thing, and do what was possible to help them as best as I could.

S: And then, when you did receive the assignment to become administrator at Byzantine Catholic Central School?

B: I must have gotten that about three months after I had been here, I guess. I got it in September or so. Father Romsa asked me, because he wanted to get out. He wanted to leave; he didn't want to that anymore. He told the archbishop that he was going to be done by December, so I told him that I would do it. Then February of that year, I became administrator to the school. It was a mistake only because I didn't know the church well enough to do that.

S: It was too soon?

B: Yes, it was too soon. I should have waited another year at least, as I look back on it now. I think it was a mistake, then.

S: So what is a typical day like for you as pastor of a church and administrator of a school?

B: A typical day is: you get up and drag yourself out of bed. Then, you go to church. You do a little bit of praying here and there somewhere along the line. I come here and spend some time with Emma, my secretary. We work a lot of things that we have to do. Then, I usually go to the school, so I can see what is going on and can see what kind of trouble I can get into over there. Then, I usually go to hospitals a lot to visit the sick. I have to do that, sick calls. I do 35 of those every morning.

S: Sick calls in the homes, do you mean?

B: Homes and nursing homes.

S: And nursing homes, oh.

B: Whatever meetings that we have, I attend those, like preparing for our 75th anniversary, ladies' clubs, men's clubs, and those kind of things. That is basically it. Then, you try to get some reading in and stuff for yourself. It keep me pretty busy.

S: Sure does.

B: Sometimes, there are funerals and baptisms and weddings that I have to prepare for. I do instructions for baptisms. I visit with the families. For weddings, I do five or six preparations for the weddings. It takes time.

S: Do you feel that the parish has grown in the years since you have been there?

B: I think so. I think I see a lot of younger people going. I didn't see to much when I first came here. A lot of the younger people are coming back. That is good.

S: Yes, that is good.

B: Then, I did things with F.L.A.G., which we started.

S: Do you want to elaborate on F.L.A.G.?

B: Family Life Action Group. Again, my goals are to start with young people who are interested in working for the church, doing some kind of events in the church. Say, if they want a place in the church to work together to get to know each other, and get their kids to work with each other, too, then to develop and become very much a part of the church because it is hard for young people to become part of the church and become established in the church.

S: To feel that they belong.

B: Yes, to feel that they are a part of this established church. The older people know each other; the younger people don't. Sometimes the two meet, so I try to do that much.

S: Besides F.L.A.G. is there anything else that is very important to you right now?

B: Well, the 75th anniversary and the preparation for that and making sure that goes off well.

S: Tell me some of the things you are doing to prepare for that.

B: We are preparing the history of the church. We are doing preparation for the St. Nicholas Day, which is going to be December 6. We're doing preparation for the liturgy for the young people that we are going to have this month, which is part of our F.L.A.G. group, too. Some things we want to do is to prepare for the banquet, which is going to be in September. I also would like to do some new treats for the new people here at the church somehow. I would like to organize that. I would like to do some kind of celebration for the community, so that they know who exists and continue to know who exists and that we are here. All of this community should get to know St. Nicholas Church and to know that St. Nicholas Church is here, alive, and living and that it is not dead.

S: What do you see as the future of St. Nicholas Church?

B: Well, that is one thing we have to determine. That is one question I put to the anniversary committee to see how we can insure the success and insure the continuance of St. Nicholas Church and what we have to do to do that. In my opinion, it is to become a neighborhood church and whatever we want to do to bring people into the church. I feel this is going to revitalize itself, since its mills have been down.

S: Open new mills.

B: Yes.

S: Okay, do you have any words of wisdom for future generations of the parish?

B: Amen.

S: Okay, is there anything else that you think important to add that we did not cover that you can think of?

B: No. I think that is all.

S: I thank you very much. I really enjoyed this.

B: I thank you.

END OF INTERVIEW