INTERVIEW WITH LAWRENCE GAUTHIER
MARQUETTE, MICHIGAN
DECEMBER 20, 2006

SUBJECT: LIFE OF FATHER GAUTHIER; CATHOLIC CHURCH IN MARQUETTE

MAGNAGHI, RUSSELL M. (RMM): Interview with Father Lawrence Gauthier, Marquette, Michigan, December 20, 2006. Okay, Father Gauthier, we'll start the interview. The first question I usually ask is your birthday.

LAWRENCE GAUTHIER (LG): February 26, 1929.

RMM: Okay. What we want to do here in the interview is, to kind of talk about your French-Canadian heritage, and then the French-Canadian heritage that you knew of in the Upper Peninsula. Then we'll talk a little about yourself as we go along. Could you tell us first maybe a little about your family? When they came to the Upper Peninsula, where they settled, and possibly why they came here.

LG: We did some ancestral studies and we found out that the first Gauthier – in French we say Gauthier (French pronunciation - FP) – came to Montreal in 1614, from Nance (?), France. And they settled in a village called St. Julian (FP) – St. Julian's, about thirteen miles west of Montreal. The first Gauthier recorded from France that arrived here, his name was Matherin. M A T H E R I N, I believe, something like that, Gauthier. He was eventually given the Isle of St. Therese in the middle of the Montreal River, near Montreal, where his gravesite is, and that of his wife. It was mostly occupied, of course, by Native Americans at that time. I'm not exactly sure when my great grandfather, Antoine Gauthier, arrived here in Marquette, but he's buried at Holy Cross Cemetery, and he was married to a Chaput – C H A P U T. Looking at our heritage, back to 1614, a couple of my ancestral grandparents were married to Chaputs, and that's an Indian name, my understanding is. And so my grandfather arrived here in the Marquette area. I often wondered why they came to Marquette. But he had a son, who was my grandfather, by the name of Joseph Gauthier, and he had approximately five daughters and four sons. One son passed away at the age of fifteen in Canada, but the rest of his family settled in the Marquette area, and they intermarried with other French-Canadians that had settled here. My grandfather died in 1912. He was actually a fur trapper and a woodsman, and he died near Big Bay. There was a little town – Birch, it was Birch – and my dad lived there for one or two years and that was about the extent of that little village there. And my grandfather died of tuberculosis.

RMM: This is Joseph?

LG: This is Joseph, right. Antoine's first wife died, my great grandfather, and he married, I believe it was a Deseos (?), and I believe she outlived him by a few years. So these sons of my grandfather – I'm sorry, I should say his brothers and sisters, I'm getting a little confused here.

RMM: The brothers and sisters . . . .

LG: I'm thinking of Antoine's family. His brothers and sisters settled in the Marquette area here, and many of them actually died in this area. They were married again to other French-Canadians.

RMM: In Marquette then. They were all descendents from Antoine?

LG: That's right, yes. I was tracing my ancestry and I got to about 1912 and there were so many Gauthiers that I kind of gave up at that time. And I was searching the baptismal records of St. John the Baptist Church, and there were over 6,000 French-Canadians that were baptized at St. John's Church until it closed. These were recent years, those records are at St. Peter's cathedral. My grandmother's name was Perrault, P E R R A U L T, and she lived in a village called Sante Spree (?) or Holy Spirit, just three miles from St. Julian, where my grandfather came from. They did not meet, however, until both of them were in Marquette, Michigan. My grandfather, Joseph Gauthier, was a farmer, and his family did farming. But my grandmother's side of the family were quite highly educated, and her father served in the French-Canadian Parliament for their district in that particular part of Canada. My grandmother was one of 27 children. Her father had married after his first wife died, and my grandmother wasn't the easiest person to get along with, so my grandfather was happy to send her as a nanny for the Bureau family, who came from the same area. So my grandmother arrived here in the United States, and she worked for one of the Bureau families. Their home was right behind what is now a fire station on South Third Street.

My grandfather was about twelve years her senior – it wasn't unusual for French-Canadian girls to marry at a much younger age and to older men. So I visited Sante Spree, my grandmother's birthplace, and I met the pastor there, who spoke only French. Fortunately I had my aunt, Mrs. Ickus (?), [who] was my father's sister, and spoke French. And he took us into the parish church, in this small village town, which was almost the size of St. Peter's cathedral, because everybody in that area was French-Canadian Catholic. We went in there, and he showed us a window that my grandmother's brother had donated to the church. What was fascinating about that is that at that time I was superintendent of Catholic schools here in the diocese of Marquette. And her brother became superintendent of Catholic schools in Quebec City. And so as I mentioned, that side of our family was well educated, and this is one aspect of the Perrault family.

RMM: Now what was your grandmother's first name?

LG: Her name was Mary-Louise Perrault. In the central city of Green Bay, there's a park there. And there's a Jesuit missionary, and there's a voyageur, and there – this is a statue, and there's Perrault, although they spelled it like Parrot – P A R R O T. He was quite influential in that part of Wisconsin, and had great relationships with the Native Americans. My sister Evelyn Myron, she now lives in Menominee. She's my youngest sister. She was doing some of the research on our heritage – both the Gauthier family, Gauthier (English pronunciation – EP) family, and the

Perrault, Perrault (EP) family. About three years ago they had a big reunion up in Sante Spree, and my sister went up there and met the Perrault (EP) or Perrault side of the family. They had over a thousand people present for this reunion, so they celebrated for about three days. And she did get back safely.

I noticed too, looking at the history of the family, that both the Perraults and the Gauthiers didn't move too far away from Montreal. They settled in little towns that were maybe fifteen to thirty miles away at the most, and you see a lot of those small towns around Montreal as kind of villages, so to speak. I used to talk to my grandmother and try to get information from her. Of course, she didn't tell me that she was sent to the Perrault family because she was a stubborn little girl. I couldn't figure out why she arrived.

RMM: She came to Marquette.

LG: She came to Marquette, yeah.

RMM: Now, Bureau, that's like the bureau – B U R E A U.

LG: Yeah, there were quite a few Bureau families here in Marquette, there used to be.

RMM: Were they from the Montreal area?

LG: They were from the Montreal area, and they may have even been from the villages on the Spree – that I don't know, because, how would my grandfather otherwise know that family, you see.

RMM: Okay. You mentioned your grandfather was a farmer. Where did he farm in the Marquette area?

LG: He didn't farm here, but he came from St. Julian. Around there is a farming community. When he came here, I guess he was uneducated. So he was a fur trapper, and that's why they moved up to Birch. My dad used to tell me how they would go even down where the old orphanage used to be, and down in that area they used to trap rabbits, and sell the furs and stuff.

RMM: Oh, where US 41 bypassed.

LG: 41 bypasses [the spot] today, yeah. And my grandmother, one of her brothers also, my uncle, great uncle Charlie it would be. He was a lumberjack, and he came and lived with her for a number of years until he passed away. I remember him as a kid in our family home on Fisher Street. My grandfather, Joseph Gauthier, my dad's dad, he built our home at 428 Fisher Street. It was built in 1903. And my understanding from my dad was that, probably it was the first house built in that area. I know I looked over the records of that Fisher Street plot of land, and it goes back to the Civil War. After the Civil War, the government gave homesteads to a

number of people, and this one gentleman in the Continental Army, pulling that whole track of land right to Lake Superior. My dad used to tell me that, when he was growing up, there were mostly Native Americans living in that area. When I was doing gardening there, I would stumble across a lot of what appeared to be Indian arrowheads in the yard, as I'd been digging up for gardens and stuff. The other incident I remember him telling me was, it was hard to get glass up here, and they shipped a big bay window from Chicago, somewhere quite a ways south. And putting it in, they broke it, and [it] took several months of course to transport something like that.

RMM: This was the Big Bay church?

LG: No, this is my home on 428 Fisher –

RMM: Oh, not something super-fancy, just the regular large window.

LG: Yeah. In those days, they used to have kind of a stained-glass across the top, you see. And I always remember my dad telling me that this came from Chicago, as I remember him telling me. All that business and it took several months to get it this far north, and putting it in they broke the original window, and had to wait again for another window to be sent from Chicago.

RMM: From your memory, were a lot of the French-Canadians in the Marquette area from the Montreal area?

LG: I would say yes, I think many of them came from there. And I guess the question is, why did they settle in Marquette? I would love to know the answer to that. Most of the old timers are gone now, so I have no idea why my great grandfather came here, and then this . . . . (odd cut) I think a lot of Catholics in Marquette settled on the south side because that's where St. Peter's cathedral was established, and on the north side, as you mentioned, were mostly people of Protestant faith, and probably people of more means than the south side. So when I was growing up, Washington Street was kind of a division line. Not entirely, because there were a lot of French speaking people that lived just on the other side of St. John's church, on Bluff and Ridge Street, but on the west end, not on the east side.

RMM: Where was St. John's school?

LG: St. John's school was where the present Bell telephone office building is today. And when the building was closed, St. John's parish contributed funds and we built a wing on St. Peter's school, the upper wing. [It] was the result of taking the children from St. John's school, so they became part owners, so to speak, of Father Marquette, which is now known as Father Marquette School.

RMM: Now was the convent – is the building still standing there and is now a law office?

LG: The sister's convent for the French?

RMM: Yeah, for the French school.

LG: No, there used to be a Craig's newsstand, right on Washington Street, right where there's a parking lot in front of the former rectory. You go to (unclear) you know where it's at.

RMM: Okay.

LG: Okay, that parking lot, there were stores there.

RMM: To the east of the church.

LG: To the south. Actually, yes, it would be to the east and to the south of the present rectory. And upstairs of that building, my understanding was that's where the sister's convent was.

RMM: Oh, in the commercial –

LG: Yeah. St. John's owned those buildings. There's a man by the name of Craig that they must have rented from [on] the street side, where he had a newspaper stand, and a small confectionary store. Then Erickson's Radio Shack was in there too – I shouldn't say "shack," but they had some part of that building, also.

RMM: So the sisters lived almost next to the church and walked up a block or two to the school.

LG: Yeah.

RMM: Tell us a little about growing up in this, was it a French-Canadian community, or were there French-Canadian neighbors – how'd that work out?

LG: Of course, there were other ethnic groups. I grew up on Rock Street and Fisher Street, and we had some German people, we have Smausers as an example, and Kriegers, and there were a few people of Belgian descent – Belgiques. But, my grandparents – I never knew my grandfather but my grandmother and my two aunts, Mrs. Ickus and Mrs. Easly (?). [They] and my dad all spoke fluent French. So as kids, when they got together, we never knew what was going on [because] they would be speaking French. The reason why my dad didn't teach us French is because he married my mother from Hancock, her name was Harter, H A R T E R later changed to H E A R T E R. She was German, so she didn't understand French. So our language in the home was always English. But at St. John's church, Father Jodessey was actually Belgian. He gave us homilies in French, and I remember attending Mass there for a year or two – as a matter of fact that's where I was baptized. Finally my dad decided that he and his two sisters both would move to St. Peter's Cathedral because their spouses were not French-Canadians, and they didn't know what was going on. So that's how we became members of St. Peter's Cathedral.

RMM: So, you've given the kind of actual break-up of how the national church comes apart later.

LG: Yeah. And the purpose of national churches, really, they were born to die, because they protected, in this case the French culture, the language, and of course the faith. So, when people came to this country, because it was Anglos (unintelligible), English language was the main language and so on. This was a way of preserving their ethnic heritage. It's hard for people to understand that when you close down, even today, a national perish. But that was the purpose and intent, to accomplish those three goals. Preserve their faith, their culture, [and] their language. St. John's for many years had a St. John Baptist (FP) Society, St. John the Baptist Society. Which, you know, originated in Montreal, in Canada. Again, it was an effort to maintain that French identity. Many of the people that belonged to St. John's Church were farmers, out where St. Louis the King Church is today. They were out in that area, they farmed, and they weren't able to get to church very often. So when they established St. Christopher's and St. Louis what happened was, there was a dismantling, really, of St. John's Church. And so the people out in Harvey – that's why we named the church St. Louis, the most Christian king of France, because of the French-Canadian influence out there – many of those people were not able to get to church very often because they were at a distance in those days.

RMM: So that was the original purpose of establishing the St. Louis parish?

LG: Yeah, and there was growth out there.

RMM: So the two kind of went together. French-Canadian influence.

LG: That's right. And you had to have so much French blood in you to belong to the French church, as we used to refer to it. It's interesting because oftentimes these national churches, they didn't get along too well with other Catholics. The cathedral was basically an Irish parish. So St. John's pastor, Monsignor Jodessey (?), he did not encourage his high school kids to go to Bishop Baraga School. It was at tension. They had their own grade school at the time, of course, that was fine. But, rather than send 'em to the Catholic school . . . .

RMM: He'd send them to the public school.

LG: Yeah, he would not encourage that. You find that in French Canada, too – while I was up in an area about a hundred miles north of the Sioux, or northeast, they were just building this town where they had discovered Uranium. They had an Irish Catholic congregation, and a French congregation. Well, they never got along together, in the sense that, one had a Catholic school, [so] they wouldn't send their kids to that Catholic school. [I] think they were afraid of losing their French heritage – I think the French were more responsible for that than the Irish, because the Irish were much closer to the English-speaking population.

RMM: Yeah. So, there was a large French-Canadian population in Chocolay township.

LG: Yeah, there were a lot of French-Canadians settled out there on farms. As a matter of fact, some of my grandfather's daughters married people like the Degrans (?), and I'm trying to think of some of the other names that they married into. Many of the more prominent French names were people who stayed in this area, and my grandfather's brothers and sisters married into these people, and some also married on the north end of town. I remember visiting an uncle, a great uncle I suppose, uncle Sam. Uncle Sam lived out in what we referred to as the swamp area. It was really kind of a poor part of town, and there were a lot of Native Americans that lived out there. And I remember visiting him, you know, on a couple occasions with my dad.

RMM: What kind of work would [he do?] Do you remember that he seemed like a fur trapper or something?

LG: I would say most of those people were probably woodworkers. Lumberjacks.

RMM: Would they have cannons, saw mills out there, things like that? Pick up jobs at various times.

LG: Yeah. Birch was a little community that only lasted about two-three years, and then Brunswick or somebody else came in there and they built, they even literally moved some of those homes. There are some foundations there in that particular area; right across from where you go into Loma farms (?) is where the town of Birch was. They moved a lot of those homes to Big Bay, the company homes. So Brunswick, I believe, bought this place. And then of course the lumbering business was up there, and then Ford came into the picture and that sort of stuff.

RMM: So there were French-Canadians also at, at Birch.

LG: Yeah.

RMM: And then they would move with the housing and the company.

LG: The Slovenians played quite a part there, too, because in Slovenia, there were great lumber magnets [that] would reach out to people in Slovenia, because they knew timber. You know, the whole city of Venice was built on the timber from, from Slovenia.

RMM: Oh. The (unintelligible)

LG: Right, right, that beautiful area there. And that's one of the reasons too why you have a number of, I think, Slovenians and Croatians – some were Croatians, too, because they were, I guess, in their home country they were woodsmen, and did a great deal.

RMM: Yeah. Because I remember John Vandesatti (?), who was from Big Bay up there, asked me one time; he said, he ran across something and it was called the Austrian House or the

Austrian Hotel. He said, were there Austrians up there? And I said, they're probably referring to the Slovenians, the lumberjacks, which was true.

LG: And many of them did not have families. They came over to the New World at the beckon of these lumber magnets, and many of them were just single men, hard drinking, hardworking, they spent their whole life up there.

RMM: Now, you were talking about the French-Canadian farmers. I remember when they were closing down, and they were selling parts of St. John's church there. I remember looking at a stained glass window, and there was something on it – I think I took a picture of it, it's someplace. But it was a French gardener's association that had put the window in.

LG: Oh. Well that, I'm not aware of that. The only think I know is, that they did have the society of St. John Baptist (FP). But that I don't know. But that would, if the window, as you described it, that certainly would kind of fit in, of course, I think with the farming element of that French community, early Marquette French community.

RMM: Do you remember - someone told me that down on, well down, I don't know what the street is there, Ring Street (? - quiet) maybe, and Fifth, in that area – that there was kind of a Pole town, if you use that term, there was a number of Polish people [that] lived there, which would have been across the street from the the railroad roundhouse.

LG: Oh, I see where you're referring to, yeah. The only, the only Polish people I can remember were off of Altimon (?) Street up on the hill there, you know. There was Nesky family there, the (unintelligible) Peskoski family was the name – and there was a Polish element in that area, but I'm not aware of what you're referring to, maybe that was before my time. But, that was what I understood as kind of a small Polish community up there on the –

RMM: Kind of on the outer margins of Marquette.

LG: Yeah. Right where the Giant's Wood (?) Hill used to be, as we called it as kids.

RMM: Yeah.

LG: In that general area.

RMM: Did you attend St. John's school?

LG: No I didn't. I was baptized at St. John's parish, but my father had, early on, moved to St. Peter's cathedral, so I attended Bishop Baraga Grade School and High School until I entered the seminary after my eleventh grade year.

RMM: So then, you didn't – and they would've talked French in St. John's school.

LG: I would imagine that they did in those days. I don't remember teaching French when they hooked up over here with this Father Marquette School.

RMM: Well I think, actually, Father Brown wrote a thesis on the Marquette school – the Catholic school system in Marquette. He had a chapter on what happened in the 20s, how the bishop kind of dismantled the foreign language programs, and started to dismantle even the national churches of this kind of super-patriotic time after World War I. So possibly, by the time you went to school, even if you went there, they weren't teaching foreign language.

LG: Yeah, they weren't.

RMM: There's the big shrine of St. Anne of (couldn't tell). Do you remember hearing or knowing of people from Marquette that went there for the, I think the peace day is on July 26th? I know some of the railroads, [through] railroad ads in different papers, would encourage people to take their railroad, and almost have a schedule of when to leave and when to get there and when they went. Was that part of the French-Canadian culture of Marquette?

LG: Well, I'm not aware of what you're speaking of. I am aware of the shrine of St. Anne de (?), and I visited myself on that feast day. It's near Two Rivers as I remember. The easiest way to get there is to go up on the right side of the river, then cross over by ferry boat. And I was very much impressed by the faith of those people, because miracles evidently were professed to occur there. When I was visiting they had people on cots and wheelchairs and an outdoor shrine there where they were having Mass and special blessings for the sick and so on. And it was really, I thought, a real expression of faith, and deep in my own faith to see all these people [who] would turn out for these events, and seek the blessing of those who are ill (unclear). There's a story connected with that. I can't remember it at all, but there was a reason why they built that shrine there. It had something to do with ice floes on the river, as I vaguely remember. I don't know if there's some sort of a rescue associated with that area?

RMM: Well I don't –

TAPE CUTS

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RMM: Did you family, when we were talking about the Gauthiers and the Perraults, did they all come to Marquette, or did some of the siblings stay in the old country?

LG: My grandfather's family all came to Marquette, his brothers and sisters. As I mentioned, I think there was -

RMM: That was the 27?

LG: No, that was the Perrault side of the family.

RMM: Oh.

LG: [On] the Gauthier side of the family, or the Gauthier (EP) side of the family, my grandfather had five daughters and four sons, and one of the sons died in Canada at the age of fifteen. The others all came into the United States and intermarried with French-Canadian people here in the Marquette area. And the Perrault family, the only Perrault that I was aware of, associated immediately with my grandmother, who was her brother Charlie. And he most likely worked up in that Big Bay area as a lumber jack, and –

RMM: And he remained single then?

LG: Yeah, as far as I know of. The only other brother of hers that I was aware of, was the one that was the superintendent of Catholic schools in Quebec City, I believe it was.

RMM: Do you remember his name?

LG: I don't. I had his obituary somewhere, and, matter of fact I was just running across some pictures the other day in the family home of my father's family. I never met my grandfather because he died in 1912. So this was probably the only picture that I've ever seen of him. He was pictured with his wife and the two daughters and my dad. My dad was the youngest of the three children. I did find out as I'm going through the records that my grandmother had two other children. I found the birth record, but they died of smallpox. But I couldn't find the death record of one of those children, it wasn't recorded or something happened. But they both died young and I never knew that, so I started digging into the baptismal records, you see.

RMM: Is the family home on Fisher Street still in the family?

LG: Yeah. My sister is presently in a nursing home, and hopefully she'll be able to come back and live at the family house at 428 Fisher. Right across from the main entrance of the veteran's center. Previously there was St. Mary's hospital complex.

RMM: So you have family photographs.

LG: Yes, I had that one photograph of my grandfather, and with my dad's family. That's the only photograph I have. I have another picture and I'm not quite sure what it was, because it was a glass kind of thing, and I was fooling around with photography one time and I printed a picture – I don't even know if I have it anymore, anywhere. It appears, when I look at this picture, that this was my grandfather, and as I say he did carpentry too, besides being a fur trader. He's standing over a bench of some sort. I wonder if I still have a couple of those tools. I used to have a planer there, and one or two items – I'll have to look around, see what I've got there. If I've got anything that would be of some value for the museum I'd be happy to give it to you, because you want to be able to preserve some of this stuff, you know.

RMM: Okay, yes. And I think it also, having that museum, allows people – you know, when you have something like that, you might have no use for it, you don't want to keep it, you're not going to bring it here, but you don't want to get rid of it. It's kind of connected.

LG: Oh, yeah. I mean, I've enjoyed history myself, and you want to give it to somebody that's going to preserve it.

RMM: Or give it, yeah, to the museum. Because –

TAPE CUTS

CONTINUE

LG: I don't know what I did with that. At my dad's first communion – of course, they didn't make their first communion in those days until they were twelve. It was only after Pious X encouraged frequent communion. That thing stood about this high, great big oval picture.

RMM: In his first communion –

LG: Yeah, first communion outfit. And they probably confirmed him at the same time. I'll have to look and see if I find something that might be of value. I have another picture of my mother and dad's marriage, but that occurred in Hancock.

RMM: Okay. That'd be part of the story.

LG: They're standing outside of the church, in front of their new vehicle. And, of course, the dress of the 20s.

RMM: And if you have a bunch of photographs, I'd be willing to come by and go through them, because sometimes, you'll look at something and won't think it's of any value, but then if I look at it, I say, wait a minute, this is, you can tell some story with a photograph that way. And then we could make copies of them, the originals.

LG: Sure.

RMM: But, yeah, if you had anything like [that] –

LG: Well we may have a few photographs like that. I'm trying to remember, what the heck did we ever do – I used to have that put away somewhere. Of course I had a room in that house and I had some of those things in a drawer, but my sister went through some of the stuff and cleaned out some of these drawers. Because I did have the obituary of this brother of my grandmother.

RMM: Charlie.

LG: That was her brother, but this was the superintendent of schools in Montreal – it's all in French, of course. So as I'm cleaning out some of these drawers, if I run across anything I'll set it aside and look at it and see if there's something of value.

RMM: Or even things like, and this would be something you'd really throw out, but if there's some kind of, like, a calendar from a French grocery store in Marquette or something. Anything like that that would sort of be something we could put into a museum display.

LG: Sure. Some of those bottles that you showed there. God, I had some down in the basement. And then I had a wine corker that they used to, it was a handmade thing, and you corked the wine and make it during the Prohibition. And buried in the sand basement.

RMM: Now [you've gotten] into another topic. Could you talk a little about French Canadians and Prohibition?

LG: The only thing that I know is that my dad was very popular during that time, because his grandmother used to make choke cherry and dandelion wine and things of that nature, [and] apple wine. At the time they didn't have a full basement, but they had a sand basement, and my grandmother had a trapdoor right in front of the sink with a rug over it. She'd also made root beer for us kids. So every Saturday we'd go over and get a packed bag of root beer. But during the Prohibition my dad was quite popular because they had made wine, and they would put it in the sand in the basement, and then, every once in a while, you go down in the basement where my grandmother knew where she buried this stuff.

RMM: Oh, she actually buried it. I mean, that wasn't just sitting on the sand, it was in the sand.

LG: Not just sitting there, yeah. (crosstalk) make it nice and cool. My dad used to tell me about that. Yeah, he said, we had a little bit of French wine once in a –

TAPE ONE, SIDE A ENDS

TAPE ONE, SIDE B

RMM: Your grandfather, Joseph, died in 1912.

LG: Right.

RMM: So your grandmother was a widow in the 20s?

LG: All the way up until 1946 or '47, when she died. Maybe even later. I usually look at those dates on the tombstones out there. That's really where you get a lot of history.

RMM: So they're all out at Holy Cross.

Was she selling this wine in Prohibition?

LG: She wasn't selling it, but they made it like the Italians probably did, too – the family, you know.

RMM: I ask that because that was one way for widows to make basic money, or make extra money. My grandmother out in San Francisco put the pieces together [and] was renting out her basement to have a guy make wine, and then was serving wine in her laundry. And, you know, why was she at this laundry at nine o'clock at night? My mom said, "Oh, you know . . . ." She was a widow. And, "Why, we used to go home late," and so on. Then you hear, oh, the guys would come, sit, and have glasses of wine in the back room. She had a little tea room in the back there. So she was, maybe not selling it, but maybe had it available.

LG: No, she wasn't selling it. Unfortunately – of course, he's passed away now – I don't know what happened to it, but my uncle, my aunt's husband, Floyd Ickus, worked for the post office here and in Chicago. I'll look to find out what happened. He sent the first air mail letter to Marquette. I have that letter with the postage stamp on it. I had that somewhere. I also had some medals that my dad had when he was in the Navy. I had that in a drawer somewhere, and I'd be doggone if I can find that stuff. Hopefully it's still around somewhere, but if there's anything there, I'll look and see. As a matter of fact, a few years ago I ran across his Navy uniform [from] World War I.

RMM: Well, if you run across anything like that . . . . Were there other French Canadians making liquor during Prohibition?

LG: I would imagine. Many of them knew how to make wine, just like the Italians did. They made it primarily for themselves and their friends. I don't think I ever heard my dad saying if my grandmother sold this. It was all kind of undercover, so to speak.

RMM: Do you remember, when you were growing up, a group of French-Canadian businessmen, stores, grocery stores, that French-Canadians would go to?

LG: When I was growing up, no, I don't remember that. But I am interested in reading, like, sixty years ago, there were a lot of French-Canadians that were involved in the politics of the city. We were on the city council, and different things. There was, I think, quite a few prominent French-Canadians that got involved in city politics, and many of them probably were businessmen. But that would be much earlier than my recollections.

RMM: Do you feel that you were, maybe, kind of disconnected from the Fren[ch-Canadians] when your father made the decision to go to St. Peter's?

LG: I was just a little kid then.

RMM: But was then your family kind of disconnected from the French-Canadian heritage?

LG: I don't think so. A lot of them had relatives that went there. I always remember as a kid, when we did belong to the French church, the kids who belonged to the cathedral would say, "Well, you belong to a Protestant church." [laughter] I said, "That's not Protestant, that's Catholic." That was that antagonism with the national churches. It's like, well, you're different. You're not part of us. Somehow, you're not part of us.

RMM: So all of a sudden, the Catholicism is pushed aside for the nationalism.

LB: Yeah, the nationalism steps into the picture, and I think probably the toughest thing people at St. Peter's had to do is use St. John's church in the construction of the new cathedral. As I remember it, I wasn't sure if it was bishop Wagner (?), or bishop Ploggins (?). One of them, I think, he was already consecrated bishop, but his installation took place at St. John's church, because we didn't have the cathedral. I think that's what happened. Either that, or they had enough of the cathedral built that they could hold the [consecration] – usually you have to consecrate in a cathedral, because that's the head church. But to install a bishop would be different. It's not a consecration. You know who's got a lot of stuff from St. John's Church? He's got the baptismal font, he's got quite a collection of different things from different churches in the Upper Peninsula. He built a church out at his cottage around Dead River, and they've got a church there they call St. Anne's Church. He's kind of a collector of these church goods and stuff. That's where the original St. John's baptismal thing was. And he probably has some statues there, too, from St. John's. The big statue of St. John the Baptist, I don't know if it's still there at the Cemetery Chapel or not. That used to stand in the entrance of the church as you came in, this huge statue. It's about six feet tall, maybe even taller. I'm not sure, but it could be too, that the stations and the cross at Holy Cross came from St. John's Church, [but] I'm not positive about that. I think that did occur, because they had to get rid of some of the stuff, and usually they just don't want to put it into secular hands.

RMM: Getting a little more personal, could you tell us a little about how you became interested in the priesthood and went to the seminary.

LG: I think the first time, I always, for some reason, had an interest in becoming a priest. I can remember, in the second grade even thinking about it. The priest used to come in and teach religion classes to us kids. And of course, we always held a priest with high respect as a representative of God. I think what really triggered it is when they dedicated the cathedral here. They put up a cornerstone where the bishop's chapel is today. They didn't have the rest of it built, but all the clergy were up on that platform, and I thought to myself, "I want to be like one of those people, one of those priests." Then I used to serve Mass, I used to serve three Masses a day. One of the parish priests, Father Bayers, he noticed that. So I said to him one day, "I'd like to go to the seminary, but I don't know how to go about it." Then monsignor Buckle, who was the pastor here, sent Father Bayers up to our home at 428 Fisher that my grandfather built. So, he went on to visit the family, and of course, my parents were thrilled. At the same time, he always told the story. He said, "He's a little devil. He's always fighting

with his sister. I don't know if he's good enough to go to the seminary." He said, "Well, we don't want somebody who's so quiet that he goes in a corner and pulls a rug over his head. That's the kind of a person we want." Then I entered the seminary, and they had an opening. Some lad that was supposed to show up decided not to. I was about to complete my twelfth grade at Bishop Baraga. They called me down [to] the rectory and said, "There's an opening in the seminary if you want to go in this year." I said, "Yeah, well, that's what I want to do. I might just as well get into it." So I left after my junior year. In those days they did take kids, even in their freshman year. They don't do that anymore; usually you complete high school and maybe even a couple years of college before they take you into the seminary. So I went to the Salvadorian Seminary, which is at St. Nasien's (?), Wisconsin, about thirty miles west of Manitou (?). I spent three years there, up through [the] second year of college, and then to St. Francis' Major Seminary in Milwaukee, where I spent my other two years of philosophy, and received my bachelor's degree in philosophy. And then all the students that were studying in the state of Michigan, most of us were from the Upper Peninsula. We were studying in St. Paul, Minnesota, Cincinnati, and Milwaukee. They established a St. John's Provincial Seminary outside of Detroit, in Plymouth, Michigan. So all of us, of course, from Michigan then went to this provincial seminary. That's where I completed my four years of theology. Later on, of course, I was ordained a priest, and sent to Sault St. Marie.

RMM: What year were you ordained?

LG: I was ordained in 1955. And then my first assignment was Sault St. Marie. They had a mission at the Nativity of Our Lord Church, which I was assigned to, which was the smallest parish in town. And then a mission called Holy Family of Barbault, which is kind of interesting, because these were French-Canadian people in that particular area, [and] they were all farmers. This church was out in the middle of farm country.

RMM: That's south, southeast?

LG: South of the Sioux, and a little north of Pickford. As a young priest, I had a wonderful pastor who let me just go and do what I possibly could. I took a census of the area; a lot of fallen away Catholics. I brought them back to church, and got their kids instructed on a weekly basis. Within four years, we raised money and built the nice church which still stands there today. So, the people then had a nice church, and church hall, and everything that goes with it. That was quite an experience for me. I also taught at Loretto High School at the time. I was councilor and Latin and Religion teacher down there. I spent four years there. Then bishop Noah (?) called me to Marquette and asked me if I wanted to go to Catholic University to study education. At the time I was thinking of becoming a missionary, and I was studying with Father Joe Lawless the Spanish language on tape. I thought, when the bishop asked me to do this, I guess God has other plans. So, I went to Catholic University for two years, and got my Master's in administration and counseling, and then came back to the diocese and became superintendent of schools, and later on, superintendent of the total education department in the Upper Peninsula.

RMM: When did you go to Catholic University?

LG: Around 1959, 60, 61, I think, is when I got my degree from Catholic U. And then I came back here as superintendent of schools, and then, of course, I developed a school plan that involved total Catholic education. Religious ed, universities, even Mary Grove Retreat House had at that time a religious library. Of course, I had people scattered all around, and there was not a central office at the time for education. There was a person that was a superintendent, Monsignor Neil Debour (?), but he had left the diocese and was working in Washington, D. C. I was the one that established an office with staff, and we were able to accomplish quite a few things that were quite unique. I established an all-teacher volunteer corps, because we were having trouble financing teachers. Then, of course, unionism came into the public schools. Well, that affected us. At the same time, Vatican Council II is taking place, and what was happening at Vatican Council is that, the sisters were able to do other things than nursing in Catholic schools. So they got involved in all sorts of other apostolates. So that reduced the number of sisters. And then, of course, the church was in turmoil at that time because of the changes. A lot of people left religious life because the church wasn't moving fast enough, and some left because the church was moving too fast. Catholic schools took a real bad rap at that time. It was probably the most difficult period for Catholic schools since the establishment of our country. I did the first all-Catholic school study in the United States, all our schools at one time, and I had to prove that they would stay open for at least three years, financially. I met with all the religious superiors that had staff in our schools – there were about fifteen different orders – and I spent about three days. They couldn't get out once I got them here, because they were in a snow storm, so that gave me an opportunity to talk to them for three days with meetings and so on. What we were trying to do was to look at our major areas of concentration, or do the major towns – Iron Mountain, Iron River, Marquette, Escanaba, Menominee, the Sioux – and see if we couldn't make some exchange between these religious groups so that, instead of having three Notre Dame sisters here and, 100 miles away, another three, something like this, could we combine them and put them into one school. That was very difficult to do because of the history. They'd been in that community for years. So that was not an easy thing to do, and many of them did not do that. But, for the most part I modernized the school system with my staff. What happened was, I actually organized my staff so that I was covering other aspects of the diocese. Finally I sat down and wrote a position paper for the bishop, Bishop Salafka (?) at the time, and said, "You ought to have the Administration Commission, the Liturgy and Spiritual Life Commission, the Justice Commission, [the] education department, and let's just keep education together." I wanted to lop off some of these appendages that began to occur. For the most part he adopted that plan. Then, because of our projected loss of religious [people], I was concerned [about] losing the school. So, I started consolidating wherever we could in the larger towns. Some we just couldn't, because we were fifty miles from nowhere – L'anse is an example. There's still a Catholic school there today, thank goodness for a dentist who left his particular fortune to that particular community as a foundation. I did begin to establish foundations for each o f the schools at the time. There are a number of those that are in existence as another source of revenue. There's always a problem of revenue, and of course we didn't want our Catholic schools to be so sophisticated that only people with wealth could sent their kids. Anybody that

wanted to send their kids, we wanted to accept them. So it was a very difficult situation. Then we fought for paroch aid (?), which we got for one year, until they passed a referendum that excluded us. We were very much involved in the political process of trying to get the state to realize the contribution Catholic schools were making, to recognize that, and to help give us some resources to continue to accomplish what we had been doing, outside of any funding for a religious education aspect. Actually, we went backwards after that prohibition on the state constitution. So we've been struggling since then. When I first took over, we had about 95% religious [teachers]. When I left in 1970, we had maybe 5%, and the rest were lay teachers. This was a big change. And then, of course, people withdrew their kids from the Catholic school, because they didn't have sisters anymore. Lay person[s] couldn't teach religion – that mentality that the nuns were always in charge of everything. The poor sisters, when you look back at it. We have a special fund every year around Christmas time for their retirement plan, because they only work for a $600 stipend a year, if you can believe that. Right up into the middle '50s. So that's how the congregation got the $600, and the money went to the mother house, for continuing to educate, train, [and] take care of their elderly. The idea for the (unclear word) wife collection we take up around Christmas time is to take care of these sisters who are retired, because the younger generation is diminished, and there's no way of supporting these great women who spent most of their lives, 40-50 years, working for the church. We have an obligation to care for them, and are doing that quite responsibly. It's a whole new framework we had to enter into.

RMM: How many schools – high schools and elementary schools – were in the diocese at its prime? And how many (crosstalk) back to them?

LG: When I took over, around 1964, that was just about the time [the] Vatican Council came in to the picture. When I took over we had, I believe, five high schools. We had one in Ironwood, Sioux St. Marie, Calumet, Marquette, [and] Negaunee. And we had about thirty elementary schools. But there was, at one time, a decrease in the school population – not only affected the public schools, but it also affected us tremendously. What I did is, I did this diocesan wide study of the schools – it was the first one in the United States. We looked at our situation and said, this is what you're going to be able to do. These schools can combine into one here, and so on. You could only do that in the larger towns. I projected that we would have twelve or thirteen Catholic schools – no Catholic high schools, so all of those closed, because you can't have a Catholic high school without a Peter (?) system. Escanaba was a good example of that. That's probably the most Catholic population in the Upper Peninsula. We had four grade schools there, plus Holy Name High School. But [in] Flat Rock, the majority of the people were Catholic farmers. And if they had a class of 35, thirty of them from the grade school would come into Holy Name. Bark River was the same way. If they had a class of 35, maybe we'd get 25. So we had one of the largest school bus systems in the Upper Peninsula to bring these kids in. That became very, very costly. Holy Name, of course, half a million was donated by Mrs. Boniface, and the other half a million was raised by the Catholic community in that area. That was our largest Catholic school we had at one time, almost 700 kids. Of course, Negaunee closed. The first ones to close were Calumet – the building was in bad shape – and Ironwood – they had a wooden structure, and that was very unsafe. I was in the Sioux in 1955 and I was principle,

maybe there in '57, '58. The building used to be in a canopy that the sisters ran, and the diocese eventually took it over. But the fire marshal called Bishop Noah (?) and said, "You've got to close the school immediately. This is a fire danger." I think that was the worst moment of my life. I had to get on the PA system and send three hundred and some students home, clean out all their lockers and everything.

RMM: This was immediately?

LG: Yeah, immediately. And I said – myself and the pastors are (were?) called to Marquette to discuss our situation with Bishop Noah – "Just have faith in us. We have to put about $50,000 repair into the building before they'll let the students come back. In the meantime" – that was at semester time – "In the meantime," I said, "We'll hold the exams. All the stuff will be in the newspaper. The exams will take place over at St. Mary gym, right across the street, grade school." "And," I said, "We usually have an annual retreat. We'll have our retreat at the time." I said, "Stick by us, as parents, and we assure you that we'll continue Catholic education." Then we went to Marquette, (what follows is somewhat unclear) and that night we had a home school meeting. We'd do anything, I told them, to have a home school meeting. Fully occupied. [laugher] They were hanging from the rafters. We had proposed that we would build a new Catholic high school, and that that would be an assured thing, and stick with us as we begin finding (?) this. And we did; we built a beautiful school. We went out to Ford Foundation, we got the latest in school architecture. It was the first school to use carpeting throughout the school, to cut down on the noise. We had open-door classrooms, but the classrooms didn't face one another; the doors across the hall didn't face one another, they were this way. We could reconfigure classrooms because there were portable walls. We operated that for about seven, eight years. We could pay the entrance, but we couldn't pay the capital outlay, so we had to sell it. We sold it to the public schools, and they built their new high school out right across the street from us. That worked out fine for them. They used our school for a junior high school.

RMM: That's the complex that's over at the Sioux (unclear word), south of town.

LG: Right. We bought 33 acres of land there, to build that school. Once we got out there the Sioux, they were looking for land, too. And that was kind of a marshy area, there. Somehow it got all filled in. When I stood on the hill overlooking this property, I was reminded that bishop Baraga owned all this land – Sioux St. Marie right to the St. Mary's river. Of course, it was confiscated by the government for the locks and everything. I always remember Father Terry Don. He had an interest in history, and he was trying to push the government to see if he could get some money for the church, for confiscating this land that the church was never really paid for. I'm looking, I'm saying, "My God, we used to own this land at one time." It was on the property deed, you know. We finally went to Detroit. We had a big meeting in Detroit, all five diocese at that time. Now we have seven. We met with all the major religious superiors, so maybe five major religious superiors throughout Michigan. Met with cardinal Dearden, and all the bishops were there. I worked 24 to 48 hours straight to come up with this study proposal for our schools. I told the bishop, "Well, we're going to have to close some schools. We

consolidate the rest when we're done. We'll have eleven schools that I can see have some viability." But, my God, we've got nine today. And that was a long time ago. So, we did survive that crisis. And, the diocese of Marquette was the only one that had a plan. It made me feel real good – our bishop, he got up there and said, "My diocesan attendant has worked out this plan. This is what we're doing." After that, all my colleagues from around the state came over to my desk [and] wanted a copy of this study. Of course, we didn't have the money. Detroit had money to do all these things. It was quite an interesting era. It was the most difficult time we had for Catholic schools, certainly in the modern era. When they closed Bishop Baraga, that was a difficult time, because that was my alma mater. I had to give out the last diploma, and was in charge of dismantling the building and selling what was there. We had a court recorder's desk and everything up there, and you couldn't get rid of that. Nobody wanted it. I don't know if you know this or not, but the stone on the Baraga building was brought from the original courthouse up the block. Sandstone, because all of that was manufactured, cut here in Marquette. Up on the balcony we had this court recorder sitting. I tried to give it as, it's historical, so is somebody interested in this stuff? Finally we had to dismantle the building because it was going to be knocked down. It ended up in the city dump, which I felt badly about, because I felt, there's some history here, and this is not the place to put it.

RMM: This was from the courthouse?

LG: Yeah.

RMM: It's still at the dump?

LG: It's still at the dump somewhere, probably buried under a lot of debris by now.

RMM: So you were in a real, I don't want to say exciting, but to a certain degree. You had a number of things happening; you had Vatican II, and you had all this change coming about . . . .

LG: Unionism, and the decrease in religious.

RMM: And you also had the decrease in the local population.

LG: Yes, we had to deal with that. All of these combinations came together. Each board of education had to project at least three years of some sort of financial stability, and then they had to come to the diocesan board and present their plans. It was very difficult to support these schools, so there were a lot of pastors that didn't feel that the effort was worth it, that the era of Catholic schools had come to an end. But what they failed to understand is that there was too much secularism going on in our public schools. So, we had to battle clergy as well, amongst other things. That became a problem. They're saying our concentration should be totally on adults. We had a couple of men, a very prominent Christian brother that was pushing that bit. My conclusion is that there's no one way you're going to save the world, so to speak. There's no one way you're going to be able to educate people. So, we need the grade schools, we need the high schools, we need the universities, and we need a solid religious

education program. That was the other thing that I developed. When we closed the school, we had to have in place a board of education for religious education, and we had to ensure that the best religious education we could provide would be there. Then some of the sisters that were in school work decided to get a Master's degree in religious education and pastoral studies. They were hired as religious directors. It was my intent that they should train the local people, and then get a lay person to take their place and move on. I had a theory that the sisters were diminishing, and they couldn't cover all the areas they covered before. So their job was to enable people in a parish to take over their own religious education program. In the meantime, send someone away to get a degree in religious education. Many of them did that, and that worked out quite well. But we went through a big crisis at the time. We had to redefine what the purpose of the Catholic school was. In the early days of our country, of course, there was a lot of bigotry against Catholics, and that was one of the reasons why Bob (unclear words) said every parish should have a Catholic school. Well, we developed the greatest private enterprise in education that the world has ever seen, with private money. However, it was never possible to achieve that, so the end result was that, we did make a great indentation in education in this country. Now, of course, we don't need these Catholic schools anymore, because we don't have this sort of bigotry that was going on the early public education business – it was quite anti-Catholic. But we redefined the goals, that we have a secularistic society, where religious values are prohibited from being taught in public education [and] paid with public dollars. So we developed a new philosophy: that our schools are Christ-centered, and there was the idea of teaching the faith. There was the idea of service to not only the Catholic community, but the community at large. We established three important goals. Once we got those goals, then you could define what our mission was, and then you could get up and say, "Well, this is why we need our Catholic schools, and still need them today." That helped to strengthen the Catholic school movement. But again, it always came down to dollars. Bishop (unclear name) established the Legacy of Faith Fund for the diocese of Marquette about five years ago. The idea is to raise $10,000,000, most of which will be a fund that the interest will be used. Basically, to maintain our Catholic schools, and to improve our religious education programs, and also in any family life programs, such as social services and so on. So, we've been quite successful. We've raised about four, four and a half million dollars, so we're still working on that particular goal. I've worked along with the director, Terry Gazinski, who used to work for Northern as a fundraiser. We're making some headway. Now our problem is that, because of the lack of pastors, we're going to have to close churches again. We've had three studies already; another one is coming up. (unclear words) U.P. Catholic quite an extensive meeting they had with this planning commission. So there's going to be a number of churches closed, some of them combined. We've got some of these Indian (unclear word) that came over to help us, thank God, or we'd have closed another twenty parishes. Some of these guys have four missions. You can't keep that up, you know. We have to figure out where we're going to close a church. Maybe we have to build a central church for those four communities that's not too distant. Our problem up here is distance, of course. They talk about the declining Catholic population. Well yeah, if you close the church and the next church is forty miles away, these people don't have much opportunity to practice their faith in that sense. Right now, most of what's going on is not so much school planning as pastoral planning. We are having a number of seminarians coming up. They'll be young priests, but we can't put

them in a parish because they have no pastoral experience. But maybe they can work in a team approach. They could live with a pastor, and maybe the pastor would put them in charge of – depends on the personality. You've got self-initiators and you've got those who wouldn't be able to do that. I mentioned the bishop (unclear word), I said, "Well, I had a pastor that just let me take over." But not everybody is a self-initiator. I'd go through those churches in four years, and practically paid off the dead. But I said, "How do you learn? You learn by doing. The sooner you can get 'em involved, the sooner you'll keep 'em interested." The problem that we have up here too, is that some priests are really isolated, and in some cases are forty, fifty miles away from the next priest. You've got a highly educated individual, and in some cases he really hadn't a whole lot to do, because you're way out in the country. If they've got multiple parishes that adds to the stress, and the travel, and everything. Otherwise, a priest can go astray because he has no companionship, and it's quite remote. This can be a problem as far as clergy are concerned. I'd say most of them adapt pretty well to that. I myself thank the Lord that I was always in a larger town, because, for the grace of God, I don't know where I'd be. It's just one of those things where, every five years, I had a change, or I got a new job, or something happened.

RMM: Kept you interested.

LG: Yeah. And my priestly life has been a very interesting one these past 51 years, and I never regretted a moment of it. It always had new challenges, new opportunities. I think that's important, that the priests not stay in a place too long, that they move on to another challenge. After a while things can get, like a marriage, you can get into a rut. You get in a place too long, the people need a change as well as the priest. Now we have six years, and then after six years, if you want to stay in a place, you'll stay for six more maximum, unless the bishop has a need to change you. Twelve years is usually the length of being in one place. Now that we don't have as many priests has we had in the past, then it becomes a little difficult to – (interruption, I believe for a phone call) It's the history of the diocese. They have a three volume . . . . I was disappointed that the girl, the Johnson girl, really – there's not a whole lot on Catholic schools there. I would say, 60s, 70s, this was our struggle. She interviewed me on a couple of occasions, but I don't know if there's a page and a half in there on Catholic schools. I mean, this was a struggle. I had files, I don't know what they did when I kept files of all the boards of education. There were some fascinating things going on, and I wanted it for posterity. They were stored up here somewhere.

RMM: The archives?

LG: No, unfortunately, they put them in an outside storage facility. So I don't know if they're still there, or somebody threw them out, or what. I wanted to keep them because I thought, "This is the real struggle of Catholic education, this period of our history." There are a lot of pastors that are dead and gone now that gave me a rough time, because they didn't want a Catholic school. "We're just putting our dollars down the drain," and so on, so forth. Well, they're dead and gone, and some of those schools are still going. Within the church itself we had a lot of people who decided that –

RMM: Turmoil.

LG: Yeah, turmoil over Catholic education. [For] the history of Catholic education in the Upper Peninsula, these would be resources, because they used to have to send me the minutes of their meetings. So I kept all this stuff, and there's some fascinating struggles there, you know. I don't know if the diocesan board of education, if their past records are still available or not. But because we developed a structure in education, even before parish councils came, see, the education people had to do this in order to survive, because we didn't really have an education system; we had a group of individual schools. Once I established the office of education, then there was a tie-in. So you would say that, even though we had a centralized office, we had a lot to say about the philosophy of Catholic education. We would interview people that would come in, that were interested in teaching in the schools, mostly religious education during my time. We interviewed every religious education director before we would extend to them the opportunity to teach to them in one of our parishes. Religious orders played quite a role in all of this, because I did my Master's degree on the conditions of service of religious teaching in our Catholic schools and did a nation-wide survey. It could've been a Doctorate degree and they would've given me more time to stay around. But I collected contracts and things – they never had anything like that, see.

RMM: Where's this thesis?

LG: It's at Catholic University. I have a copy of it here. It would have been expanded.

We'd get comments from mother superiors, like, "Do you consult the superintendent of Catholic schools in the diocese as to when you're going to withdraw sisters? We know our situation better than you do, we have the broad picture." And you get answers back. "Well, you'll get what we send you, and that's it." A lot of Technicolor there, as I used to call it.

TAPE ONE, SIDE B ENDS

TAPE TWO, SIDE A

RMM: Tape two. Father Gauthier.

LG: I worked under Monsignor Debour (?). My predecessor was in the superintendent's department at the National Catholic Education Association in Washington, D.C. His thrust was to establish school boards, and [to] try to put school boards in the hands of laypeople. He traveled the country doing that. We established boards of education in this diocese, and the state of Michigan was really far in advance of any other part of the country in what we were accomplishing, thanks to Michigan Catholic Conference with Lansing, [which] spearheaded all this.

We studied our situation. We did not have any sort of centralized finance focus, so we developed the administration, a policy administration manual, adopting some of the basic elements of the public school, so that we then were able to have this manual to set up administration policies. I worked on the subcommittee four days in a row, (unintelligible), so that we could develop this and adapt it to Catholic schooling. Then, of course, we did not have any sort of a financial situation – every parish was run by the local pastor, and there wasn't any sort of commonality in structuring finances, so then at Michigan Catholic Conference we developed, through CPEs in Detroit and so on, a financial system that we could apply at every parish, so people then, in the course of education, had something to follow as far as budget and expenses and so on. That was a new development, [where] we can begin to see how the Catholic school system became more and more centralized to some degree. But the responsibility was still at the parish level to support their own school. But we would have to approve the teachers, make sure that they were certified and so on and so forth.

RMM: That happened, what you're saying, in the era of the 1960s?

LG: 60s, 70s. Before that it was just run by individual pastors, and there was a superintendent of Catholic schools. There was two of them, Monsignor Debour and before him, oh gosh, he's still living, he's in his 90s. But all they did is they visited the schools once a year and just, what should I say, as kind of a –

RMM: (from here the words become very difficult to decipher – this line and the following are very unclear at points) That gave their field group movement . . . operation . . . .

LG: Yeah, it just let 'em know that they were tied in with the diocese. But once the boards of education started, (unintelligible), there was one that implemented that in those dioceses. Then of course, there were different formats there. You had a constitution for a parish school, you had a constitution for a central school like we have here in Marquette. And then we did the same thing – I had the concept of what I called total Catholic education, because now the parish councils were becoming more prominent. The problem was that we were more sophisticated than they were. This became a struggle between the education boards and the parish council. Of course, the education boards hadn't realized that they were just part of the parochial concept of of the parish council. [That], and because most of the moneys that were spent at the parish usually went to Catholic schools, so this became a struggle with other groups that were established under the parish council – they had money for this group, that group, so on and so forth. So it was a (unintelligible). And it was kind of a struggle. But we really had our boards of education pretty well established and pretty knowledgeable, because we had developed board of education workshops. I used to even go to Green Bay to get us in one of those, with the Green Bay diocese. And every year we would have a combination between Green Bay and Marquette, using all the same (unintelligible). But many of our conferences were held right here in the Upper Peninsula, so (unintelligible) than there was in the past. But this was a whole developmental thing, and I had written one of the first pieces of information on how the board of education related to the parish council, and in so doing that, I also was able to look at these other elements of the parish council and see how they were

related to the total picture. I put out a booklet that told about it across the United States, because it was one of the first that even discussed that kind of (unintelligible).

RMM: Now is a booklet like that – what's its availability?

LG: I still have a couple of copies left, I think I've got some in my pile, if you want 'em. I started cleaning out my file here, and when I started moving down in this part, but –

RMM: I'd like some of those.

LG: Yeah.

RMM: So you were kind of the intermediary or catalyst between Vatican II and its changes, and the new Catholic school system.

LG: Right.

RMM: So you're the first.

LG: Yeah. I think our present superintendent – she's working on her doctorate at Marquette University – and she got enamored with Monsignor Debour and all of his doings, so I think her theses is basically on his contribution to Catholic education. But that was a nationwide. So as a matter of fact he asked me if I would mind taking a title as an associate superintendent instead of a superintendent, so he could remain in the department in Washington, D.C. Otherwise, if he didn't have a title, he couldn't be in that department. I said yeah, 'cuz titles don't mean anything to me except when I dealing with the public. So I went with it. And then he died suddenly, around about San Francisco, so . . . .

RMM: And he was from the diocese?

LG: He was from around Rapid River, that area.

RMM: Now, anything else you want to add to the school story?

LG: Well, of course, I've structure, restructured, restructured, and now it's called – it has a different title – "Faith Formation." And probably, that title is used because we have so much involved in religious education. We have eleven, nine – I think we have nine schools left, and they seem to be in pretty stable condition financially. (Once again this section becomes mostly unclear) We had a (unintelligible) education, we had grade school, and high school, youth ministry programs – all of this is under the (unintelligible) formation. I took one of the libraries for (unintelligible) – started off there as a big library – and it was under the education department, still is. So a lot of (this whole sentence and the next are unintelligible). They'd do other things too. They had kind of a lay leadership program. It used to be hooked in with a university in New Orleans, a Jesuit university.

RMM: Loyola.

LG: Yeah, Loyola. And through these courses, Loyola would grant a Master's degree. And then we had programs to train people as pastor – leaders, you know, where we had small places and you can't put a priest in there, but this person was educated enough by faith to where they could kind of run the operation. And then there is a theology program, or at least the deaconing that's on hold now for a couple years because we've had a number of men enter into that. We have to really look at this again, because you have St. Peter's that might have eight deacons, but what are they gonna do with eight deacons? And if they're working in the area, you can't say, well, you work in Negaunee, you work in Ishpeming or Escanaba. Once they're free of their tasks, then they could do that. But we have to look at the numbers and what types of work these men are doing and (unintelligible) why a young man is kind of with youth ministry here (unintelligible) if he does a good job. And they had Bob (unclear name), he's the deacon for St. Michael's, out there, and basically is liturgical functions. But some are into education aspects and the youth ministry and so on.

RMM: Kind of a, question for you – CUT – I think.

LG: McCann, sure. I think she got an advanced degree. I think she's been recently returned from, I believe it was Rome, but I have kind of lost contact with her. I know who she is, she's a very fine person, a very dedicated person. My feeling would be that a person that would be helpful to you would be our Jesuit father that teaches in the Faith Formation office, Father William Ibach. He's a Jesuit, and he's retired, but not really retired – semi-retired, so to speak. He's doing what he likes to do now, setting up religious study courses. But I feel that he might be the key person to talk to, to get some idea of what the diocese is presently doing and what, maybe, (unintelligible) may be able to offer if they were to go into some sort of a study program, because they do have their own curriculum along with this stuff, and I'm not familiar with that. But Bill lives here, in this building, and he can be contacted at the education office, (unintelligible) which is the Wells-Fargo building there. I think that he might be the type of person that could give you some idea as to whether this is practical, or maybe by discussing with him some of this business, maybe something could be developed. That'd be wonderful if you could do that.

RMM: Well, part of it is, I'm in a good (unclear) if somebody else comes along, if they would be interested. I'm in a position to initiate something like that, and I could put something into place. And it would be, you know, would be courses anyone could take and would add to the program. And there seems to be more of an interest in the religious studies program. We have two people in the history department, we have one in philosophy, and we can hire adjuncts so that we have people that have the ability. We could develop the program (unintelligible). From our end of it, from Northern's end of it, developing the program, in getting more students, and also, helping the diocese, and helping seven areas or something (rest is unintelligible).

LG: Well, it sounds like an interesting concept, so I think that the person that I would check things out with might be Bill Ibach, because he can tell you what we're doing now, and being a college professor himself in a couple of Jesuit institutions, he could probably tweak this vision this vision that you have, and maybe something would come up that would be beneficial.

RMM: Okay. One thing that you had mentioned to me years ago, I mentioned or something –

LG: (unintelligible)

RMM: - and maybe it was when you were over at Barboa. You were talking about, it was kind of like ministry to the bachelor French-Canadian lumberjacks. You were talking about going out and visiting a fellow who was [a] bachelor guy living in camp. It was kind of a slice of what a priest would have to do in the old days.

LG: Yeah, that's when I was first ordained. I was down in Barboa, they were Desarmeaux (?) brothers, and very comical two guys.

RMM: Now how do you spell that?

LG: D E S A R M E A U X, I think. Something like that. There's Desarmeaux here, in the phonebook, [and] it's spelled the same way. I went out to visit them, and they were quite remote from the church. It was, I'd say, maybe about 7:00 in the evening, in the summertime. It was still light. I went to see them, enthusiastic as a young priest. I knocked on the door. The one guy came to the door, he had long underwear on. And they may have possibly already begun to go to sleep. [He] came to the door and I said, "I haven't seen you in church." "Well, by there, you know, it's a long way. It's a long way to get over to the church," he said. "And the road is bumpy." I said, "Well, that's why I'm here." I said, "I come here because I'm concerned about you spiritually and we should hear your confessions and bring you communion if you can't get to church." "So, well." I said, "Well, you tell your brother he [should] go out and visit with the other man." So I took him into his little room there and he knelt down alongside the couch. I used to say it was the strangest confession I ever heard, because his trapdoor was open he made his confession in French. I'm not quite exactly sure what he said, but I know God did know, so I gave him absolution. I sent him outside and I said, "Okay, you come in now," so the other guy came in and went through the same process. In the meantime, the fellow that I just heard the confession [of] said to the young teenage boy that was driving me around because I didn't know the area to well, (with a French accent (FA)), "That young priest, he means business." They would come to the church, and they tried to build a church many, many years ago. They had a hole in the ground, and they still had three logs laying there. That's as far as they got. These two old Frenchmen said (FA), "There, you never build a church. Those logs have been sitting there for twenty years." I said, "Well, this young priest is gonna build a church. You can be sure there'll be a new church." So there was a new church. I remember they both got sick and they ended up in War Memorial Hospital, must have got pneumonia or something. I went in to visit them, and they were propped up in their

hospital beds. Probably it was the first time they had clean sheets in years. (FA) "Well, this is a nice place. Three meals a day."
It was fascinating because many of these people in that parish could not read. They had no education. I couldn't understand that because we were beginning to go from Latin into English, and I had Mass cards in English, and nobody's using them. I was getting upset because we didn't have much money, and every dollar counted in those days, and we had this beat up old church that was a wooden structure that went back to the middle 1800s. Of course $50 was a lot of money in those days, and I was just about ready to say something from the pulpit one day, and somebody said, "Well Father, you know, these people have never gone to school. They don't know, they had no form of education." I said, "Well, they can't read. Those cards didn't do much good, then." It was an eye-opener to me, and they were good people. But only their sons and daughters were going to school, and some of them went to (name unclear) School. Of course, that's where they lived, out in that area. I got in with the school officials there quite well, and that was a difficult task, because they were Orange Irish (?) and they were quite antagonistic towards Catholics in that particular community. But I got to make friends with a lot of people there, and after a while, because we were accepted, I even was able to get fish on Friday for the Catholic students, and that was a very good accomplishment. Because if they say, "What do we do," I say, "Well, you gotta eat." You're probably not scandalizing anybody, because the rest of the population down there doesn't know too much about our tradition. So you eat what they put in front of you. God understands. It was quite a fascinating experience. And I gave a lot of contractual work on the church to some of these people that worked in Pickford – because there was church in Pickford, and mysteriously it was burned down. And –

RMM: It was never rebuilt.

LG: - IUt was never rebuilt, yeah. It was right as you come into the highway. So I was able to sell that piece of land to local people there, and they were happy about that. It was kind of fascinating. There's a lady from Pickford, and she's a Catholic now at St. Michael's. Her husband died, and when said she was from Pickford I said, "Oh, boy," I said, "That was an experience. As a young priest everybody was afraid to go in that village, you know. But it had five Catholic families. (The following is unclear, particularly as to what is a spoken line and what is descriptive) I said, 'Well there's an old restaurant,' I said, 'They just had their own restaurant,' and I walked through the door with a Roman collar – there was complete silence.'" So I get outside and I'm walking down the street, and some guy literally spit at me. So I said to him, "Keep collecting your saliva because you're gonna see this Roman collar coming down the street many times." After a while I ingratiated myself. We had a lovely lady that taught home economics there, and she invited me to come talk to the kids, because they always had Protestant ministers, and Catholic kids, why can't we have our priest come and talk to them, the kids? "Yeah," I said, "that would be wonderful." "So will you come down?" I said sure. I went down there with all sorts of things – brochures that we had from Loretto (?) High School and Catholic School on dating, and all that sort of stuff. So when I passed out all this material – it wasn't Catholic stuff. It was good, healthy, morality stuff. I eventually was even asked to give the invocation at the graduation there, and that ought to be the first.

RMM: Yes.

LG: It was an interesting area. I tried to figure out, how am I going to instruct these people scattered all over this couple of townships? What I did is, every Tuesday night and Thursday night I would have two rooms, one room in a farmhouse from that district. I'd go in, and I would teach, go through the (rest of section unintelligible), and then to this other place. Their non-Catholic relatives and spouses, of course, didn't come into those meetings, so a lot of people, once they knew something about the (unclear), it broke down their prejudice, and some of them even became converts. So that was kind of a fascinating experiment. [Furthermore], they were uneducated, so how do you raise money? Well, you cut pulp wood. So I said, "If you can cut pulp wood for yourself during the winter months when you're unemployed, then every Saturday, you cut pulp wood for the Church." I finally found out what a cord of wood was – eight feet long, four feet deep, and four feet high. They raised quite a few thousand dollars that way. Then the Sioux armory got built, and so I put on an international affair, for Loretto High School. It was a big affair, so we had all these parishes (unclear) used to send a few kids into Catholic high school. It was the first time the armory was used, and they didn't have all the sinks in the kitchen, which was really a problem, so we had to wash dishes in (and?) wash (unclear) and stuff. But these farm ladies, they were used to cooking during the hay season for paying us guys, so they came in and the gals from the city, they wanted to help. They said "No, no, you helped us build our church out of (?), we'll do the dinner." So they fed something like 1,500 people. The Secretary of the Army, Brucker at the time, came up because they were going to dedicate the building a couple of days later, and he was so impressed by what he saw that he told the local people, "You ought to offer a contract to these ladies for meals held here at the armory." So they got a contract for about three years.

LG: So they had all these dinners, and they made money, and that's how people at the church paid for it, because we had nothing. Matter of fact, they used to say we didn't own a knife or a fork, and then we built this beautiful church, you know. (unclear) floors, rock and western cedar arches, and a nice church – a full basement. It's a nice little church for being out in the country, and there have been some improvements beyond that. A little bit of entrance and a few things like that.

RMM: Some people say about you that you're a very people-oriented priest. Whenever [one] mention[s] your name people go, "Oh yes, Father Gauthier." That was, very possible. (unclear what the last four words were and if they were part of the quotation) where did you, if you've ever thought of it, develop that? It kind of sounds like total (unclear). Where did you develop that good interpersonal communication with people?

LG: Well, I guess it comes from my parents. They were loving people, and they just taught us to love everybody. And so, I guess, when I was brought up here in school, and our family is very much rooted in our Catholic faith. Of course, I can't actually tell you how that developed, but I like people. And my mother liked people. She was always very openly expressive. She could hardly meet anybody without giving them a kiss or a hug or something. Our family I think was

quite affectionate in that sense, and maybe it's the French blood too; that French blood, Italian blood, it runs pretty deep. I love people, and I try to exercise my priesthood in a way to benefit people, and I've paid and had a lot of success as a matter of fact. On my fiftieth I got letters saying how I helped this person or that person, or maybe they were in a bad marriage, or maybe they were in a (unclear), and I went in there and said, "Well, let's see what we can do. Maybe we can fix up this marriage." Seems we can do today what we couldn't do twenty years ago. And I always felt that it's very important, when people die, to be there, to make sure you express your sympathy. At one time, we were afraid to put our arm around the widow. I'm sure that, maybe we [were] offending our vow of chastity or something. But even today, I've had a few over the other night. I didn't know these people. There were two daughters there and a wife, and they asked me to take the funeral. And I was supposedly a Catholic at one time, but they call me for the difficult ones, because a lot of people left the faith, and a lot of priests would find it very uncomfortable to come and try to talk about our faith at the time of death. But my approach to that works out very good, because I just say to people, "well, every death is a reminder of our own mortality." And we have to look at ourselves and say, what can I do to better live my life? So that's the blessing that we learn. Now this man's life is complete, his journey is finished, [and] there are many things he did that affected other people's lives. I started off with the phrase said by Pope John Paul II, that every life is the unrepeatable and duly gift of God's love. So if you operate on principles like that, then you respect everybody. I can't judge this man as to why he didn't go to church. He did at one time, but why didn't he all the way? I don't know, I have no idea. There's many good things he achieved, but I couldn't really talk too much about his religious beliefs because there wasn't anything there to talk about. But the idea is, he's got sons and daughters and grandchildren, great grandchildren, many of whom are grown up. And maybe his own family was really trying to see their own faith like they ought to. So the idea is to try to get them to focus on their mortality and the fact that someday we're all gonna be held before God. We just judge and He's going to reward us according to our attempts to live a Christian life, according to the gospel values. So, you know, you affect a lot of people's lives that are (unintelligible). I think God gave me that type of overt personality, and so I try to use it for his honor and glory, and achieving what God has put me on this earth for. When I came out of retirement last year, I was going down to St. Joseph's and Patrick's Church, and the big struggle was [that] they could find two major parishes there –

TAP TWO, SIDE A ENDS

TAPE TWO, SIDE B

LG: I ended up there for eight months. And I literally turned that parish around. A parish is like a human being; you've gotta have a good self-concept. These people felt that no priests wanted to go there. They had heard that from the previous pastor. That they're lucky to have him. To me that's just a ploy that he can get his way. I said, "I can't believe that. If I were ten years younger, I would ask for this parish." One of the most beautiful churches in the diocese, the (unclear name) Cathedral. Even more beautiful than the cathedral, (unclear phrase). The whole sanctuary is rose marble; the entire sanctuary. The rest of the church, half-way up, is all marble. It's beautiful. It's almost the size of St. Peter's cathedral inside.

RMM: Is that the church across from Boniface Art Center?

LG: Yeah. Wherever there was something going on, I'd be there. If they had a pancake breakfast, I'd go down and visit the people. If they had a baptism, I'd go over and visit them afterwards. If they had a wedding, I'd go to the wedding reception. I've always done that, because you meet people at these places that really aren't church attendees for some reason. I would meet them in a store somewhere. "Oh, Father, nice to see you. I was at so-and-so's wedding. It was beautifully done." And that's important too, to make sure that your liturgy is good, and to make sure that your homilies are constructive and well done. I told a young priest, "There are two ways that people are gonna know you the most. Everything else is frosting on the cake. And that is, how the (following phrase not completely clear) reverend you say mass, and how good your homilies are. 90% of the people are gonna know you only by that. Then, when you go to the dying and the sick, okay, that's frosting on the cake. When you go to youth activities and so on, that's frosting on the cake." So, you began to expand on your personal influence, hopefully that doesn't rely on the person, so much as you're reflecting the image of Jesus Christ. That's what we're supposed to do. But you have to have an instrument to accomplish that. That's how I look at the priesthood. It's an opportunity for me to reach out to people, as Jesus would in the gospels. So, I have a lot of people that are not of our religious persuasion that are good friends of mine. We always kid about it. I used to tell them, "I got Lutheran relatives, too." [laughter] And I got Methodist friends – matter of fact, when I got (unclear name) to remember me in the prayer of the faith at the Messiah Lutheran Church, because some of these people were friends of mine, and asked their friends to pray for me. So the kudos come back, not that that's what you do it for. But anyway, it's always a joy to know that you've done something for someone's life. And what you learn as a priest, too – you become very humble. I got a letter from a lady last year, just received one this year. She's had tragedy all of her life. I helped her out when she was at St. Louis parish. She's been to Colorado, and now she's down in (unclear name), Wisconsin. She's had all sorts of problems. Health problems. (unclear words) arthritis, so she can hardly move. And her daughter, who had great promise, got hooked up to somebody that was in drugs, and she's been on drugs. She was just torn to shreds by all this. She told me last Christmas what had happened. Finally she left this guy. She was pregnant, they had a baby, and the baby was born malformed. But this baby is a blessing. So this woman and her daughter lived together with this little child. She was telling me this personal struggle, but she said, "No matter what happens, I know God is with me." And then I just got a letter this week. Her husband for eight years. She said, "I didn't notice, I didn't know anything about it, but he's been unfaithful to me. He's into pornography. I came home, just a week ago, and he left a note on the table that he no longer wanted to be my husband." So here she is with her daughter, a crippled child, and herself, and I mean . . . . But she said, "I know God is watching over me. I know that God is going to take care of me. And," you know, "this is what we're trying to do." I wrote to her. I said, "You're writing to me, asking for advice. I should be taking advice from you. The faith you have is absolutely amazing." Absolutely amazing. She's had all of these conflicts in her life – health, daughter going awry, grandchild. Now this terrible thing had happened. But she always remembers when I helped her out when I was at St. Louis parish. That's gotta be fifteen years ago. That's

just one story. I had one other I always like to tell. It's a lady that's from Trenarian (?). I wasn't aware – I guess she told me where she was from. She came in to make a visit at the church. My office door is always open. I said, "Is somebody in there?" and I was right at the top of the stairs in the old (unclear word) there. She came in, she went into the chapel, and veered into the church, and she was in there for a while. She came out, and she was rather distraught. I said, "You must have some problems. You want to sit down and talk about it, see if I can help you out?" She came in, and her and her husband were living in a small trailer with mother and kids. He was unemployed. It was life struggles for them. So she's bemoaning all this, the poor thing, so I said to her, "You know, if your husband ever needed support, he needs it now. And you're kinda down on him. These things will pass. Something will happen that will change your lives around. But my question to you is, what are you doing to help this situation?" And that's the way we left it. She had picked up her (unclear word) from the church and went out. About three years later, I'm at Trenarian. She comes in to bring supper, because they didn't have housekeeping. She said, "Do you remember me, Father?" I said, "Gee, you look awfully familiar." "Well, I was a person who came in to see you. You asked me of those problems I had, said, 'C'mon and talk about it.' Do you remember what you told me?" I said, "Well, I counsel a lot of people. But," I said, "I think I do remember what I told you. I told you, 'What are you gonna do to help this situation?'" She said, "I went home," and she said, "I thought about that. Now the marriage is great, we've got our own home. Everything went fine." You see, you never know how you touch people's lives. In that case, this was a saving moment in her life. She was too negative, and she wasn't helping the situation. It was deteriorating, and she was helping it to deteriorate. But there are many situations. Once in a while, I had a guy come in one time. He was an alcoholic. He had a nice wife, a nice family. He'd come in to see me, and he said, "Well, I don't love her anymore." I said, "What in the hell are you talking about, you don't love her anymore?" She said, "Well, he is fooling around with one of the nurses in the alcoholic (unclear word)." I said, "Oh. Okay, alright." I said, "I can't understand how you don't love this woman. This is a beautiful person. You've got two lovely children. You're going to sell all this down the river, because of having an emotional involvement with somebody." I said, "Well, you know, I'm gonna speak clear language to you: you're a son of a bitch. You go home and think about what I said, and you go home and think about the marriage vows you made twenty years ago. This just doesn't happen overnight." About three weeks later they came back, and, "Father, I appreciate it for laying it on the line with me." I said, "Yeah, when you're an alcoholic you like to lie, you like to cheat. Well, no BS with this priest. You had it coming, and I gave it to you. And one good thing about it is, you took it the right way, and you did what you had to do." And that marriage was saved. There are a lot of people that get emotionally involved in a situation that just deteriorates. A state police guy, I used to see him every time I'd see him and his wife coming. I went into the villa when I [was] about to eat there. Two teenage kids, one was a beautiful gal who lived out in the Harvey area, and her husband was a state policeman. For some reason they (unclear words). He left her, and so he went and got another assignment. Well, this other policeman, he would go out and visit her, and make sure she was alright. So he's getting more emotionally involved with her. That was really an interesting one. He comes in to see me, and he realized that he's getting further and further away from his wife.

RMM: This is the second?

LG: This is the second state policeman. So he's getting further and further away from his wife. He's getting really enamored with this gal, and she is good looking, because I knew that she was. I said, "Well, you're playing with fire. You came in here to ask my opinion. Again, your wife is a nice looking woman. You've got two teenage kids. You're gonna put this all on the block because of this infatuation with this lady. You're making a mistake. You're going over there too often. Now it's heading up into a pretty emotional lust situation." He said, "Do you mind if she comes in to see you?" the other policeman's wife that he was getting enamored with. So she came in, and she wasn't Catholic. I said, "You gotta realize what's going on here. You're a very attractive gal, and something's not quite right with his marriage. I don't know what it is at this point. I hate to tell you this, but you're going to be a marriage wrecker. You're gonna destroy this man's family. You have to think about that. There are more consequences to this. There isn't anybody that you couldn't have if you really wanted them, because you're a very attractive gal, very attractive personality. But," I said, "you have to understand what's going on here." So she left, and then he asked me if I'd talk to his wife. Well, I talked to his wife. I said to her, "You know what's going on." She said, "Yeah, my teenagers are at the point where they're very disturbed and upset, and now their schoolwork is being affected." I said, "Well, I've got one line for you, and the line is this: you gotta be better than her. You're not doing that. You're spending too much time with the kids, you're spending too much time with your mother, and not enough time with him. Your first responsibility is to your husband, and then your kids, and then your mother. If you can right that, and you can be the wife that you're supposed to be" – she didn't realize this was going on. So I said, "Some men like to be babied, and you've got a husband that wants to be babied. He may be a tough state policeman, but he's expecting more of his wife, and she's not there, so he's finding it somewhere else. So your challenge is, to be better than the other gal. You maybe have had competition – she's a knockout. But you are too. You are a very nice looking, very attractive woman." So then the both of them came in about three weeks later to see me. They had mended the fence, and things were working fine. So when I'd be in the restaurant at the villa capris – I have a table right at the door there (rest of sentence unclear). I'd see them come in. "Hi, Father." I'd say, "Hi. Did your teenagers (rest of sentence unclear)?" Boy, that's one I didn't think that I could save. That was something else. But it put those people back in focus, and their life in focus. Here again, you touch somebody else's life. It's really God's grace that's working through you. He uses me as an instrument. In the priesthood you have story after story that you could tell. I've got a whole boxful of cards in there. I almost hate to throw them away. About 500 cards people sent me when I got sick here. Not even from this parish. Down in St. Joseph's, St. Patrick's, and only then I had eight months. Of course, different people I touched down there, too. Behind every card was a story. Once in a while people would surprise you. They would send you a card, or something, usually at Christmas time. I had one lady. She was a single mother at the parish there. As a matter of fact, before you came I (unclear word) my own Christmas card to send her. She sent me the most beautiful card on my 50th anniversary. I had forgotten about all the turmoil this poor women had been in. She was struggling, and she was dealing with alcohol at the time, and dealing with other drugs, trying to raise these kids. Really, she kept coming to church, kept coming to church. I think the Lord answered her prayers there,

somehow. I did some counseling with her and so on. When she sent this letter, I saw her sometime later. I said, "You know, I got a lot of beautiful letters on my 50th and cards. Things I did for people. But your letter brought tears to my eyes." Because I didn't realize how deeply I was able to get into her life, and she told me, "Change me all around." That's the way the cookie crumbles.

RMM: So that's why you have the reputation that you have – very, very positive.

LG: I think, try to look at every human being as that significant, unique, unrepeatable gift of God. No two people are alike, and there isn't anybody in this world that doesn't have problems. The thing is, if you can touch their hearts, bring them to a more positive orientation, then I'm doing something that's worthwhile. I think that's one of the most beautiful things about being a priest, because you're in a position to do things like that. I feel bad, really, when I see a priest who doesn't utilize his priesthood in that fashion, because people do respect you if you reach out to them. If you, in any fashion, get too self-centered, you're not really doing what you were ordained to do. You were ordained to be at the service of the people. That's the purpose of being a priest. You are ordained to serve the people, not yourself, but the people. That's the basis of the priesthood. To really understand that, and really try to live that, then people will respond. Not that you ask them to do that, but that's their natural reaction.

RMM: I guess priests have to retire and not say mass, but I sort of admire you. You're there in the cathedral and so on, and then I see other priests that you never see. Some of them have actually told me, "Oh, I get out of here. When I retire," and so on. Maybe I'm old school, but I thought you were a priest for life, and that you would try to help out.
LG: The thing is, the priesthood is not a profession. It's a calling, by God, and that's where these guys move one. We had a lot of people that were the "Me, me" generation. They entered the seminary, and the question is, what was the motivation? Was it for me? Or was it to be at the service of the people of God through the church? I know I went to a priest meeting one time, and I said to them, "Well, I don't know about you, but I became a priest primarily to be able to offer the sacrifice at Mass on behalf of God and his Son Jesus, and to proclaim the gospel." That's why I became a priest. To continue to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ. (unclear) silence (unclear). I had a guy down in Escanaba. "Oh, I can't wait until I retire." I said to the bishop, "I'd retire people like that. I'd go without a priest," because he's a functionary. He gets a salary, they pay him to do this, this, this, this. And he does it. But there isn't any feeling, there isn't any emotion for the people. He's a functionary, he's a doer of things. That's not being a priest. I remember, we had a priest up in Iron Mountain. He had this beautiful parish, St. Joseph's. St. Mary's, St. Joseph's, beautiful, beautiful parish. It's the premier parish in Iron Mountain, as far as the size and the number of people in the congregation. He'd been there six year and he said, "Well, I'm asking for a change." I said, "You gotta be kidding. Why are you asking for a change?" "Well," he said, "I just wanna get out of here." That's strange. I thought to myself, there's something wrong with this man. Do you know, he took another assignment, and in two years he ran off with the parish secretary? His mind was not on the priesthood. I told him, "How can you say that? You've been here six years. It takes you six years in a parish this size to know the people. Don't you have any emotional bond with these

people?" None whatsoever. And so you say to yourself, there's something wrong with that man's attitude. The one in Escanaba is, "Oh, can't wait to retire." I said, "I want to tell you something. I've been retired for fourteen years, and I've never stopped working since. You know, retirement isn't what it's cracked up to be. It's not all fun and games. You have an identity as a priest. As long as you are able to do something, you ought to do it. Because once you lose that, why be a priest? Why retire as a priest?" This is a lifelong endeavor, and it's not something that all the sudden you decide, I'm gonna retire now, and I'm done with all this stuff.

RMM: Walk out the door.

LG: Yeah, walked out the door. You're looking at the priesthood as a functionary, not as a vocation and calling of God to serve His people. As long as your healthy, you should resume service to the people. You can't do all the things you used to do, but do whatever you can. You will remain a very happy person.

RMM: We were talking with (unclear name). We were talking about you, and he said, "Yeah, Father Gauthier one of those people that's engaged," and so on. Then he mentioned the functionary thing. He said, "Yeah, there's some people over there, they come out of their room, come out of the rectory, put the vestments on, say Mass, take off, and then run back to the room, and never spend time with the people." People look up to you as a priest to help problems and so on. And then you just put that aside. As I said, with this one priest who was talking about retirement, "I'm getting out of here."
LG: Yeah, you would say, here's a very unhappy individual. He does not understand, nor does he appreciate, the priesthood. Perhaps he should never have accepted that station.

RMM: That would be the conclusion I came to.

LG: And you find out that there's something going on in that person's life that just isn't what it ought to be. So I told this young priest, "Look. I live in a retirement community down in Lakeland, Florida. I say Mass there every Sunday, I help out on penance services, I hear confessions. I worked as hard down there as I do up here." I've been there through at least three pastors, and the people down there say, "Father, why don't you become our pastor?" I said, "Well, it doesn't quite work that way. Besides, I'm not a member of this diocese, and if I was going to take a parish, I'd have to take it in the Upper Peninsula, where we've got shortages worse up there than you have down here, because you have retired priests." But again, when I got ill I must've got at least 150 cards from those people down there. They're still wondering when I'm coming down. You try to humanize a situation. That's why I always try to tell a story if I can. I'm beginning to run out of them. But they look forward to that. I told them, "Well, Christians are supposed to be a joyous people. One of the gifts of the Holy Spirit is joy. But you get people coming to church all grumpy, grr [muttering, complaining], and you wonder why they're even here. While I'm down here, I'm going to try to send you away with a smile on your face." Once in a while, if something goes wrong, then I'll say, "Well, I know how Johnny Carson felt when his joke didn't go over.

The pastor, he's a new one now, he's only been there two years. They sent me up a great fruit basket from the staff. They can't wait until I get back there.

RMM: You go down in February, you were saying?

LG: Yeah, I'm gonna go down the first part of February. I was kind of wedded to doctors here, and I wasn't sure whether I could get away, because they keep adjusting my kumiden (?), and I've gotta keep getting blood tests, and the rhythm of my heart, I'm taking medicine to make sure that stays in sink.

RMM: You were saying about your eye, that's part of the problem. That kumiden. You had said your eye, you gotta be careful.

LG: You gotta be careful. They didn't get around that, I guess. They probably stopped it (unclear word) for a short period of time. But I had some bleeding in the central phobia (?) of the left eye. There's nothing they could do about it. It's not behind the eye, the retina, but it's in the retina, so that why sometimes it stops, sometimes it doesn't. But they can't zap it, because it's too close to the central visual (?).

RMM: My mom's 95 going on 96. She just got cataract surgery. (an unclear sentence follows) They didn't cut into anything, (the rest is unclear)

LG: That's kind of what the doctor was telling me, too, when I talked to him. I said, "Jeez, I do need that, because I have a hard time reading, even at the altar, as big as the print is." I told him, "At the cathedral, when I get in the pulpit, don't turn those lights down! You turn it down about the time you get to the pulpit. You need the lighting up there! [laughter] I can't see my text."

RMM: That's funny. Last Sunday, senior (unclear name) gets up. He says the gospel, and then he says, "Excuse me, I have to leave for a second." He comes back and he said, "(unclear word) the staff was a little efficient today." They took his notes from the sermon out, so he was there with no notes. So he said, "I have to bring in the sermon."

LG: That happened to me with him too. The server, somebody. What they did, is, I put my homily notes on the pulpit. (unclear name) had preached the previous Mass. So he said, "Pick up my notes." Well the kid picked up my homily. I caught him. I said, "Where are you going with that?" He said, "Well, this is Father (unclear name) homily." I said, "No, that's not his homily, it's mine! His is under that." They say, "Well, we'll put your homily –." No, no, I'll put it up there, so I know it's there. I had that happen at Christmas last year, during the children's Mass at St. Joe, St. Pat's. They had a children's Christmas scene, kind of a play, for the gospel. The guy who was at religious education, he picked up his papers, he picked up my homily. I got up there, I said, "Well, I'm somewhat at a loss. I could go it alone. But the reason why I keep notes is, that that means I can keep the time frame where it'll be." My tendency would be to skew longer. That's why I keep notes there, so I know approximately the time length that I'm

talking. I said, "And I know who did this. My religious ed directory, would you please bring back my homily notes." He just kind of sheepishly comes up there. [laughter] Yeah, he just picked up the papers.

TAPE TWO, SIDE B ENDS

TAPE THREE

LG: When that happened to kind of recover I said, "Reminds me of the story of the pastor who was kind of rough on his altar boys, so they thought they'd get even with them, and they'd lift a page of his onway (?). He got up there, and he was talking on Adam and Eve, and he said, 'Adam said to Eve . . . ,' and he stopped. 'Adam said to Eve, 'I lost my leaf.'" "Well," I said, "this is the only way I can get through this right now after where (lost in laughter)."

RMM: In conclusion here, from your years being in the diocese and so on, how do you view the condition of the diocese, the situation, the church in the Upper Peninsula, in retrospect?

LG: I think our biggest problem is personnel. Priests, the lack of them, although we seem to beginning to get more vocations. But these men have to have some pastoral guidance before they can start taking their own parishes, and that's the problem we're facing now and probably will face for the next four or five years. We have to continue to encourage vocations. I think one of the reasons why the Holy Father appointed, you know, Bishop Sappola (?) as an example is [that] he's a younger priest, and we need younger bishops so that young men can look up and say, "Here's a young man and he's a bishop." I think this is a way of encouraging young men to consider the priesthood as a vocation. And I always tell 'em that yeah, we have our difficult times. But by the same token, one nice thing about being a diocesan priest is, no one day is the same. There are lots of different things happening in your life, so it certainly isn't a monotonous life. The biggest difficulty, of course, when we become [priests], is that we have to give up our own life (or wife) and our family. But what you have to see is that we do that for the service of people, so that our family becomes the people that we are engaged with as a parish priest. God calls us to this special and unique vocation. And I remind myself, every time that I raise the Host, that this is something unique that I do that no one else does. And I say the words, I stop and I say the words very piously. Truth is, your remembrance with me – no one else in this church can do that but me. And I'm doing that on behalf of the Lord Jesus, as the mediator between God and man. And what a privilege, what a privilege. Those are very meaningful words, and to think that God has called you to do something that he has not called others to do, that is so close and dear to his heart. That's not to put down marriage or anything else. Everybody has their place in God's plan. But that's one of the unique functions of a priest (I shouldn't use the word 'function,' I don't like that word, but that's one of the aspects of the priestly vocation), to be able to accomplish that, to be that mediator between God and man, as Jesus was between and his heavenly Father.

RMM: Do you think that part of the problem was that it was changing? That, like the education system, you had to go through a change, you had to see there was a problem and end it with

your change. But possibly, with the priesthood, people just kind of sat back, like in the old days, and said, "Well, we'll have young men come out and become priests," and so on, didn't pray for it, didn't put any direction, didn't work with the (unclear word) group and so on, and just kind of let things go – didn't encourage them.

LG: Yeah. I think one of the major reasons why we don't have as many vocations is because Catholics generally have larger families. If one of the boys went to become a priest that was fine, as long as someone else could carry out the family name. Today [in] our families, maybe there's two or three children. And sometimes parents put more emphasis on having grandchildren than [on] having a son as a priest. My mother and father were elated, and [yet] I remember talking to a young boy, and he had a lot of promise. He was attending our Catholic grade school here, and smart, smart kid – he had all of the qualities, of holiness and all this stuff, that I could see that he'd make a fine priest. Well, at dinner I was serving Mass for his grandparents' fiftieth wedding anniversary. At the dinner I was seated with [his] mother and dad, and so I said, "Well I was just talking to your son today, and he would make a wonderful priest." "Not my son!" I said, "Well, what do you mean, 'Not my son!'" "Well he's my only boy." I said, "Well I have news for you: I was my mother and father's only boy." Dropped the conversation. I think [it's] that selfish attitude, [that] somehow that it's more important to have a lineage in this life rather than the life to come. So, again, parents have to encourage their kids, and that's not happening as it ought to happen. There are some very fine families, and that's where our vocations are gonna come from. But, many families just think, there'll always be a priest there. As I told 'em, I'd say that, in Escanaba, when I was there, how many priests – I mean, we're worried about priests – has this parish produced in the last fifteen years? One. Then how do you expect that there's always gonna be a priest here?

RMM: See that's the whole (unclear) – they could become the pastor there, but then in fifteen years he's about ready to retire, so in that context you don't even have someone to follow.

LG: That's right. I said, "You can't blame the bishop for closing parishes. You can't blame the bishop, because" – that was a big problem down there, combining parishes – "because the Catholic people are not encouraging their sons to enter into a priestly vocation.

RMM: How many families would come in those two parishes?

LG: Combined, probably 1,600 – about seven hundred at St. Joseph's, and probably about another seven hundred at St. Patrick's – at least 1,400.

RMM: So out of all of that, you had one priest in fifteen years.

LG: Something like that, yeah. I try to tell them what a wonderful vocation this is – that vocation (unclear word). And then what I said, "Well, I'm just gonna talk off the top. I'm gonna tell you about my first assignment in Holy Family Barbeau (?), and, you know, what I ran into there." And I had 'em just rolling in the aisles, because they said, "Well, we got a big pot-belly stove right in the center of the church." And I said, "Everybody gather round" at the beginning

of Mass, where there's no way of controlling the heat. Every window was open, the backdoor was open, [and] people kept moving further and further towards the door. And I said, "Sometimes, even the candles, the wax candles, melted on the altar." But I said it was a unique church. I said, "When we tore it down, they had pine trees in there just shared on each side to nail boards in. But," I said, "I looked at the altar and I thought, 'That's the strangest altar I've ever seen.' So finally I asked one of the old timers there, 'Where did this altar come from?' 'Well Father, that was the sarcophagus that they put over the casket on the drawn horse-wagon.'" It was something that had curtains, but no religious symbols. So this was the altar that they had in this church. And then the church leaned like this, so I said, "Well I call this the Leaning Tower of Barbeau." And I had to take the bell out because I was afraid it might come tumbling down. And I always remember Bishop Noah came there for confirmation. It was the last time he came there; his foot went through the boards. He said, "I think, Father Gauthier, you need a new church." I said, "We're working on it, Bishop." It was really the worst church in the whole diocese, building-wise. But anyway. I remember saying Mass there, and they forgot to get wood for the stove, and then the oil – it was so cold it was like, "Oof, I'm glad you're out in the country." And so it was like thirty below in that church all week, and we had Mass in there, you know, and I'm hearing confessions, and the confessional consisted of a storm door with a handkerchief, where the little window was to be. And I'm sitting on the other side of this thing with an overcoat on, and I had gloves on my hands, on one hand, and I'm holding my foot with the other to make sure it doesn't freeze, and I'm giving absolution, and everybody was going to confession because they were so cold they had to move. When we got done with that I said Mass with my jacket underneath my vestments, and I could've cancelled the Mass but I thought, no, the worst crime those people ever committed – because they didn't have Mass every Sunday – [was] that they weren't frequent in Mass, but when I left they were all coming to Mass. I got to the water in the chalice, and I had to breathe on the water to melt the (unclear word). I remembered Bishop Baraga doing that. What I forgot was that, when I received the water and wine at communion, my lips stuck to the metal chalice. Pulled the skin right off. But I said, "Now I know how Bishop Baraga felt." Just telling some of those stories, it kind of picks up the attention of the ears of these kids. "Well, gee, that sounds exciting."

RMM: (unclear) their priest.

LG: Yeah.

RMM: Have you ever thought of putting all the recollections down?

LG: Oh, no, I've never done anything like that, but that's maybe because, when I get – well, I was at the University the other night, and we were talking about seminary days, and this Prosen, Professor Prosen, was sitting next to us and, was (unclear word) Irish hearing stories from our seminary days. Well, we just had the whole table roaring. "So you usually did that in seminary?" I said, "You think the college kids are bad today?"

RMM: Now you said that John Beaumir was in the seminary there?

LG: Well, he spent one year in the seminary and he probably came, maybe in his junior year – he may have been a year younger than myself, I don't know. He just spent one year there. But Mary Jane is always so funny, because when John gets together with me he always talks about (unclear), you know that one year that's . . . . I don't know how many years they've been married and statements she made to me. She said, "He thinks more of that one year in the seminary than he does forty some years of marriage with me." She has that dry sense of humor, she is just hilarious. She's funny.

RMM: What do you remember of the, I think they were South Victorians there, at Menominee. Jordan College?

LG: Yeah, they, they bought that college, and they had kind of an (unclear word – some Catholic term) there for a couple years. They did run, they had like two years of seminary there, but it was basically, they're in a (same word).

RMM: Kind of a high school?

LG: Yeah, well, it would be college, probably first and second year of college. See they – one of the hilarious things about my life is that I never got a high school diploma, because in the seminary, you always received a diploma after second year of college, not after high school graduation. And then, of course, I went on later to get a Bachelor's in philosophy and theology, and then went on to Catholic – University (unclear) to get a Master's degree. And during the old Bishop Baraga reunion, they had me as co-chair. I said, "I feel a little bit left out because," I said, "you know, here I've had all of this education, I have all of these diplomas and things, but I don't have a high school diploma!" So I said, "I don't know why I'm co-chairing this." So at the dinner, they gave me a diploma. It was a blank diploma, an honorary diploma. I said, "Well, I coulda made that out and signed it by last year, because I was administrator." So it's like an honorary doctorate. Well, we better let you go, then.

RMM: Okay, well this has been very enjoyable, very informative. I thank you very much for your insights, and I'll kind of leave it up to you, but you might want to think about some of these things, if you want to pursue some of these topics.

LG: Yeah.

RMM: I think, I think an excellent one would be saying more about education, and doing something. Thank you.

LG: Okay, you're welcome.

TAPE THREE ENDS