

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

St. Paul Apostle Church

Personal Experience

O. H. 925

JOSEPH J. SAVAET

Interviewed

by

Jerry J. Hiznay

on

December 11, 1984

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INTERVIEWEE: JOSEPH J. SAVAET

INTERVIEWER: Jerry J. Hiznay

SUBJECT: New Middleton in 1930s and 1940s, church life,  
Fr. Pauleweicz

DATE: December 11, 1984

H: This is an interview with Joe Savaet for the Youngstown State University Oral History Project on the history of St. Paul the Apostle Catholic Church in New Middletown, by Jerry Hiznay, at the rectory of St. Paul's Church, on December 11, 1984, at 4:50 p.m.

First of all, Joe, could you tell me a little bit about yourself, where you grew up, your family background, and your younger years?

S: In my younger years, we lived in Youngstown. In 1924, my father moved out here to New Middletown. He bought the farm in New Middletown. It used to be Hollar Road. Now it is Locust Drive. I have lived here ever since. I am single. I never married. I have three brothers. There are four of us, John, Henry, and Stan. I was charter member of this church. In fact, I bought the shovel that we broke ground with.

H: Were your parents born in the United States?

S: My mother was born in the United States. My father was born in Krakow, Poland. They got married in 1919 in Pittsburgh. My mom passed away in 1953, and my father passed away in 1981. I lived with my father all of my life.

H: Are you related to Snycards?

S: Mrs. Snycard is my aunt. That is my mother's sister.

H: What was Springfield Township like back in the 1920's and 1930's. If you had to describe it, what was it like back then?

S: To tell you the truth, there isn't too much of a change in Springfield Township. The biggest change was made here right where the church is built, that would be more of New Middletown. That was done right after the war. New Springfield and Petersburg there was not too much from what it is today.

H: What did most people do for a living back there?

S: It was farming. In the past we did a good bit of custom work in the area. We had a thrashing machine, a hay bailer, and silo for the animals. We went in and bought combines. They were self-propelled combines. That put the thrashing out. This was the most enjoyable community when it came during harvest time. Everybody just worked together. You had a list of where we went thrashing. With combining, it was a war and everybody went to heck. With thrashing, everybody just looked forward to serving dinners there. Mr. Tony Thomas, everybody looked forward to their spaghetti dinner. It was spaghetti and red wine. That was a favorite. Tony Thomas had to send his workers away. Then they went in and used the plows with horses. That was grain binding way back then. I remember that. Most of them modern farm tractors.

H: When was the tractor really used here?

S: Tractors really came in this area right after World War II. It was right in that session.

H: Was it Ford?

S: Ford Ferguson was the most popular and was. . .

H: Henry Ford built that durable tractor in the 1920's.

S: The Fordson was back then.

H: Were many of them used back here on the farms in the 1920's or was it horsepower?

S: There were a few, but not too many.

H: I can remember when I was young in the early 1950's, my grandfather still had the work horses. I can remember

our first tractor. It was about 1954 or 1955 that my uncles bought the first tractor for the farm.

S: We wanted to buy a new Ford with the three point gauge because that was the coming thing of the day. My mother would never let us buy a Ford because her brother got killed on a Fordson. Our first tractor was a Farmall 30. That was on steel wheel and they converted it to rubber tires.

H: What were the schools like back then in Springfield Township?

S: The first couple of days I went to school, I went on a truck. It was a state truck. Then they got busses.

H: When did the busses start? I talked to Mary Ohlin Brentin and she remembers going the first couple of years by wagon from the house down to the township school in Petersburg.

S: In Petersburg, it was just a small school. Petersburg was, for some reason, centralized for the township. I don't know why, but it was. They had the New Middleton School and also New Springfield elementary schools were here.

H: What was high school like back in the 1930's?

S: I enjoyed it very much. We had teachers and different class periods. We had different teachers for different subjects. We had study halls in between. We had some athletics. Athletics were pretty famous.

H: Did you have six-man football back then?

S: Yes.

H: Did you play at all?

S: I played a little football then, but I didn't do too much because I had to come home and work and help my mother and father.

H: That was a problem with a lot of the farm boys.

S: It was the coming thing.

H: When you were in the service, what theaters did you?

S: I traveled in the United States covering thirty-eight of forty-eight states. I was with the Air Force.

H: What Airborne?

S: I was with the 390th Heavy Bombardment Group. I flew 71st Squadron. It was high 71st heavy bombardment squadron. We made history in the 390th. We got all kinds of awards. We got a presidential citation, four of them. I spent two and a half years over in England. They wouldn't let me fly combat. I flew and I was a checker too on high altitudes. Sometimes the boys would come down and say they were jerked and couldn't get a smooth movement on their turrets so I would fly in high altitudes and checked. They had to be checked. I would go up there. The higher you get, the colder it gets.

H: When you came back here, getting to the history of St. Paul's, what do you recall about the beginning of the church out here?

S: We had been trying to get a church here for years. We had been trying to get a church here.

I had been going to St. Stanislaw's Church. Mr. Yasechko offered some ground and decided that he was going to build here. They were talking that they might build on the corner of Calla and Struthers Roads. Somehow, I don't know how they got it, but they got this piece of ground.

H: From what I heard, it was the Bishop thought that this was a better location because it was on Route 90.

S: Actually, it was because. . . Maybe that was the reason that they chose it because it was on a main highway where it would have a good access to it.

Our masses were at the New Middletown Elementary School in the cafeteria. It seems to me that it had to be close to two years. Then we had the church breaking ground. That was a day like the April weather. There was snow and sleet and rain.

H: In April 1953 you broke ground? I think 1953 was the year.

S: Yes.

H: It was April of 1953?

S: Yes. It was snowing and raining and we were out there. After everyone got their pitches and shovels then they put it up for bid. I ended up with it.

H: You got the shovel?

S: I still have the shovel.

H: You still do? That is good.

S: I just threw it in the attic. I never used it.

H: I see where they are renovating the old school out in Poland Center. Somebody had the original school bell. They had been looking for it and somebody down on Kennedy Road had the original school bell that was in the original building.

S: The one in Poland Center?

H: Yes.

S: Is that right?

H: Yes.

S: That is nice. That is what gets me about the changes in the Catholic church. It seems that since Vatican II, our church got into a bind or they got lost or something. It seems that nobody knows which way to turn. Before it always seems that it was run from the Pope from Rome. Now it seems that we have so many rebel Bishops and Priests and everything. It seems that we have more now than we ever had.

H: Do you think when Pope John XXIII and Pope Paul started that they realized that they were going to open Pandora's box. When you all of a sudden make it aware that you are willing to accept suggestions to change that you are going to get a lot of. . .

S: You are going to get a lot of feedback or rebels or what. I still think like what is happening to our church. We are out of debt now. We have built a church. We paid for it. We built a center back here. Everything we have is all paid for. I don't approve of the changes to begin with. Why should they stick us in debt again. If things were booming, then you could burn this church down and build new one. Under the conditions, why don't we leave that for posterity. A

lot of people here bought the statues. Our family. . . I paid for the chalice but. . . Jacob and Julia Savaet and myself. The three of us bought the chalices for the church at that time. My aunt and uncles bought St. Anthony's and the rest of them. Mr. and Mrs. Cutchick, I think, bought one statue. The rest of them I don't know too much about. I have talked about this to different priests about this from different parishes. He said that a statue is nothing but an idol in church. To me it is not an idol because it inspires you to say. . . When you see a statue even when you are going down a road driving. . . I don't know how you are but I am. If I see a statue like Immaculate Conception or any like Holy Family it inspires me to say a prayer. I think that is what a statue does in church. The altars. . . There was a lot of sacrifices here building these altars.

H: Who was involved in the construction of the . . .

S: Paul Cutchick was for one. I think you have Mr. Platnick. He passed away. He is deceased. He had a lot to do with it. He worked for the Ohlins. He was a good carpenter.

H: Steven Shirilla is the name that. . .

S: Shirilla had a lot to do with it. He passed away. He is dead.

H: He is deceased. His wife lived down in Columbiana is what I have been told.

S: He used to live back here on the first street off of Arrow Road to the right. He used to live back in there. He passed away. It was quite a few years ago. Bingo was started here.

H: Were you involved with bingo back then?

S: There were a couple of meetings when they first had it. Then after awhile I sort of broke away from it. Now I got involved with and I have been involved for over two years and I am involved every Tuesday. When we have these special. . . I am usually involved because I don't have other commitments.

H: What type of people come to bingo? If you had to categorize the average bingo player, what type of person goes to bingo?

- S: From what I have seen here it is. . .There are a few younger people from the younger generation probably from. . . The middle age is retired people. That is what I would say.
- H: Are they Catholics or Protestants?
- S: They are both.
- H: Both?
- S: Both.
- H: What group would dominate then?
- S: The Catholics would be dominant.
- H: Speaking of Protestants, this is one question I have failed to ask everybody, since you grew up out here, back in the 1930's and 1940's, how many Protestant churches were there back then? When I drive around Springfield Township and the size of it, we have an immense number of Protestant churches. Were there that many then back in the 1930's?
- S: Yes. Let's see. Back originally there were the twin churches. That was known as the twin churches on the corner of Route 170 and South Range Road. There used to be two there. There is one now. In Springfield there was an old church. Petersburg I think had two. The newer churches there were, I think, the Church of Christ on that Petersburg Road out the road between Petersburg and New Springfield. It is on the right hand side. That was a new addition to our parish for churches.
- H: Of the Protestant faith which ones were most dominant, Presbyterian, Methodist, Lutheran or what? Can you think back?
- S: I don't know who would be the. . .
- H: Let's put it this way, around your neighborhood. . .
- S: We had a good variety. We almost had a league of Nations here on religion.
- H: Let's put it this way, when the formation of St. Paul's was started since this primarily at that time it was a rural Protestant community, how did they respond?



S: We had a lot of anguish. There were quite a few. A good bit of them were backlashing. Why do you want to move here? What do you want to change the township for? There was a good bit, quite a few. Some were by pretty good faith. They were my real good friends.

H: Was there any Klan activities out here in the 1920s that you can remember? You were pretty young then.

S: Yes. No, I can't.

H: At least when the church was started there was some?

S: There was a lot back then. We got a lot. They didn't mind so much.

H: That was another one.

S: That was one of the big objections that I did hear.

H: I guess we are probably, with all of the churches, we were one, of the first ones if you are coming south from Youngstown.

S: There is a Methodist church up here.

H: Yes. We are one of the first ones you would see, I guess.

S: Then we were built here before the Methodist was built here. This church was built before.

H: There may have been feedback because of that.

S: There was some feedback on that, but they soon agreed that, "Okay, we are here and we are going to stay," and so we are in here.

H: At one point I have found out from some people was that a lot of the farms, big family farms at that time, were people like you; Polish, or Slovaks or other Hunkies who moved out here.

S: Most of those Hunkies moved out here. They were brought here after the end of the Depression when things started to come back in in the 1930s.

H: When I look at the list of the original charter member, I see your name, I see the Huchkos, you got the Broschaks, you got the Helkos.

S: Shanders.

H: The Dubecks, Cossacks.

S: You are right. They all moved. . .

H: I know a lot of them were farms and most of those that I know are either Polish or Croation or Slovak or something. Mary Ohlin Brenton said that a lot of the Pennsylvania-Dutch, who had originally moved here, seemed to move away during that period of time. That is when the ethnic families moved out here.

S: Ethnic families moved in here after the war.

H: Looking at that then, when the parish was started, when it was finally agreed to give the "okay," and Father Pawlewicz was chosen for the parish, do you think the bishop chose Father Pawlewicz because he was Polish, I think? Do you think that may have been it?

S: I never checked into that.

H: If you look at a lot of the names, that was really a good choice because you are talking this about a really ethnic. . .

S: Yes. When you look at it. . . Original like you meant it. This was actually an ethnic parish when you come down to it. Most of it was Slovic, Polish, and Hungarian, and Croation.

H: Jack Cumberford said that they used sing a half hour before midnight mass. They used to sing some ethnic hymns and some Slovak hymns.

S: That is right. I don't know why they ever started but they did have it for quite a few years. They would usually sing one each, one Slavish, one Polish. Mostly it was Slavish because most of the choir was Slavish. They did that before the midnight mass. That is right.

H: I guess that shows. . . Nobody has really said that. I think if you look at Father Pawlewicz being Polish, it was a good idea. Speaking of Father Pawlewicz, what was he like as the initial pastor.

S: He was a priest from the old times. He was from the old schools. I liked him. He and I got along real well. He never, for all that he has done. . . Look at the stuff that he has done with the money he was getting. Then, our only collection was going to be between \$190-225 a week. That was our collection.

H: Really?

S: He done an awful lot with it.

H: I was impressed with when I met with Mary Brentin. She had a couple of things that she gave me. One that was really interesting, from one of the picnics that you had for fund raising.

S: We had some here. We had a grandfather clock. Then the farmers got together with Mr. Yasechko and they would try to buy fertilizer in large quantities and they would get a better prices. John Yasechko that is a father. . Catherine Yasechko, did you ever talk to her?

H: No.

S: Well, that was her father.

H: Mickey Burke's wife?

S: Yes, it is Mickey Burke's wife. That is who Catherine is.

H: I talked with Mickey. I guess that she felt that since I talked with Mickey that I got most of the information from him.

That is from a picnic you had back in August of 1952. I was really impressed when you looked at the net receipts for one picnic. The people were really. . .

S: We had more. It seems like everybody. . . I don't care what anybody says. It seems like even when this farming when they changed from thrashing to combining, it seems like the picnics in the areas changed right along with it. Before that everybody met. We used to have picnics here in the woods up where that trailer park is now. That is where one of the. . .

H: That is one of the Ohlin's right?

S: Yes. That was one of their places. We had all kind. . . It seemed that we had a heck of a good crowd and now you see that it is now what. . .

H: That is interesting. To see how because of technical improvements people were pulled further apart. You got together to work.

S: When we were back there. . . When we were to farm years ago, boy I tell you, you knew what every neighbor was doing. I mean everybody. Say something happened that was even unusual that had. . . By golly, there were always two or three of the neighbors come up there. Today, you don't even know your neighbor.

H: That is true. That is sad, I guess you have to say.

S: That is right. Is that what modernizing is bringing us up to. Modern equipment has a lot to do with these picnics.

H: Was there a close bond amongst the families, the 50 to 90 families that were. . .

S: Oh, yes. I would say it was a lot closer than today. I would say yes.

H: If you had to list a name of the parish "who's who" back then, what people really were highly responsible for getting the church off of the ground?

S: One of the more important ones was Mr. John Yasechko. He was one that pushed it. Then. . .I wasn't too much to push.

H: Petrick?

S: The Petrick's were in there. Petrick's were pretty good. I wasn't too much involved. I didn't get to much involved in the church until the last twenty years or so and then I got involved with the church. Until then, I wasn't.

H: What do you remember about the construction of the church?

S: Oh, yes, I can remember the construction of the church.

H: What type of structure is this? Is there. . .

S: I don't know what you mean?

H: Let's see. . .

S: There are the cement blocks formed. It has a red brick facing.

H: How about the. . .?

S: Every place where the thing is, there is steel girders. Every place there is a rib in the roof. That is a steel girder roof. But you know, they can't find any plans.

H: Everybody I have talked to. . .

S: Nobody can seem to find the plans on this church.

H: I have gotten some pictures. One of the things that I have heard so much about was the murals.

S: Yes. Oh yes. We had such nice murals. . .

H: Until . . .

S: Every space in between there was a big saint painted up there. I don't know what happened to all of them.

H: Jack Comerford thought that they were starting to fade and I think Father Haidet was here.

S: I think that might have happened in Father Haidet's days.

H: They couldn't find anybody to do the painting, but they had that post card. I have never seen it.

S: Oh, yes. That was the original, that is right.

H: In all of the pictures that I have so far, it definately didn't show. Couldn't see the mural because they were black and white for the most part.

S: We had that painting done. That is the way it looked so nice and everything. We also had them in the ceiling. There were four in the ceiling, two of the murals. Like I said on this thing too, I cannot see taking all of this out.

H: Since you are going to talk about change, when Vatican II took place, they went from Latin to English. How did you view that?

S: I didn't approve of it at first, but the more I thought about it. . . The only thing I knew were several songs in Latin and those, I still miss them. The rest of it, I thought that was a good change for the church. That was one change that I approved of, you know, the language of the parish.

H: If you went to St. Stan's, they had masses in Polish. Did they at times?

S: Oh, yes. In fact, they still have one mass in Polish.

H: My in-laws are from St. Mathias and I have gone to the 10:00 a.m. mass on Sunday and it is still in Slovak. If you go to Christmas midnight mass there, they start singing an hour before mass and it is all in Slovak, all of the hymns.

How about the changing of the altar from the back, with the priest's back to you, to turning it around and having him face you? How did you. . .?

S: Well, I was sort of against that too, and then I figured that I could live with that changed.

H: How did the other people react?

S: A lot of people. . . A lot of times he sits up there like a bump on the log. That didn't affect me one bit that he had his back towards me. That part never bothered me because no matter what church I went to, even the churches in Europe, and the churches that I went to all over the United States when I was in the service, they all had the same meaning.

H: You felt comfortable?

S: Yes, I felt real comfortable.

H: Did you have a chance to go to any of the historic churches over in Europe?

S: Yes. I have been to St. Paul's, I've been in St. Mary's Cathedral.

H: How about Notre Dame?

S: Notre Dame, I have been there. I have also seen that one church in Paris. I went over there. But I didn't get that. . . See, we were going to fly on that one mission. Then, I don't know what happened. I had a two week furlough and I was supposed to go to Ireland. I had everything all fixed up. They were supposed to wake me. That night, about midnight they canceled. So, I didn't get to go to Ireland.

H: Was that about the time of D-Day, maybe?

S: That was way after.

H: Way after?

S: Oh, yes.

H: I was just wondering.

S: They said that they had a lot of trouble there.

H: Where were you at?

S: I was in England. I was eighty miles from London, where I was stationed. I got to travel pretty good. I saw a good bit of England and Scotland. I saw the famous Loch and all.

H: Didn't get a chance to go back into Poland?

S: No, I didn't. I flew over Poland. I went on seven mercy missions when we took food, but we just hauled food into there. Sometimes we dropped it. Four times we landed. The people there unloaded our airplanes. We couldn't leave the airplane. The whole crew couldn't leave. As soon as they unloaded and got everything, we just took right off. I loved it. I figured that we could spend a day or two, but we couldn't. All we did was stop, land and unload it and took off and went back home.

H: When the masses were held back when the church first opened up here, what type of attendance was there?

S: It was fairly good attendance. We had them in the cafeteria of the elementary school. That is where our first masses were. I wouldn't say the church was crowded, but it was enough here that we kept the church going. We just seemed like we grew up with the church, but like I said as far as closeness goes, there was more closeness then than they are today. I don't know. Has modern equipment brought that one, you know, farm equipment or what? The closeness has just faded away. We have now, we have a few cliques. It is mostly cliques.

H: Yes. Is there any way that you think that it could come back to the old way, that closeness?

S: The only thing I could see that would ever come back, we would have to see the worst depression that we ever experienced in the United States.

- H: Isn't that horrible that you have to have a tragedy?
- S: You almost have to have one. It has to be a tragedy to bring people closer together. It seemed like then children had more respect for parents than they do today.
- H: I am a teacher. I know where you are coming from.
- S: Are you a teacher?
- H: Yes. Of the people who were the original members back then, what did the average person do for a living in the 1950s?
- S: I would say it would be between working in the steel mills and having a farm on the side. That was the main thing. The steel mills were the main thing.
- H: Business was booming back then?
- S: Things were looking pretty good then. Then everybody had their little family farms. The family farms were real popular then. Today, that is going out the door and it is getting like in the next few years there won't be a family farm.
- H: That is true. If you look around, except for the big business farms you have, most of the family farms have.
- S: Most of the family farms are out the door. Like I say, it seems like today with all of these benefits that we are getting, I think that is what ruined a lot of homes too. Those benefits that we are getting which is a good thing, because if not we would we in the worse depression that we have ever been in if it wasn't for all of the government compensations, and unemployment. I remember my father, he went to work one day, and he came home and told my mom, "You know how much my pay is? \$2.48."
- H: That day?
- S: No, it is not. That was for the pay period.
- H: The pay period?
- S: He said they used to have to go down. . . They didn't have it. . . See, that is what made the unions so strong. If it wasn't for the bosses that had their



buddies, we wouldn't have it anymore. That is what helped to bring it on. Roosevelt helped them.

S: What was it like in the Depression? Getting a little bit away from the church's history, what was it like out here during the Depression years of the 1930s?

S: Everybody in the neighborhood get up and get in their old car, Model T or Chevy or whatever they had. The Model T and the Chevrolet were the two most popular cars back then. They would go to work and then maybe in an hour and a half or two they would be back. The boss didn't pick them out. My dad used to tell me that you had to line up in front of the gate. The boss would say, "You, you, and you work and the rest go home." The ones that were going, my dad used to say, in fact my uncles used to say the same thing, if you brought chickens or eggs to the foreman, you worked. If you didn't. . . That is what made the unions so strong.

H: Were times ever tough? The farm had to be helpful, right?

S: Yes. We never made any big money, but we had something to eat. We always had potatoes, and cabbage. That was the most stable food there was.

H: My mother always says that. She never knew a depression was going on for the fact that they never went hungry.

S: That is right. At home we always used to raise a beef and a pig, a porker. We would butcher them in the fall. It isn't anything like it is now that you can throw it in your freezer.

H: You had to do everything by canning.

S: Yes, my mother did everything. Either you're canning or you dried it. You would put it up in your barn. We made sausage and everything, and put it in the barn, and let it dry up in the barn. There was something about that peperoni we used to make. I don't think there was as much delinquency as there is today. Everybody seemed to live closer than we are today.

H: Besides the picnics for fund raising, what other things do you remember that they might have done to get. . .

S: Once in awhile we would have a grandfather clock donatated and we sold raffles. Sometimes the girls

would make afghans and that was a big thing. They would sell them. Then we had a few get togethers. There was never too much as far as food goes, like dinners. We had a couple chicken dinners. That was about the most popular.

H: I know you are an usher now.

S: Yes.

H: How long have you been an usher, Joe?

S: Ever since the church was built I was either a councilman or an usher.

H: As an usher, you get a good idea of what the people are like. You are there in the back of church and you see them. You mentioned collections back in the early days, what was an average collection then?

S: Like I said the average collection when Father Pawlewicz was there was up to \$200.

H: Here is a question that I have asked two other ushers. I have asked Stan and Ralph Bair.

S: They are the old timers.

H: Did the collection ever reflect when times were bad? When ever there was maybe a minor recession in the economy and the steel mills were running slow, because a lot of the men were steel workers, could you think back and say, "Gee, you know. . ." Could you think back if times were bad, was it shown in collection plate as the basket was passed?

S: It seemed like the people, when we started off, it started off with so much it seemed like everybody threw his dime or a dollar in. It just held up and it just kept increasing. I don't think that has changed too much with the Depression that we had in the meantime.

H: I thought that would be interesting if there was any way you could see. From what I gathered, at least, the people here were so tight in those years, that times got tough, they probably tightened up the belt.

S: No, it seemed like they tightened their belts, but the church got its share.

H: That is good.

S: It seems like it is more so then than it is now.

H: Another thing as an usher, when people come to mass or when families come to mass, did they tend to sit always in the same area?

S: Pretty much so. They were within a few pews of each other.

H: Some of the old families like the Yasechkos, was he still alive when they built the church or had he died yet?

S: No, John was still alive.

H: So, where would a John Yasechko sit when he came to mass.

S: He would sit over toward the front. Mostly on the right hand side of the church back there. Everybody seemed like they had certain pews picked out and they would prefer ends.

H: Why do you think people do that?

S: It seems to be the going thing. I don't know.

H: I noticed that too. Whenever I am not a Eucharistic Minister, we always like to sit on the left side towards the front.

S: For a long time then they would have the women usually on the Blessed Virgin's side of the church and then the men would be on the other side of the church, St. Joseph's side. That was common too. Quite a few families would all go together. The majority of them would be women here and men. . . If you are facing the church, the men were on the right and the women were on the left. Everybody out there used to sport their Easter bonnets.

H: All of the time?

S: The girls, oh yes. That was a big think on Easter Sunday.

H: Before Vatican II the women had to wear the hats.

S: That is right. That was one of the rules of the church that they had to have their head covered whether it was a hat or something or just a plain handkerchief.

H: I can remember that myself.

S: Yes.

H: Who were some of the other men who were ushers with you back in the early days?

S: Hutchko, Joe was an usher. I will have to show you my picture.

H: Sometime you will have to let me look at it. That would be interesting.

S: I think John Yasechko was one.

H: Ralph Bair was one. I got one picture here from the . .

S: Ralph Bair was here since . . . I have that book there. It has some in there.

H: There are some pictures of some ushers. Are you the good looker on the right hand side in the second row?

S: That is me.

H: Can you identify those men for me? That is a toughy, always have to look at pictures.

S: Oh, yes.

H: That is one thing I don't like about this book. They didn't put who was who in the pictures. Unless you were an original member back then, if you would look this book today. . .

S: There is Stanley Yasechko, Richard Billock.

H: That is the council there?

S: That is the council, yes.

H: That is Shirilla?

S: That is Shirilla. This is Billock and Stanley Rutana and Mickey Burke.

H: As an usher, what changes have you seen in from the back of the church if you look how people participate in mass and all of that?

S: Years ago one big change that I noticed, a lot of people coming years ago, they would come in and first thing before the mass they would decide to pull their Rosary out and start praying on the Rosary. Today, the Rosary is a no-no almost here in the church and that is one thing that has really changed.

H: You still see some of the old timers still say the rosary.

S: I always carry a rosary with me. I have one in each suit jacket. Then there were more people praying on their prayer books. Everybody had their own little prayer book. Some had a nice big one and the others had the tiny little ones. That was one thing too that was . .

H: Did people come earlier to mass? I noticed that people tend to rush right in at the last second.

S: I would say today about the last two minutes is when everybody rushes in. Then they would come earlier, and then like I said they had their prayers or their saints and their rosary. That was more so than it is today. That is one thing to.

H: When did you serve on the council? Do you remember when you were councilman?

S: It was shortly after the church was formed when Father Pawlewicz was there. It was Father Pawlewicz, that's right.

H: You have been to our council meetings today so you know, how were they different back then when you were a councilman?

S: Not too much is the same. There weren't as many there. There was only about half as many. There was maybe even less than a half. I think there was about seven or eight of us. It was pretty much the same. As far as the counting of the money, he did all of the counting, like now we do it on Monday. The one big difference I know now has been before he would take all of the money. Father would take all of the money. Now, I deposit it, and all of the ushers deposit it from every mass. We deposit it right into the bank. Whenever we get money

bags, we deposit it right in the bank. That is another big change.

It seems like the lay people seem to me today have more on doing on the money matters of the church than they did before.

H: You didn't have much. . .

S: We didn't have too much to say. It was out there, it was written down and it was laid out and that is the way it was supposed to be.

H: Did Father Pawlewicz say if you had any suggestions or hints, did he. . .

S: He would accept them and he would listen to them. He would think them over. If he thought they were valid, he would accept them. It was pretty much like it is now. He would go along with you for certain things.

H: Did Father Pawlewicz have a good rapport, a good relationship with the parish?

S: With certain people, yes. I would say in the general parish, I would have to say no. He came from the old school. They believed in all of that. Even a couple of times I did the reading up there and I couldn't lift the chalice, couldn't carry the chalice or anything. You know, even if just to put it on the altar, unless you put a white cloth up on it and then carry it over. Now today, you handle it like anybody else.

I would say under the conditions that Father Pawlewicz has done wonders with the money that he got. That is one thing for him.

H: Looking at all the different pastors then, that served here, what was Father Haidet like?

S: Haidet should have never been a priest.

H: I have heard that.

S: He should have been an entepenuer.

H: He is a businessman is what I heard.

S: He was a business type of person. He should have never been a preacher.

H: How about Father Bissler?

S: He was more of the priestly type.

H: Father O'Neill?

S: Father O'Neill seemed like he was trying to be nice to everybody. That was one thing about Father O'Neill. He was trying to treat everybody like a member of the church. It seems like that. I don't know. There were certain people that we would get in there and try to run the church and everything else. I didn't think that a priest ever got away from that. It was pretty nice.

H: A priest is a human being and they definitely would like to extend their personality into the parish that they are involved with. I think it is a fault that we all have.

S: Oh, yes. That is one of the faults that we all have. The more you get to know certain parties, you find out the more we find out that they try to be bossy or something.

I am saying as a rule that we always had pretty good, except like I said Haidet should have been an Entrepreneur. You know the business.

H: Since you have been a member throughout the church's history, how has St. Paul's changed, if it has changed? Has the parish changed at all in your view or has it basically remained the same? Have the people remained the same or are they different?

S: I would say that there is a change here. It seems like everybody got more individual like. It seems like years ago there was more cooperation. Now you have these certain cliques. It seems then there was more of a family type thing. I think they were a lot closer.

Another thing is all the older people we had here. That made a difference here too, I think.

H: How about this, do you think that maybe the growth of the community, which obviously you have seen it grow tremendously in the last twenty years. . . We are up to 600 families here. That is what Father Brops says we have. Again, we are talking about technology, that the automobile has to do with that? What I am saying is how we consider New Middletown as a suburb of Youngstown.

Do you think a lot of the people. . . Like I know myself, my in-laws live in Youngstown. What we do as soon as mass is over Sunday, we hop in the car and we head to the in-laws. You think that maybe that is part of the problem? That you have so many people that as soon as mass is over they're hopping in their cars on Sundays to go visit the families.

S: Yes. They go visiting or go to eat breakfast or something on their own. There is not as much closeness today as there was a lot of years ago.

H: At that time, the families were here and they lived here. Your parents were here and you and your brothers have stayed primarily in the community. If you look at the Hickos, they are still in the community and their parents were here. The Yasechko family has primarily remained here. The Billocks and Baroshacks and all of those families are here.

S: All pretty much in the area. They left our thing because when they lost their job and they couldn't. Then, it seemed like the older people, I am referring to when we first came out here like the Polish, Slavish, and that, they seem to be a lot closer to the old folks. They would come for Sunday and they would go visiting each other and now that the young kids grew up or even from my generation, from my times, we are not as close as I was saying that my mom and dad and my neighbors were.

H: The Depression had to have a lot to do with that, don't you think?

S: I think that it has a lot to do with it. Another thing, we went to schools and we had other activities that we were already involved in too. I think that had a big change from my generation on up. Like from my father and my mother, I know they were a lot closer to the neighbors than I am.

H: Each generation you think it gets worse?

S: It seems to be coming that way right now.

H: I know my neighbors by face, but I really don't know my neighbors.

S: That is exactly right and that is same thing around.



You know how things really changed on the farm here in the area? We used to thrash and we had nothing. We had ten, fifteen, or twenty people helping you. Now, when they came to combining, you supply your truck. Some places they would have their own truck. The truck and a combine went together. They wouldn't even bring you out a glass of water. Before they would feed you. That is what the modern equipment has done. They wouldn't bring out anything. These are free refreshments or something.

H: I appreciate your time. I know that you have to go get involved with bingo here. Thank you. If you think of anything else I would like to get a chance to see those pictures. It is going to help when I am going to have to put this part together for myself for the history of the parish.

S: I hope that I have done you some good.

H: It is nice to know that the shovel is still around. Father Brobst would think that is interesting. He really likes history, especially the older history. That is one of the reasons he got me to do this project.

S: I will say this much. I think Father Brobst has brought this parish closer since Father Pawlewicz died.

H: You are not by yourself on that. I think that most of the people that I have talked to, Joe, agree to that. They think his vim and vigor, his youthful appearance, I think his outright concern for the people of the parish is good. Hopefully some way of another he isn't taken away from us.

S: He seems to be more social. Like I said, since Father Pawlewicz has left, I think Father Brobst has done more for this parish to bring it closer together than any other priest we had in between. That is my personal opinion.

H: I think that is an opinion that most people that I have talked to has shared.

S: Then, I am not alone.

H: I will second the motion. I really enjoy going to mass with Father Brobst. He has a good sermon and he definitely has a good message to it.

S: Like I said, I think that he has done a lot of good for this parish.

END OF INTERVIEW