

**MY LIFE  
AS VIEWED FROM  
MY MEMORIES**

**By**

**Raymond “Jay” James Kilroy**

**2022**

# MY LIFE AS VIEWED FROM MY MEMORIES

By Raymond “Jay” James Kilroy, SAS Class of 1949, the Forty-niners.  
(Completed March 15, 2022)

## FORWARD [By Steven Raths, SASAA Director](#)

Jay Kilroy, SAS Class of 1949, is one of our ‘senior’ alums. He has recently penned the story of his most fruitful life, from his childhood days as a ‘free-range’ kid, to his two years at SAS, through his ordination, teaching, missionary work; and now to his present married life.

Jay’s philosophy of life contains humor mixed with sincerity, faith, and love. This has been his ever-present pillar of strength as he faces each new adventure and each rewarding challenge.

We are placing his autobiography on the SAS Alumni Website because, first of all, it is a *good read*; but also because it shows how the influence of his SAS teachers and mentors, have guided him throughout his life of service. Enjoy!

## PREFACE [By Jay Kilroy](#)

Praise God for his gracious blessings to all his creatures.  
I praise & thank Almighty God for all that he has bestowed on me.

For:

- the gift of my Catholic Christian faith by which I have come to know Him and love Him, albeit in an imperfect way. St. Joan of Arc was asked by her Inquisitors – “Are you in the state of grace?” Her reply: “If I am, it is by the grace of God; if I am not, it is because of my sinfulness.” I am in accord with this statement for my life.

- a most wonderful family – a mother and father who put their children’s welfare before their own, and my sisters and brother and their families.

- my wife, Doris, and my children and grandchildren; by whom I will live after my mortal death.

- my health, which has brought me a life into the tenth decade.

- an intelligence through which I was able to learn of God and His creation, and in some small way the ability to impart this to others.

- the wonderful friends and companions I have had the privilege of living, playing, and working with over a lifetime.

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## Chapter 1 - MY FAMILY

### (My Dad) Raymond James Kilroy - March 4, 1896 to September 10, 1976

Ray was born in Chicago into an Irish Catholic family. Both of his parents, James and Anna Marie Burke were born in Chicago, but *their* parents were born in Ireland. Ray was raised in the Logan Square area of northwest Chicago. He was educated by the BVM nuns at Annunciation Parish School. Graduating in 1910, his formal education ended. He went to a vocational arts institute for a couple of years and went into the work force at age 16. He worked as an office boy, a banker, and a foreman at a radio manufacturing plant until the Great Depression forced it into bankruptcy and closure. Ray, a married man with several children, was unemployed for a number of years. At that time to better his chance for employment, he went to night school to gain a high school diploma. After graduating, he applied at various places for employment: and was offered a job with the Illinois Department of Corrections at the royal wage of fifty dollars a month. Since it would have meant moving to Joliet, he instead took a position with the State Employment Department at Cicero and Madison, closer to home. He remained there until moving to Phoenix in 1944. In Phoenix, he transferred to a comparable job with the Arizona Department of Labor, (later the Department of Economic Security) until his retirement in 1966. Immediately after retirement, he took a part time job at Saks Fifth Avenue, where as Mother said, he had the longest lunch hour in Phoenix, since he opened and closed the store and came home for lunch. He did odd jobs there as needed. He finally retired at age 75. Sadly, dementia slowly set in for Dad, and he passed in 1976.

In 1922, Ray met a beautiful young lady, Lydia Klewer, at a dance. Ray was smitten by her and remained so for the rest of his life. They married on August 9, 1924 in the rectory of the church, since Lydia was not a Catholic. In the course of the next ten years, Ray and Lydia sired six children. The family lived in Chicago until 1944, when they moved to Phoenix.

Ray and Lydia (now a Catholic) were parishioners at St. Mary's in downtown Phoenix. Both, in the course of 30 years, held many positions in church societies. Ray was president of the Holy Name Society, the St. Anthony's Guild and the Parish Council, when Phoenix became an independent diocese. Lydia preceded Ray in death by 18 months. Dad died at age 80. He is buried beside his wife of 50 years at St. Francis Cemetery in Phoenix. God bless them both.

### (My Mother) Lydia Adeline Klewer February 7, 1897- February 6, 1975

Mother was born in Chicago of immigrant German parents. Her father, Gustav Klewer (1856-1913), was born in Pomerania on the Baltic Sea. His family came to the United States and Chicago in 1874. Gustav married Therese Bohl in 1880. They had eight children. Therese died in 1892, leaving Gustav as widower with small children.

Lydia's mother, Augusta Pelz, was raised in Stuttgart, Germany. She and her sister were orphaned and lived for a time in an orphanage. Their brother, Karl (Charles) had immigrated to Chicago. After he had saved enough money, he brought his sisters to Chicago. Augusta married Herman Bohl (brother of Therese). He died about the same time as his sister, leaving Augusta a widow with one daughter at the same time as Gustav was a widower. Since they all attended the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the north side of Chicago, it was natural for the two to marry. As a result, Lydia had nine half sisters and brothers. Her parents sired nine more children. The Klewer household was a busy place. Lydia was close to her siblings, most particularly to her three full sisters, and Adela, her half-sister, who coincidentally had also married an Irish Catholic.

Lydia attended the Lutheran parochial school until graduation from eighth grade. As was the custom for lower middle class children, this ended Lydia's formal education. Despite this, she was a font of knowledge that would put to shame any high-schooler and many college grads. Like Ray, she went to work at 16. She worked as a stenographer and clerk in downtown Chicago. In later life, she continued this type of work. She was a lively, beautiful woman, witty and a wonderful story teller, able to sing, tell jokes, and entertain others. **In 1924, Lydia Klewer married Ray Kilroy;** and she lived with, and loved him, for over 50 years!

Lydia studied the faith, and became a member of the Catholic Church, and a devout member of St. Mary's Parish in downtown Phoenix, AZ. She was President of the St. Anthony's Guild and involved in several societies in the parish for many years. She died the day before her 78th birthday in 1975. All her children, except Joyce, were at her bedside. She had borne six children and was grandmother to thirty.

### **Mother and Dad's Children – My Five Siblings and Me!**

Joyce Catherine Rogers (My oldest sister) (November 24, 1925 – March 2, 2018- age 92)

Joyce was a perfect eldest child. From an early age she was a baby sitter for her younger siblings. She was also a role model for obedience, love, and reverence. Joyce always had friends because of her open heart and unique personality. Probably her best friend was Frances McDevitt, our next door neighbor. Academically, she was a scholar... first in the class at her elementary school. She received a scholarship to Siena Girls High school, finishing in three and a half years. At age 17 she entered Xavier University on the south side of Chicago. She finished two years at Xavier before joining her family in Phoenix in December, 1944. Joyce interrupted her formal education and worked in a clerical position for a year before enrolling at Arizona State Teachers College (later ASU). In May, 1947, Joyce graduated as the first Liberal Arts grad at ASC.

After graduation, She was employed by the State of Arizona. She bought a car and headed off to Yuma (where as she facetiously said she was the only human in the family). In 1952 or 1953 she was commissioned as an officer in the U.S. Navy and began work at the Pentagon. Working nearby was a young ensign, Dick Rogers, from Rhode Island. Dick liked what he saw, and in 1954, they were married in Trinity Catholic Church in Washington D.C.

Joyce and Dick sired seven children - all as intelligent and beautiful as their parents. They were married for over 64 years. Dick once said that "Although they had traveled to all seven continents, his greatest accomplishment was marrying Joyce." Joyce died at age 92 beloved by all who came to know her. Dick followed Joyce two years later. Rest now, my beloved sister, with Dick, and your mother and father.

Beryl Ann (March 1, 1928 - )

Beryl is my beloved sister and has been my confidant through our many years together. We walked to school and church together for years. When separated, Beryl always wrote to me. In my heart-wrenching year of 1974, she was the rock on which I stood. Beryl was an aggressive, assertive child – one to take charge. She had her friends during her school days and as an American Beauty drove many boys 'crazy.' She was a fabulous dancer. I recall one night at a high school dance at the huge Phoenix Union High School gymnasium. I was on the dance floor, when I noticed that everyone had stopped dancing to watch a couple doing the jitter bug. It was Beryl and my friend, Bill Wandell. They cut a rug and got a roar of approval from the crowd of teenagers. Wow, that was something.

Beryl went into the nursing program at St. Joseph Hospital in Phoenix, AZ after graduation from high school. Not the scholar that Joyce was, she took on a heavy class load along with an equally hard work load at SJH. Three years later she graduated. She would work as a nurse at SJH for over fifty years, as an absolutely competent and dedicated nurse. She used this skill to care for her children and parents for years. A gift that Beryl has is to make people feel that they are important. As many of her friends died, their children looked upon Beryl as a surrogate mother. At their funerals, the children (adults) would hug and kiss her as they would their own mother.

In 1950 Beryl married Jerry Standard. They had five beautiful children. Sad to say the marriage did not last. Jerry was neither faithful nor honest, and she was saddled with the task of raising four boys and one girl. Not an easy task. Her family lived in the home of Mother and Dad, who lived in the back apartment for several years. Beryl had a nursing job at Sperry's. Working with her was Bill Howard who was raising three boys. They hit it off, married, and blended the ten into one family. (The *real* Brady Bunch) She now had a family of seven boys (What a job!) and one girl, Andrea. Possibly, the hardest thing for Beryl at this time was her Catholic faith. She was a devout Catholic Christian, in love with the Mass and Eucharist. At times, the RCC seemed quite devoid of empathy for its members. Because of her divorce and re-marriage, she believed she could not take the Eucharist. In 1968, when I returned from the Philippines, I ascertained her situation. I told her to go to the Casa (retreat house) and discuss her problems with the Franciscans. There she was told that she was free to return to the sacraments. A load was taken off her mind. She became involved with the Sodality at St. Thomas Parish, and was a Eucharistic Minister there for years.

Beryl's house and pool were always a place for family gatherings. She is a great cook and can whip up a meal from scratch with seeming ease, but it was her organizing skills that made it happen. In time Bill and Beryl felt it was time to part ways. In her later years, as a single, Beryl continued her work in her parish, as well as hosting family parties all through the years.

Beryl tried marriage one more time, marrying Phil Genovese. Both were older and had children and grandchildren from a previous marriage. Sad to say this one did not work out either, and they parted on good terms. In 2021, as I write this, Beryl turns 93, still with a quick wit and dashing personality. She loves to be with people and engage them in conversation and games.

Gwynn Ellen (June 7, 1931- )

Gwynn was born when the family had moved to Mansfield Avenue in Austin, Illinois. She was baptized at St. Angela's Parish. She finished kindergarten at Ella Flag Young School. Joyce, Beryl, and Jay went to the nearby Catholic school, but Gwynn was shepherded by Joyce to and from school. Gwynn turned out to be a character. She saved everything, and scrounged up goodies from wherever they could be found. Later, when we moved to Help of Christians Parish, five of us went to school together. Gwynn found an immediate friend living next door, Jane McDevitt. 80 years later they still communicate.

Gwynn spent six years at St. Mary's elementary and High School in Phoenix. She attended Phoenix Junior College where among other things she learned how to play bridge (I guess it was an optional class). She was always interested in politics and was ready to defend her position at a moment's notice. In 1951, she and Lea enrolled at the University of Arizona. Oh my... one time, on a very rainy day while having lunch, Gwynn and Lea, along with a few girl friends, needed a ride back to their dorm. By good luck a young man near their table was finishing his sandwich. Never a shy person, Gwynn approached him to see whether he had a car and might be kind enough to give the girls a ride. "Sorry, no car, but I have a truck."

Good enough... the others got in the back and Gwynn got in the front seat. "After all, I arranged the ride." Who was the mysterious driver?? Eduardo Carrillo Lopez, from a local Tucson family with roots going back 100 years when Arizona was a Territory.

Gwynn studied and worked as an x-ray technician for a year or so. Marriage, however, got in the way of this avocation. She and Eduardo married in 1954, and over the next 20 years sired eleven children. With a family that size, Gwynn never worked outside the home, but did she work hard *in* the home.

Gwynn was a devout, well informed Catholic. She and 'Eddie' raised their children as Catholics and lived to see them all live fulfilling lives, except for her third child, Adrienne, who died in her first year of life. Other sorrows grieved Gwynn including the death of her son Edward, and a grandson, Aaron, who died in the prime of life. Late in life, her closest sister, Lea, died. These two- - a year and a half apart in age-- were inseparable throughout their school days – all the way to the U of A. In these, her later years, Gwynn suffers from severe health problems. Gwynn understands that all – joys and sorrows – are from the hand of God. This sustains her. As always, she bares them as from the hand of God. God, faith, and family have always been paramount in her life.

Lea Mary – (January 18, 1933 - July 18, 2019)

My oldest memory was seeing my youngest sister in the arms of my mother. All of my sisters were beautiful, but most would agree that Lea was the most beautiful. Lea was four and a half when she entered kindergarten. In 8th grade Lea was chosen as class president and captain of the junior police. At Saint Mary's High School she was in the school band. She was a finalist in the State Oratorical Contest. In 1952 Lea entered the nursing program at St. Joseph Hospital. The main difference in accommodations from Beryl's three years at SJH was that Beryl lived in a dorm on the back porch of the hospital, while Lea and her classmates had individual rooms in the old SJ hospital, when SJH moved from downtown to Thomas Road. The girls were bused to SJH after Mass, breakfast, and morning classes. Lea followed her nursing career for fifty years.

In 1955 on a *double* date, the 'other guy' decided that the gal on the other side of the table, Lea, might be the better choice. Jack Winn and Lea dated, and like Beryl and Gwynn, they were married at St. Mary's Church, and in this case, in October, 1956. In short order, five wonderful children were born, baptized, and raised as Catholics, each marrying in the Catholic Church. Lea loved to preside at family gatherings. She loved her in-laws and grandchildren, whom she doted on. Jack and Lea were married for 58 years and saw their children and grandchildren grow and mature.

Lea was a woman of devotion to Christ and His Mother. (In 2000 I spent two weeks in the hospital after surgery. Each morning when I awoke, there was my private nurse, sitting silently saying the rosary. She lovingly cared for me, but was repaid in a unique way... Jack drove her to the hospital in Mesa each morning. When leaving one day, Jack was approached by a nurse selling a chance on something. "What the Heck, I'll take one." The next day, the nurse approached Jack again and told him that he had won! "See what happens when you do kind acts." (I forget what she won, however.) Jack died in 2014. Lea lived for five more years, but suffered several severe ailments, but accepted these sufferings for the poor souls in purgatory. She passed to her reward at exactly 86 1/2 – January 18, 1933 to July 18, 2019. Her rosary and funeral was crowded with friends and family.) I miss my sister Lea.

Terence (Terry) Michael (September 29, 1934 –)

Gwynn and Lea seemed much younger than me. But, Terry, even tho five and a half years younger than me, was much closer. He was a boy. We played together, walked to the grocery store for Mother. In our backyard and street games, we played football and softball together. When we moved to Phoenix, Terry made friends with a group of boys who, even tho only in sixth grade, planned on going to the seminary in Santa Barbara, California; so in a sense, Terry led me to the seminary. Terry did join me at St. Anthony's Seminary in 1948. During our years in the seminary we were only together for that first year. Terry was a tad better in sports than I was, and he made varsity at SAS in baseball and basketball.

In 1953 he was invested as a Franciscan with the name, Alaric. (Mother hated that name.) Because of his fluency in Spanish, he did parish work in a primarily Mexican neighborhood. Still, most of his priestly life was spent in Arizona working with the Native Americans. For several years, he was pastor and director of St. John's Indian Mission and school near Laveen, AZ.

In 1976 Terry asked for a dispensation from the vow of celibacy and in 1977 married Kathryn Surfus. Kathryn was a native of Manitowoc, Wisconsin. She was employed by the Department of Education at the top level position. Terry worked in real estate. They frequently visited Manitowoc, which Terry fell in love with it; so after retirement they moved to the very house where Kathryn had been raised. They later purchased a condo in Scottsdale, AZ. Now they are able to spend the summer and spring in Wisconsin, and the colder periods in sunny Arizona. In retirement, Terry found a new skill – cooking. He loves to spend time in the kitchen, mixing and measuring. Kathryn, a home-ec teacher and pro, spends much time in repairing the house, doing gardening, and creating all kinds of works of beauty.

## Chapter 2 – MY LIFE FROM 1929 to 1937

**I was born March 15, 1929**, the third child of Ray and Lydia Kilroy, in the Logan Square area of Chicago at St. Mary of Nazareth Hospital just before midnight. Mother wanted me born on St. Patrick's Day, but I decided to come early by 24 hours and five minutes. A few weeks later, at St. Veronica's Parish, **I was baptized as Raymond James Kilroy**. Sponsors: Dad's cousin, Norman George from St. Louis and Aunt Eleanor Burke, Dad's sister.

But Mother called me Jay because she wanted to make sure she got the right man when she was calling for him. From that time on, I was always called Jay, except when I was officially enrolled in some society or group, as a hospital, or the draft board in 1947, or on my visa and passport when travelling out of the country. (And from 1949 to 1974, I was Brother/Father Kiernan.) When I was in sixth grade, Beryl and I both came down with pneumonia and were admitted to the Children's Memorial Hospital. Mother and Dad came to visit us one night, and Beryl complained to Mother "The nurses are calling him Raymond, and he likes it!"

My earliest memory: walking with my father on a cold winter day in January, 1933. We were going to visit my Mother and my 'new' sister, Lea in the maternity ward. I remember my radiant Mother in bed with my sister in her arms. But more importantly, I had my eye on a box of chocolates next to the bed. Mother recognized it and asked me if I wanted to hold my sister. "Yes," I said, "But, can I have a piece of candy first?"(!) My family was a wonderful one to be raised in, although I didn't realize it for a few years. I had two older sisters... Joyce Catherine and Beryl Ann, my closest companion, a mere 54 weeks older than me. Gwynn Ellen would be born two years later. Lea Mary and Terry would follow. Grandma Kilroy lived with our family from 1924 until her death in 1933. However, I have no recollection of her.



A second early memory: in 1934, I was playing on the kitchen floor, while Mother was preparing dinner. "You are going to have a brother!" "What? How do you know?" "He is in my stomach." I don't know how she knew the gender – no ultra sound back then. I guess she figured the odds were on the side of a male. Turned out she was right – Terence Michael was born on September 29, 1934. A few days later I recall running out to the street with my sisters to greet my mother and brother, coming home in a big Buick driven by Mother's sister, Aunt Erna. Terry had been born at St. James Hospital in Chicago Heights with Uncle Rein Rutz (Erna's husband) as the delivery physician. (It must have been cheaper that way).

### St. Angela's Parish in Austin Neighborhood

In 1931, my large, wonderful family had moved from Logan Square in northwest Chicago to Austin, and to an apartment on Monitor Street. Austin lay on the far west side of Chicago, from Cicero (4800 west) to Austin Boulevard (6000 W) and from Jackson Boulevard (100 south) to North Avenue (1600 North). In total only three square miles, yet six thriving Catholic parishes were located in Austin – two west of Central and four on Leamington from Jackson to North Avenue. (Today, in 2021, there are no Catholic parishes there.) Austin High School, with some 6,000 pupils, was just four blocks south of our place on Long Avenue. (By 2000, it was closed because of gang violence.) In our day tho, Austin was a highly residential neighborhood with two or three story apartments and single family homes. In all parts of Austin, small Mom and Pop stores did a brisk business – delicatessens, butcher shops, and small grocery stores on the corners of streets.

The owners lived in the back of the stores. On the main streets like North and Chicago Avenue, we could find every type of business - barber shops, shoe shops, dry cleaners, bakeries, etc - no huge mega stores, like Costco or Walmart. Like the smaller stores on the corners, the owners often lived on the premises.

Life in the early thirties was a different world. Divorce was rare. None of my classmates were from broken homes. (Except in one instance when a tree fell on a house breaking it into two!) No TV, no microwave ovens, no cell phones, no GPS devices. We wrote letters in long hand on a sheet of paper, put them into envelopes, placed a stamp on them, and walked them to the mail box, knowing that the recipient would receive them in three or four days. Chicago (as I remember it) had not changed much from the days when my dad was young. The rich had a car, and trucks were used by business, but in the alleys of Chicago the horse was king. Milk was delivered in horse-drawn carts (and the horse learned where to stop for deliveries). During the day we heard a sing-song voice crying "rags – old iron, rags – old iron" from the junk man in his horse and cart who would buy our papers, old tires, and assorted junk we stored in our garage. The women would come into the alley to buy fruit and vegetables from these vendors in trucks pulled by horses. The ice man came down the alley every other day. Mother would buy a 50 pound block for our ice box (no refrigerator). And finally, the garbage truck, pulled by an old nag, would stop in front of our trash bins or stalls; two men would jump out and shovel the garbage into the back of the truck. What a different world from today.

We wrote out our homework in long hand on lined paper, made erasures and turned it into to our teacher the next day. We had no auto, no telephone, no bikes, but we had a home and a family and we never starved. All travel was on foot to school and church, or to the parks and swimming pools. When going downtown or to our cousins, we walked to the street cars, buses, and best of all, the "El." We were absolutely secure and happy in our family, our neighborhood, our church, and our school life.

We lived at 1734 N. Monitor (crossroads North Avenue and Central) in St. Angela's Parish. Joyce started first grade at the parish school. She was a model student, the best in her class in studies. As a result, the bar was raised very high for the rest of us. None of us reached the same heights as Joyce. Beryl and I

followed. We were taught by the Sisters of Mercy and made our first Holy Communion at St. Angela's. Gwynn, Lea, and Terry were baptized there. It seemed to have been a very Irish neighborhood, our neighbors and family friends were the Kennedys, Cummings, and O'Donnells. Patsy O'Donnell was my first crush. We held hands and even kissed while sitting on the steps in the back of the apartment. After we had moved, I learned that she had died at age seven.

We lived on the first floor of a two-story apartment, with a basement, where Dad had his tools and work bench. We also had a back yard with two trees. Early on I loved to climb the trees and sit in the branches. Mother was terrified that I would fall and injure myself, but nothing like that ever happened.

### Life During the Great Depression

In the 1930s, the Great Depression dominated the economics of America. It also greatly affected our life. Most of my early recollections were learned from stories that Mother related to us in later years. Mom and Dad had good jobs, owned stocks, had a bank account, and owned a decent car for the first six years of their marriage. Dad was a foreman at a radio manufacturing plant. His salary was sufficient for the family to live in relative comfort. However, around 1933 or '34, Dad lost his job, and with no workmen's comp nor any safety net, it must have been terrifying for Mother and Dad. The car and stocks were sold, and the bank account was drained, but dad never gave up. Jobs were scarce, but he would go out every day and knock on doors and visit businesses, looking for any kind of work. He would take any job for a dollar a day. In part, we depended on Grandma's little retirement income and savings. We also got help from Aunt Katie, who was unmarried and had a steady income. She would frequently send a food box to us and our cousins, the Burkes. Dad's best friend, Uncle John McNulty, a postman and unmarried, always managed to give us a turkey for Thanksgiving and Christmas. As he told Mother: "I bought a ten cent raffle ticket on a turkey and won. We already have one; so the Kilroy's can have this one." Mother would reply: "John, you are a very bad liar, but a wonderful friend, thank you."

With only an eighth grade diploma, Dad found out that many jobs were closed to him. In his thirties, he enrolled in De La Salle night school and gained a high school diploma. This gave him access to a wider field of employment. By 1936, he was offered a job with the Illinois Department of Corrections which would have meant moving to Joliet. Instead, he took a second offer with the Department of Labor, because the office was in Chicago. With this job and steady income of \$50.00 a month, Mother and Dad now planned to buy a home. On May 1, 1937 we moved from Monitor Street to Long Avenue.

But *first*, some...

### Stories from Monitor Avenue

The most vivid image I have of life on Monitor took place in December 1935 or 1936. In the late Fall, Dad would disappear downstairs after supper. What was he doing? Beryl and I walked around outside at night. One evening we peeked into the basement window. Dad was there working at his bench. Night after night, we looked in and saw him at work. It was at the height of the depression and Dad had to provide for a family of eight. There was no extra money for frivolities like dolls or toys for Christmas. Dad, an excellent carpenter, would make sure that his family would have a nice Christmas. On Christmas Eve, we went to bed – no tree, no presents in sight. But, on Christmas morning, we awoke, went to Mass, and came home for breakfast. And there under the tree, *which had magically appeared that morning*, were gifts, wrapped and ready! Joyce received a beautifully wrought three story doll house, with rooms, windows, staircase, beds, bathtubs, even toilets – the whole works! Beryl received a newly painted and renovated baby buggy and a wooden doll to push around. I can't remember what I got, but we all received something made by Dad's hands... A million dollar Christmas!

Mother was a great story teller. She told of a day around 1934... Dad had gotten a day job, which would pay him five dollars at the end of the week. On Wednesday morning the cupboard was bare. Mother counted the money – nine cents to feed seven mouths for three days. She made out her shopping list: a large cylinder of oatmeal – four cents; a peck of potatoes for three cents, and three loaves of day-old bread for two cents. That would take care of breakfast = oatmeal; lunch = toast; supper = potatoes. Solid and nourishing. Mom took Joyce by the hand with cash and the grocery list. As they reached the sidewalk, Dad opened up a window and called out, “I just found twenty cents in my winter coat pocket.” Mother said it was like Christmas! Now her grocery list would contain: butter and jam for the toast; milk for the oatmeal, and hamburger with the potatoes and veggies for supper. Meals fit for royalty.

### The Lost Child.

One May morning Mother sent Beryl and me on an errand to buy some milk or bread. We took Gwynn with us. Mother told us to watch our little sister carefully. We were about six and seven. Gwynn would have been four. We purchased what was on our list and then did some window shopping on North Avenue. It was a leisurely trip and we returned home with our goods, but not with our little sister! Mother rushed upstairs to our neighbor’s apartment to phone the police. Sure enough, someone had seen this little blonde girl alone on a busy street and called the police. Fifteen minutes later a police car pulled up in front of our house. Supposedly, Mother told Dad to meet the police; so neighbors would not think that they were bringing him home from jail. But the *fact* was, Gwynn came home laden with candy bars and ice cream from the policemen. We figured that we should do that again. Sure enough, next year we ‘lost’ Lea, and the police brought *her* home loaded down with goodies.

### My Earliest Days in School

In September, 1934, I started kindergarten at Ella Flagg Young Elementary, while Joyce and Beryl went to St. Angela’s, a block away. We walked together until I had to turn off to EFY. For some reason, I was miffed by this discrepancy and was not happy at EFY. What I do know is that I ditched school regularly. I would go in one door and walk down the hall to another door and exit the building. I simply walked around and waited until noon, when I would meet my sisters and go home for lunch. Joyce must have known about my wayward behavior, because she would ask me if I had played kip that morning. In my usual mendacious way, I would tell her “no.” The highlight of my experience at EFY was a ride in a police car. Some lady must have seen this five year old squirt wandering around aimlessly and called the authorities. I remember the cop car stopping and a policeman getting out. Since I knew I was guilty of something, I ran. It took the policeman about two seconds to catch me and bring me back to school. It was my first encounter with the other side of the law.

We drove into the school yard and it seemed that thousands of very large kids (recess time) stared at me in the car. Mother was called. She had three toddlers at home, but she came. We met in an office, where a female police officer sat next to the principal. The only thing I remember saying was – “is that a real gun?” Mother, despaired of me, knew I was hopeless and took me out of kindergarten. Was I headed for Reform School? Maybe the nuns could convert me the next year. In 1935, I was enrolled with my sisters at St. Angela. Mother, although not a Catholic, loved the nuns and lobbied that I have the same first grade sister as Joyce and Beryl... Sister Veronica Clare.

I don’t remember anything about her except her name and that Mother was happy that I was in her charge. Somehow, I learned how to read and write, spell, and do math, and was promoted to second grade.

## A Typical Day on Monitor Street in 1936-1937

It started with breakfast of oatmeal –at times toast and jam. Then a walk to school – alone and without adult supervision, except for a police officer who guided the children across North Avenue. We walked together with the O'Donnells and Kennedys. Joyce, Beryl, and I went to St. Angela's, and Gwynn to Ella Flag Young for kindergarten. (She actually *attended* kindergarten classes). We came home for lunch and we three returned to school for afternoon classes. After school, we would play outside in the backyard or on the street with our neighbors. In inclement weather we would play inside – card games, tiddly wink, pick up sticks. The girls would play with the dolls and albums for paper cut-outs. I would listen to the radio – Lone Ranger, King of the Mounties, Jack Armstrong.

Around 5:30 PM we would go out to the street and wait for Dad to come home with the Chicago Daily News. We would watch and wait. The first to see him would shout: "First kiss, dibs on the paper." Lea would also repeat this, even though she could not read. After our hugs and kisses from Dad, we would read the comics or for me the sport page to find out what had happened that day with the Cubs or Bears. Then supper together, with Dad leading the prayer before the meal.

After supper it was playtime outside. It was a different world in the 1930's– a world without fear. We could play outside in the dark under the street lights. We had no bikes, but bigger boys on the block would drive us on their handle bars. It was hide and seek, tag, - or for me, shoot 'em up Cowboys and Indians. And then there was homework or reading books around the dining room table. At 8:00 PM we would come in, wash up, brush our teeth (one bathroom) and get ready for bed. Then we would gather around Dad's knees, kneel and say our prayers, kiss Mom and Dad and sleep the sleep of the innocent.

On Sunday afternoons, after Mass and lunch, Mother would give Joyce a dime. She would take Beryl and me to the Manor Theater on North Avenue and Central. Joyce would buy one ticket, take each of us by hand and give the ticket to the usher and we three would enjoy a Laurel and Hardy or Clark Gable movie for ten cents.

(As said, we moved a month before the end of the school year of my second grade. We continued for that month at St. Angela's. Before moving, we only had to walk four blocks straight down Monitor...easy for even a first grader to navigate. But for six weeks, Joyce, Beryl and I had to walk a mile and a half from our new home to St. Angela's. The walk included crossing three major streets Central, Chicago, and Division Avenues. It was treacherous for an eight year old. I went to school with Joyce leading the way. But I walked home alone. Got lost a couple of times, but finally mastered the route home.)

## First Communion

It was the custom to make first Confession and Communion in the second grade. So in April, 1937, I and about a hundred others learned our prayers and formulas for confession and communion. For First Communion, both the boys and the girls dressed in white. I had a white shirt and tie, white knickers, but no white shoes. So on the evening before the big event, Mother and I went downtown to a department store. She bought a pair of shoes for me. They were on sale for fifty cents, but when we arrived, they had been reduced to twenty-five cents. What a bargain!

For Communion we had to fast even from water; so Mother put me in her bed up against the wall. She tied all the faucets shut. All of this so I would not forget and take a drink of water and thus miss this important event. We always walked to school and church, but that day Dad took me to church on the

Central Avenue bus. On Ascension Thursday, I made my First Communion. For breakfast that day, we had a special feast – bacon and eggs, a break from our usual oatmeal and toast.

## Chapter 3 - LIFE AT 621 N. LONG AVENUE - 1937-1944

### Our House on Long Avenue

In 1937, age 41, Dad became a homeowner. We moved into our new home on Long Avenue! It was a single-family bungalow. Steps led up to the first floor with a large outdoor porch in front and back. Dad hung a swing on the front porch. Mother loved to sit there with Dad or her children. She would sip her lemonade and talk to neighbors as they passed by.

### The Living Room

Coming in the front door (which we rarely used) was a small cloak room to hang coats. This led to the living room, off of which was Mom and Dad's bedroom. The living room had a sofa and other chairs and a stand up radio, with a record player phonograph. We would listen to the radio. During the long reign of Joe Louis as boxing champion, the whole family would listen to his fights. On Sunday eves it was music shows, Jack Benny, Fred Allen. During the week it was Bob Hope, Red Skelton, Fibber McGee and Molly and many others. Here with Dad sitting on a chair we would gather, before going to bed, around his knees to recite our evening prayers.

### The Dining Room

The dining room was in the center of the house. Gwynn and Lea's bedroom lay off the dining room. In the middle of the room was a long table for eight or more, used for adult parties and Sunday diners. The table and the dining room were the heart of activity for the family. We had no desks; so the table was the place for evening homework and games. The Kilroys loved to play games... Mother loved hearts, but hated to lose. We played checkers. Dad was the champion, but I could beat anyone except him. We played Monopoly for days and days, especially in the winter. On school nights, the radio was shut off, and we gathered at the table to do our essays or math problems. Dad was a wizard at math, and tried to help my sisters with arithmetic, but he was so smart that he couldn't understand why it took them so long to solve a problem or do an equation.

I recall, in fifth grade, Joyce came home with her high school friends. They were working on algebra. These older girls asked for my help in solving a problem. I saw the equation and immediately got the answer, but I didn't know how I solved it... so no help from me.

On the floor was a grate bringing heat up from the furnace in the basement. When we got up for Mass in the winter, we would rush to this grate to dress. Between the dining room and kitchen was a hallway, a bathroom (a bath tub, toilet, and one sink) on one side. A pantry and closet lay on the other side.

### The Kitchen and Grandma Annie's Table

The kitchen table was a treasure. We ate most of our meals in the kitchen at a solid wood table with two folding leaves and a middle leaf that was removable. This table had been given to Grandma Kilroy in 1888 for her fifth marriage anniversary. Five generations have used this table: James and Anna Kilroy, Dad, Jay, Raymond III, Kinsley Kilroy. Dad ate at this table for 80 years. (Presently Raymond James Kilroy III, her great grandson, has this table.)

The kitchen lay at the back of house and led to the back porch. 95% of the time we entered and exited from the back door. All our friends did the same. Terry and I had our bedroom on the north side of the kitchen. In the kitchen, among the usual things, was a small pot-bellied stove - a garbage burner. (We called it the Peanut). The Peanut kept the kitchen nice and warm in the winter. This was a chore of mine – bringing a small bucket of coal to feed the peanut during the winter. I recall hanging our gloves behind the Peanut after we played in the snow.

### The Basement

In the hallway was a stairway to our basement. It was full and finished with a furnace for the cold winters of Chicago. Next to the furnace was a coal shed with a coal window and a chute. Periodically, during the Fall and Winter months, a coal truck would arrive with a ton or two of coal. It was dumped on the street in front of the house, then hauled to the coal chute and deposited in the coal bin. Keeping that furnace going in the winter was an absolute. Dad would start it when the cold weather arrived, but it became another of my chores – open the furnace door and shovel coal atop the embers twice a day. Then on Saturday, clean out what Dad called the clinkers, the ashes and unburned coal. Since it was depression time, I had to check and see if any good coal had slipped through the grate so it could be used again.

The basement also had a small coal-fed stove, connected to the water pipes. Thus was the heating element for our hot water baths on Saturday. Each Saturday I had to start a fire in the little stove. I started with paper and wood and then carefully put a little coal on top and gradually added more coal to keep the fire going for the hot baths in the afternoon and evening. We had a regular schedule - fish or spaghetti on Friday; on Saturday a bath and supper of wieners and beans (a break from hamburgers or meat loaf and boiled potatoes from Monday to Thursday). On Sunday: Mass, dinner with mashed potatoes, roast beef and a dessert, and then off to the movies.

In the basement there was a work space, table and place for Dad's tools. He was an excellent carpenter among many other talents. The best part was that the basement included a large area that was neat and clean. It became a place for socials, parties, and game time. It was the gathering place for the kids in the neighborhood - warm in the winter because of the proximity of the furnace

The two royal princesses, Joyce and Beryl, had their own suite in the attic. Total privacy as befit their exalted status. But they had to come downstairs to find the one sink and toilet in the bathroom. Their suite was nice and cozy, and above all... private - everything but servants to make their bed and wait on them. Another problem was that they had to go outside to the back porch and then walk upstairs to the attic in winter and summer... poor suffering girls. The western half of the attic was not finished, but was used for storage.

### The Backyard

We had a very nice backyard, used for our vegetable garden. Dad was an excellent farmer, even though he had never lived on a farm. The land was rich Illinois soil excellent for growing vegetables. Thus another chore for spring and summer - plant, hoe, water, and weed. We also owned a full lot adjacent to our house. Dad divided it into two parts. During the war the eastern half (toward the alley) was prepared for more gardens and trees. On the western half – toward the street - we could play football and softball (I do recall hitting a ball through the dining room window), or build snowmen or snow forts and engage in snowball fights. It was a gathering place for the neighborhood kids.

## Our Neighbors and Friends

The neighborhood was family oriented. We immediately found friends and playmates. Right next door lived the McDevitts with six children and next to them four Trenner children. They were Catholic families so we went to school with them during our days on Long Avenue. Long Avenue was the division line between our parish, Help of Christians, and St. Lucy's to the west. Three other Catholic families: the O'Reillys, the Hermans, and Billy Omnus lived on the west side of the street; so they went to St. Lucy's. For me these guys were my playmates in sports and outdoor games on the street. I often thought that we lived in the best neighborhood in the world.

Neil Quinn was my best friend and classmate for six years. (In 2021 I am still in contact with him.) Neil was the tallest boy in class – I, the smallest, but we did everything together. He had a bike, and when we went to La Follette Park or Hay Public School for football or softball game,s we went on his bike. Other friends included Eddie Pinger, Ray Trenner, and Joe Jablonsky. I generally walked with them to school and church. Since we were on the outskirts of the parish, Ray and I would meet Neil, then cross the street and meet Eddie, then a short block later, Joe. The crowd would grow as we came closer and closer to school. Given the time and weather, we would engage in games as we went. In a flat pack of gum there was a card – baseball player, hockey player (Pro football and basketball were not as popular in the pre-television era) or war cards. These cards were our treasures. With one foot behind a line in the sidewalk we would lag (toss) them to a line or two forward. The loss or gain of your card was dependent on your skill in sailing these cards. Another cruder game was seeing how far you could spit. I don't recall the reward for the champion – perhaps bragging rights. I was led astray by bad companions. For a long time the champion was Billy Sherman, who died in sixth grade.

## Lorel Avenue

One block east of Long Avenue was Lorel Avenue, and it had very little traffic, so we played on that street. We played four man touch football. Eddie was two years older than Neil and me and so was the best player. I was the worst; so he and I were one team; Neil and Ray the other team. It was largely a passing game, one man centering the ball; the other trying to complete a pass to him. It seemed that we played every afternoon after school in the Fall, except when one of us had a game with our classmates at La Follette Park. A strange demographic about Lorel Avenue was the fact that there were five or six boys four years older than me, all born in 1925 as was Joyce. All went into the service in 1943 when they graduated from high school. All came back unscathed, except Art, the only son of our grocer. I recall seeing him in 1943 at a barber shop. He was in an Army Air Corps uniform, as handsome as ever, reading a magazine, and lo and behold - smoking a pipe. He was the epitome of a young adult. All of these older boys went to Howe Elementary and Austin High. The best athlete of that group was Ernie Wienkie. Because Joyce was known to be a scholar, Ernie came over to the house to bone up on his math with her help. After class, he would show me the right posture to take when blocking on the line. These boys would also play on Lorel – enough room for us squirts and them; sometimes we would even be allowed to play in their games. Then it was six men on a team and it got rough playing on the asphalt, but somehow we didn't care.

My friends from St. Lucy's were Paul and Larry O'Reilly, Bill Herman, and Billy Omnus. Because we went to different schools, they were afternoon, evening, and summer time friends. At night we would play games right in front of our house. All outdoor games – boys and girls - tag, hide and seek, etc. A favorite of mine was "Rover, Red Rover, let Billy come over." Our side would brace ourselves holding hands and arms and Billy would crash in trying to break through. If he did, he could capture one of us; if not, he

joined our side. Especially in the summer this was typical of our evening recreation in the days before TV. But we did listen to the radio as a family: Mr. District Attorney, Amos and Andy, Bob Hope, and Red Skelton (with Clem Kadiddehopper), Jack Benny, Fred Allen, Edgar Bergen and Charlie McCarthy, and the Joe Louis boxing matches.

A half block north of our house was Howe School and Park. Immediately after moving to Long Ave, I found this park and played there for the next seven years. It was home away from home. The park, connected with the school, had a large playing area run by the Chicago Parks and Recreation. After school and in vacation time the field was open to all. A manager oversaw the park.

The park had swings, monkey bars, slides, horse shoe pits, and a half basketball court. There was also a covered sand pit for wrestling, and 'horseback fights' (a bigger boy with a smaller one on his shoulders). But best of all were two fields for football and softball – but hard dirt -no grass. One field was for the smaller boys, the other for the older ones. Over our seven years on Long I moved from one field to the other. We could sign out any sport equipment and begin our games. In the summer I would get there as soon as possible. There might be only four or five boys. We would sign out a ball and bat (no gloves) and play catch until we had six boys. We would choose sides and begin a softball game three on a side. One pitcher, one shortstop, one left fielder. A line from home to third base was the left side of our field; from first base to second was the foul line on the right. It was called Pitcher's Out, because there was no first baseman. As more boys arrived we filled in the team until we reached nine and used the whole field. In the fall we played football on the gravel. In this park, I played with other boys, who went to the public school. I loved engaging in athletics– never too good, but I played all the major sports.

I recall one incident, which showed the morals of the boys at the park. I had finished supper and went to the park to play under the lights. When I arrived, I saw two lines of boys forming an aisle. At one end I saw a boy from St. Lucy's, Costello, whom I hardly knew. He was standing with his shirt a bright red - blood spots. His fists were up. At the other end were two wild boys, the Wakefields (not my favorites). The line of boys would not allow both to attack Costello at once. See what I mean by the morals of the day. The Wakefields were dumb. One charged with his head down at Costello and he knocked him to the ground. Then the other – even dumber – charged like a bull and got knocked down. Then in a moment of heroism, I decided to join Costello standing next to him. When the Wakefields saw that it was now two against two, they left the park – said they had to go home for supper.

### The Lemonade Stand – An Entrance into Capitalism

In an effort to make some money, the five oldest (Terry was only three), decided to go into business one summer day. First we needed hard cash. For some reason, I had a nickel. Then we needed raw materials; so Joyce (our manager) and I (the financier) went to the store near our house and purchased a packet of lemonade. Third we needed a manufacturing plant; so Joyce and Beryl went into the kitchen and mixed the powder with water and produced lemonade. Then we needed business site; so we got an old crate and a chair from the kitchen and created our place of business on the sidewalk in front of the house. We also needed advertisement; so the girls made signs – Buy a cup of lemonade for pennies. Lea and Gwynn then approached adults coming down the street to advise them of our product. Joyce, Beryl and I took turns manning the business during the afternoon. At the end of the business day, we had taken in 23 cents. Our 'manager', Joyce, had to figure out how to divide up the intake. Her solution: the three senior members of the firm would each get five cents, and Lea and Gwynn would get two cents. And Jay because he financed the deal would get the extra two cents. Immediately, my mathematical mind kicked into gear – something was wrong here. I was really only getting two cents for a day's work. I complained to the



'manager' that I thought my five cent investment should have been given to me before the division of spoils. I didn't know the words "net income and gross income", but I must have known the meaning. But I couldn't convince Joyce; so she solved the problem by donating her five cents to me. Business relations were at a low ebb for a while.

### Jay and the WPA— And My 2<sup>nd</sup> Encounter with the Law

During the Depression, the Federal Government employed millions of Americans to work on numerous jobs and projects. The number one job-creation was the WPA – Works Project Administration. In 1938 the WPA workers showed up on our block. They tore out the sidewalk in front of the houses on Long Avenue and replaced it. Then they did the same with Lorel Street. They took forever - months and months. At night they left the building materials on the street. This was an opportunity. The guys needed a club house. So at night, we 'borrowed' the bricks and moved them to the back of our house. We had the finest club house in the neighborhood. After a few months the WPA moved on northward. It was winter and we needed a fort for snowball fights. On Saturday, we tore down the club house and built a fort in the front yard. On Monday, as usual, I came home for lunch. About a block from the house, Joyce met me with a peanut butter and jelly sandwich. "Jay, do not go home. The WPA police are looking for you." Three hours later, I came home. Disaster – our beautiful fort was gone – every last brick. I must have cried, but that is life.

### Our Lady Help of Christians (HOC) 1937-1943

In 1937 Joyce Catherine went into seventh grade, Beryl Ann into fourth and I into third grade. Gwynn Ellen went into first and Lea Mary into kindergarten, although she was really supposed to wait a year. Mother was at home with Terry. We all walked to school, but we were joined by the McDevitts and Trenners. Coming home I walked with our friends.

During the school year we went to Mass in October, Advent, Lent, and May – a little more than half the year. Mass was at 7 AM, home for breakfast, and then back to school by 8:30 AM; home for lunch, and back to school for the third time in one day. In the morning Mother would come into the bedroom at 6:30 AM... "stretch and get up." That was it, I would rush to the heat register in the dining room to dress during the cold winter. Joyce and Beryl dressed upstairs. We three set out for Mass in the dark. No time for foolishness – we had to be on time for Mass.

Help of Christians was one of six Catholic parishes in Austin. Each had an elementary school attached. All were staffed by nuns, which kept tuition dirt cheap. The Kilroys paid five dollars a month for five children. Three of these schools had a thousand pupils. My graduating class of 1943 had three sections and about 135 grads. By the time I reached fifth grade, each section in a class fielded a football, softball, and basketball team. So our grade had three teams until eighth grade, when boys and girls were separated in preparation for Catholic high school, which were all single sex schools. We had no coach, no manager, no uniforms, no adult supervision. We did not even have helmets or pads for tackle football. Our class played against the two other sections in our grade, the two classes (not grades) above us and the two classes below us. We played at LaFollette Park on one of the greens. We had three super players – Jack Melligan, Fran Parker, and Carl Destefano. They were so good that we won all our games except when we played the eighth grade boys who were in one consolidated class. We might play as many as two or three games a week during football season. We also challenged other Catholic schools (St. Angela and St. Peter Canisius) which were close to LaFollette Park.

Another claim to fame came in sixth grade. Remember, I was the smallest boy in the class. We had only about 22 boys in class and so I made the team. Hooray!! The four best players made up the backfield; the next best were the center and ends, then the guards, and last but not least, the tackles. I played tackle position. Any missed tackles on the line were erased by our four stalwarts. One afternoon in sixth grade, we were playing a seventh grade teams. This was Beryl's class and Ray Trenner played on it. One their stars was a big fellow named Sam Sorce. Three times in a row they ran at the smallest man on the line – ME! *Three times I rose to the occasion and made the tackle* on a boy who weighed 20 pounds more than me. I heard the boys in the huddle say: "Will someone block Kilroy." A moment of pure joy! I made the team in sixth and seventh grade, but when we had all eighth grade boys as one – some 65 boys, I was cut and did all my football in eighth grade at Howe Park.

In sixth grade, we were allowed to become altar boys – a great honor. But we had to master the Latin responses, know when to move the large missal and stand, and when to ring the chimes using the right notes. Eddie Pinger – two years older than us – was a veteran altar server and he taught Neil and me the ropes. (He also was the one who taught me about the birds and the bees.) Still it was up to us to learn the Latin. From fifth grade on, Neil and I practiced Mass serving and worked on the Latin. I was actually ready by fifth grade but not allowed. When sixth grade started, I was ready for the test in front of Sister Mary St. Joseph. But in October I ended up in the hospital with pneumonia and missed out on the test. My friends, Neil, Joe, and Tommy Nolan were already serving by the time I got out of the hospital. In a way it was probably for the best. The Sunday missal and stand were very heavy. It had to be moved from one side of the altar to the other by going down and then up the steps – quite dangerous for a shrimp like me. I may well have fallen down the steps carrying the book and stand. This would have given my mother a heart attack. (When I started seventh grade, I presented myself to Sister and passed the Latin test, and served at my first Mass on All Saints Day, 1941. Mother was at Mass trembling with fear that I would trip over my cassock and bounce down the stairs. But it never happened.)

Sixth grade was a good year and a bad year. The Boy Scouts, the war in Europe, pneumonia, and Sister Doria! In all my previous years in Catholic school, I excelled and was a good obedient little boy. I enjoyed my teachers, the nuns. Mother always got good reports from my teachers. But in sixth grade, my teacher was Sister Doria. For some reason, she disliked me, and showed it in every way she could. She embarrassed me, made me sit out in the hall, sent me down to the kindergarten class, and once had me sit in Gwynn's third grade class. I cried often. I think I may have been too smart for her. I never sass'd her or disobeyed her; but early in the year, I may have corrected a math mistake she had made on the board, but I was never really sure of the reason.

But I had my 'revenge' on Sister Doria. One afternoon the superior of all the BVM sisters in the USA visited the school. She was nice and told us that she had a surprise for us. She was going to have a math contest between the boys and girls. She asked Sister Doria to pick three boys and three girls. Sister picked the contestants but not me. I was furious. However, Sister Superior first threw out a math question to all the class. "What is six times six?" Everyone got it. Then she said: "What is six times six times six?" Silence, but one hand shot up-- mine! "216" says I. Sister Superior said "Why aren't you up here?" Bob Donofrio said, "Yes, Jay should be up here." Now I was part of the boys' team. The Superior asked 22 questions, mainly dealing with percents and decimals. I answered 21 correctly, and was tied for the 22nd. The boys won 22-0 !! I imagine Sister D. was fuming. The next day I was called to the school bookstore and given my pick of a dollar's worth of candy. In your face, Sister Doria!

About this time I got my first job outside the house (aside from offering to shovel snow from the sidewalk for homeowners.) This job was at the Symphony Theater, which was close to school and the favorite for

all of us on Sundays, except in Advent and Lent. On Saturday morning, Tommy Nolan and I and others went to the office. We were given a stack of handbills which we delivered to houses and apartments in a specific neighborhood. It was a two hour job - our pay was two tickets to a movie at the Symphony. Mother and Dad loved to go to the movies, usually on a week day evening. A ticket cost ten cents for a kid and twenty cents for an adult. So my two tickets went to my parents. I got 15 cents for a ticket and a candy bar after the movie. I remember one time when I left the office with my two tickets, a young man in his twenties offered me 30 cents for my two tickets. "You can take your girl friend to the movies this Sunday and buy a milkshake afterwards with 30 cents." Tempting... except I had no girl friend, but I did have a Mother who loved her movies.

### My Triple Play!

I began seventh grade in 1941 – football, altar serving, Pearl Harbor...and a very nice teacher, Sister Alexandria. My mother was afraid of me joining the Boy Scouts. She had visions of the Hitler Youth Corps in Germany, but nothing to fear, it was fun while it lasted. And it contained another coup in my life: We were playing softball in the yard next to the school. I was playing center field. There were runners on first and second – no outs. Then... a line drive to short center field. I came dashing in as fast as I could, scooped up the ball *before it hit the ground* and without missing a step, I raced toward second base. Two dumb runners... I tapped second base with my foot - two outs, and then I ran down the man who was still running from first base. **An unassisted triple play!** – one of the rarest of defensive plays in baseball, and boy, was I happy with myself!

### Pearl Harbor

On December 7, 1941, Tommy Nolan and I were walking to the movies that Sunday afternoon. As we walked down the street, Johnny Durkin, a classmate of Beryl, came rushing out of his house to announce, "The Japs have bombed Honolulu!" I had followed the war in China and Europe since 1939 and had all the dates and places well in my head. I even argued with my father about Hitler and the invasion of England, and then the outcome of the Russo-German war. But that Sunday, I believed that we would now be subject to bombing, as had been done in London and that the older boys in our neighborhood would go to war. The next day was December 8, the Immaculate Conception. We went to Mass and then gathered around the radio to listen to FDR's request for a declaration of war against Japan. Joyce and I talked about the declaration of war. I asked her if she would have voted for war if she were in Congress. Joyce's answer stunned me. "I would have voted against war, unless it was a tie, then I would have voted for war." Joyce was very smart, but even to my peanut brain this seemed highly illogical.

Sister Alexandria had a nephew who was in the army in the Philippines under General Douglas MacArthur; but the nuns did not get the news directly from the radio. She thought the world of Mac, but was worried sick about her nephew. I followed the war on the radio and newspaper. I almost lived it. When we got to school in the morning, Sister would ask how the boys in the Philippines were doing. "Fine, Fine, Sister. They are holding the line. The Japs cannot break through." But then in April, I had to break the news to her: MacArthur was ordered to Australia, but he stated "I shall return." And then *very bad news*, the American Army on Bataan had surrendered and the men were heading for captivity. Then came the worst news yet, on a Saturday in May, while I was listening to a Cub game, the announcer broke in and told the audience that Corregidor had fallen – the Philippines were in a bad way. Things looked very desperate. However, at the very end of the school year, good news in the Pacific – the American fleet had defeated the Japanese fleet at Midway; and then came an American land victory in Guadalcanal. The tide had turned. And I was following every beat of it.

## 1942-43

By January, the war in Europe and the Pacific and the home front dominated the life of Americans. After Pearl Harbor and the horrible losses in East Asia, there was fear of invasion and bombing of cities in the USA. A war committee was set up in Chicago. The city was already divided into wards and precincts. This division was used for defense plans. The precincts were further divided by blocks. Dad was chosen as Block Captain for one block on the east side of Long and the west side of Laurel, divided by our alley. Dad, using his three oldest, invited the adults in every house and apartment to come to a meeting in our basement. I estimate about 40 or 50 came to the meetings. He named a vice-Captain, a fire marshal, a scrap iron coordinator, and probably a secretary and treasurer. Once a month they met to discuss business and have a social afterwards in our basement. It was the finest example of fraternity I have witnessed in a neighborhood. Since I was a Boy Scout, I was assigned to raise and lower the flag at a new pole erected at the end of the block. I hated the job in the winter. When I couldn't do it, Gwynn was chosen for that chore. Another job for the youngsters was collecting scrap iron, paper, rags, and fat from the ovens and stoves. This was done all over the country. Women would collect the fat and grease from their stoves into coffee cans and bring them into the butcher shops as part of the War Effort. One butcher had a comic flair... He had a sign made and placed it in the shop window. "Ladies, please do not bring your fat cans into the store on Saturdays."

We had one air raid drill. All lights in the house were turned off. Dad was patrolling. We sat in darkness with a very nervous mother – I thought it was a lark. However, I did take a deep interest in all war news.

## Eighth Grade

In 1942, Joyce and Beryl attended St. Catherine of Siena Girls High School. I started 8th grade. Gwynn and Lea were in 5<sup>th</sup> grade, and Terry in 3rd grade. Still only five dollars a month for the family. My teacher was Sister Mary St. Joseph, a favorite of the boys – tall and imposing, interested in the games, problems, and interests of the boys. When the school year began Sister choose boys for an important job connected with the school and the students. They would become crossing monitors at the streets surrounding the school. Each boy had a wide, official strap crossing his chest and reaching to his belt. We had a captain and a lieutenant and then the rest. Neil was captain of the crossing guards. I recall sitting in class as the names and location of each team was announced by Sister. Name after name was called and I realized that my name was not called... a size problem again. Half the boys had their assignment. I was crushed. The crossing guards left a minute or two before the bell rang. When it did ring, I and a few boys, marched out with the *girls*. Neil was at Laramie Street – a major crossing. I waited for him to finish his job and then we walked home – I was quite dejected.

Then a miracle happened. A nutty boy, Tommy O'Donnell, who had been kicked out of school for insane actions, broke into the school when we were all at lunch and wrote nasty things on the walls about the principal. The nuns knew that they had to lock all four large doors at lunch and after school, so Sister had to look at the second team. I was given the job of locking up. When I finished, I joined Neil and Joe and proudly walked home. But I almost lost this treasured job before I got started. The doors were all double doors and they were locked by pressing the mechanism upward on the side of the door. I was too short to push up the mechanism with my finger, even when standing on my tip toes. But I figured out a way to do it. I used my pen which gave me the extra few inches needed, and I was able to lock the doors. Praise be to God.

Since I was not on the class football team, I played almost every afternoon and evening at Howe with the O'Reilly's, and two new friends, Johnny Lynch and Billy Cahill. With the other boys at Howe School we

formed a football team of our own and played other make up teams. One game stands out. We challenged the seventh grade at HOC – a powerful team. We had a couple of good players in the backfield. Billy Omnus and I were the tackles. We had played to a 0-0 tie. I did make one nice tackle... Heinz, the 7th grade star, broke through the line and was heading for a TD, but I caught him from behind and dragged him down! Nice going, Kilroy.

### Paper Routes

In the summer of 1942, I got my first serious paying job. I would deliver the *Chicago Daily News* in the afternoon. The work place was about six blocks from home. Some twenty boys, supervised by a couple of men, met in a warehouse-like building. We each had a raised stall where our papers awaited us. Since the work place was west of Central Avenue, only a few boys were from HOC, (Johnny Lynch, Dick Beckman and Bob Schulz (the last two had bikes). Boys from St. Lucy, and St. Thomas Aquinas Schools, and of course many from the public schools worked there. We did not use bikes to deliver the papers – there were too many papers. I had 150 of the Daily News. We pushed a three-wheeled apple cart, with a rolled up tarp at the end to cover the papers when it rained or snowed. In our stall, we were given exactly the number of papers for our customers – no room for error. I learned how to roll up the papers into a tight fit. This was necessary because we had to toss the paper to the second or third floor of clients in apartments. It was toss them up or walk them up – the last would have doubled the time needed to finish the route. So we rolled up the papers, placed them in the push cart and set off for our route. My route (#12) was from Lake Street to Madison down Parkside and then up the street to the west; four blocks south and four blocks north – both sides of the street. It was basically a two and a half hour job from the time I left home to my return. Six days a week and \$7.50 a month. No collections – this was done by an adult. Since we were a ‘Communist’ family, the money went to Mother, our Commisar. This was true for Joyce and Beryl when they got jobs. After school, I changed and headed right out to the work place – as the days got shorter, I would get home after dark.

In November, the agency had ordered hundreds of 1943 calendars labeled “From your newsboy.” We could buy these for a nominal sum, then hand them out the Saturday before Christmas to our customers – hoping for a Christmas gift. I knocked or rang the door bell at each customer. If they were home, I handed the paper and calendar to the customer. In the end, I got about seven dollars. Let’s see 150 into 7 equals about five cents per customer. Big time tippers.

In January, 1943 a very heavy snow storm hit Chicago. That night my supervisor called and told me that I would not be able to push my cart with the papers, because of the snow. Do I have a sled? Yes, I do. Can you put some boxes on it and bring that to the station tomorrow. Okay, yes, I can do that.

After school, bundled up for the cold, I got my sled and the boxes ready, but not ready. As I went up the hill to newspaper agency, the boxes kept slipping off. I had to carry the boxes while I pulled the sled. At the agency, I prepared them for delivery. I loaded the papers into the boxes – now a little weight was on the sled. I pulled it thru the snow to Lake Street, but with the boxes still falling off. As I got to Lake Street, I was crying, and a man crossing the street asked me what the problem was. I asked him if he could help. By golly, he did, until the route was over half finished. Shows the value of tears.

While at HOC, we had a Novena each Friday after school – mandated attendance. This meant I arrived at work almost an hour later on Fridays. Oh how I hated the Novena service. One day in Spring, we had a holiday on Friday. Sister warned us that even if it was a holiday, we had to come back for the Novena at 3:00 PM. If we didn’t, we were to take down a number of square root problems for homework.

On Thursday I walked home with Joe Jablonsky. He asked me if I had taken down the math problems. He had and I had not. I told him confidently that no one would come back on Friday and so she would not demand the extra work. Sure enough on Monday, Sister had a list of those that had skipped the Novena – about half the class. For punishment, we had to copy out the Novena book – 45 to 60 minutes of work. I wrote as fast as I could – who cared of it could be read. Joe and I finished about the same time and brought up our work. Then Sister said: “And where is the math problems assigned to all who missed the Novena.” Joe pulled his out and I stood there open-mouthed. I was looking at another hour. I would be home about five and still have to get to my paper route. I cried: “Sister, I have a paper route and I won’t be able to finish it.” She looked at me with disgust: “All right, go ahead.” Again, a wee bit of tears worked wonders.

I promised myself that I would never go to another novena after I left HOC. (But strangely enough, I went voluntarily to the weekly Novena about a year later when I was at St. Mary’s in Phoenix.)

During our last semester of eighth grade, priests or brothers came to our school to make a pitch for their schools. We had six Catholic high schools on the West Side: Fenwick - run by the Dominicans, St. Mel’s, a junior military school; St. Philip’s- run by the Servite Fathers (this Order was the group that was pushing my Friday Novenas), St. Patrick’s, Quigley- for seminarians, and St. Ignatius- run by the Jesuits and considered the best academic high school in the country. The girls had a similar number of choices. 90% of our graduates went to a Catholic school. Two boys even went to St. Rita’s, a technical school quite a distance from our parish. A few went to Austin High School. For most of us, certainly for me, it was not our choice. Mother and Dad made the choice. For them there was only one school – St. Ignatius, even if was 8 miles from home.

Dad had a cousin, Fr. John Mullen, who was a Jesuit teaching at St. Ignatius. One night Mom, Dad, and I went to visit him and they discussed tuition. Tuition was \$150 a year, a big jump from five dollars a month. Somehow they got it reduced to \$100. At this very time Joyce was in college at Xavier University on the south side. She had a scholarship, but Beryl and I were in high school, and Mom and Dad were seriously thinking of moving to Arizona for Beryl’s health... another beautiful example of their love and devotion to their children. (They would have to leave all their sisters and brothers and their families.) To meet these financial burdens, mother had begun full time work at a large insurance company in downtown Chicago. With war production in full swing, Dad got a 2<sup>nd</sup> job... evening work at a war plant.

### 1943-44 High School

Immediately after my 8<sup>th</sup> grade graduation in June, 1943, I went to Mr. Tweed, the owner of the Austin News Agency. I told him that I would like a morning route with the *Tribune*. It would mean a raise to \$12.50 a month. They also had a bonus of one dollar a week, if there were no complaints; 50 cents if you only had one. The next day I started delivering the Tribune to 200 customers from Lake St. south to Madison on Long Avenue and then north up the next street. This was a three hour job. Okay in the summer, but what about during the school term? Could I get to St. Ignatius (8 miles) on time and still do the route? I met Maurice O’Connor from St. Angela. We became good friends. He had two brothers at St. Ignatius; so we hit it off. I had always played softball , but never baseball until that summer. We played in a playground across from the agency after we finished our routes.

I don’t know when I ate breakfast – it must have been before going to work, because often I didn’t get home till noon. Watching baseball, (the Cubs and White Sox teams and a Negro league on Lake Street), I could not understand why the catcher had to have a mask in front of his face – after all, he had a big glove to protect him. Playing baseball for the first time, I usually played shortstop, but once I offered to be

catcher. I soon found out why the catchers use a mask... a nice big bump on the head and a black eye taught me why!

Because of the war and the difficulty of getting boys to remain on the job during the winter, the Tribune offered a one hundred dollar bonus to any boy who stayed until May 1. I told Mother and Dad. It was like a million dollars. It would double my salary. Mother and Dad could use \$100 to help in the move to Arizona. I decided to stay on the job even after my freshman year started in September. I found out that I had to be at St. Ignatius by 8:50 AM. How could I do a three hour route and leave home by 8:00 AM.? So I talked to Mr. Tweed and told him my problem. We worked out a solution. He would cut off the area from Washington Blvd to Madison Avenue, knocking off about 40 papers. Secondly, I could take the cart home with me. I would put it under our porch and bring it back to the agency on Saturdays. Now my route from home to home would only be two hours not three. However, it still meant that Mother had to get me up at 5:30 AM! I would eat quickly, get my cart and push it up the hill to the agency, and then do my route and get home by 7:30 AM, eat another breakfast and go to the bus line. As happened in the previous year, Chicago was hit by a terrible snow storm. Again, a phone call from the agency. But this time I was ready, I had *nailed* a large box onto the sled. All went well, no problems.

With my paper route it was difficult getting to school on time. I had to walk to Laramie about ten minutes from home. Then a bus ride south to Roosevelt Road (1200 south), then transfer to the street car and about a four mile trip to 1076 Ws. Roosevelt. An hour's journey, and we had to be there precisely at 8:50 – no room for argument. We had Mass every morning followed by Latin, English, and Religion taught by Father Whitehead; History by Mr. Blanchard, a scholastic (who was built like Felix Blanchard, the Heisman Trophy winner in 1944 for undefeated Army). Mr. Matthews taught Algebra. There were eight freshmen classes. We had all classes in homeroom – the teachers came to us. I was placed in 1A, which was the top section in the freshman class.

Studies were tough – one had to study and do the homework. I found that to be difficult. Good in math and history, okay in religion, not so good in Latin and English with much writing demanded. The Jesuits were strict and punishment consisted of a “JUG,” meaning “Justice Under God.”

My only infraction – being late for class. Mr. Liston stood at the top of the steps. If a boy was one minute late, he had jug for the day. Those who lived at a certain distance were exempt from Mass attendance. (I have often wondered why my Dad didn't ask for an exemption for me because of my morning paper route.) At the end of the school day, names were called out and the miscreants had to go to a detention room. I had jug twice (for being late). We sat in the room for about ten minutes, then the scholastic in charge would write out pages from our Prose and Poetry book. These were poems like Gunga Din to be memorized and recited.. Then we sat in silence and began memorizing the poem. I was amazed when some seniors raised their hand in about one minute. They had it by rote that quick. But the scholastic would not recognize them for about 15 more minutes. The first time I had jug, I thought I had my poem memorized in about a half hour. I raised my hand and was recognized. I flubbed it and had to return to my seat; so I was one of the last to leave. I got home about 5:00 PM.

In desperation to get to school on time, I found out it was quicker to hitch-hike rather than taking the bus. An innocent looking character like me easily got a ride and I was able get to class on time and I saved six cents a day.

I had no social life at St. Ignatius. I cheered for the football and basketball teams and went to the track meets (Ignatius was the perennial state champion in track). I would go to school, come home, go to Howe for an hour; do homework, and go to bed early... quite a dreary teen life.

In March of 1944 Mother and Beryl left to begin life in Arizona. Beryl hated to leave; she was very popular and had a social life. The two lived in Tucson for two months. Dad and I would follow in late May when I finished my freshman year. Joyce, an 18 year old college sophomore would take care of the three youngest with help from Aunt Effie.

At the end of April, Mr. Tweed came to our house one evening. He had a check for one hundred dollars in my name. Dad and I met him in the living room. He said to Dad: "It's in Jay's name, but I wanted his parents to know about it, just in case Jay decided to leave for California." (Very funny.) Dad told him that it would not be California, but actually Arizona! Really!?

At the end of my freshman year, in May, I said goodbye to Neil, Eddie Pinger, Tom Nolan and the others. And, my siblings! I recall it was pouring rain, and Dad and I took the Lake St. street car to the Greyhound Bus Station. Because of the downpour, we asked our next door neighbor to drive us the few blocks to the street car. I remember there were no tears as I left our Long Avenue home – I would see all my family after a short time when all made the move to Arizona. But at the bus terminal, Aunt Eleanor was there, and she was crying, because her beloved brother, my Dad, was leaving. Goodbye Chicago. Goodbye HOC and St. Ignatius. Goodbye Long and Laurel Avenues... Hello Arizona.

#### Chapter 4 – MY LIFE IN ARIZONA - 1944-1947

Dad and I took a bus from Chicago to Tucson – three days. Because of the crowds of service men traveling, Greyhound had placed jump seats in the aisle for the passengers. We were lucky because we had regular seats; so we could sleep on the trip. I do remember exchanging my seat for a young war bride, who was seated on the jump seat next to us. It must have been a relief for her.

When we arrived in Tucson, we joined Mother and Beryl who were living in a private home in a back apartment. Two Army Air Corps officers with their brides also boarded in the same home. They were training at Davis-Montham Air Base. Mrs. Kengla, the home owner, found room for us for the short time we stayed in Tucson. Beryl had changed immensely since her stay in Arizona. She seemed so much healthier and her beauty had grown by leaps and bounds. When she left Chicago she was a cute little girl; now she was a teenage beauty – five foot two with eyes of blue.

While in Tucson we went to Mass at St. Augustine Cathedral. What a difference from Our Lady Help of Christians. In Chicago, we had dressed formally for Mass; but in the open spirit of the Southwest, things were quite informal. Boys and men wore levis to Mass. And to my utter surprise, young Indian boys and girls walked up the aisle in bare feet! Wow! We also took in one movie – Humphrey Bogart in *Sahara*. After two weeks in Tucson, Mother and Dad had made a decision that we would move to Phoenix. There was no Catholic high school in Tucson.

On June 6, 1944, Mrs. Kengla came in at breakfast to announce that the invasion of Europe had begun... D-DAY! Dad had already left to head back to Chicago. Mother, Beryl, and I packed our bags, were driven to the bus terminal, boarded the bus, and headed a hundred miles to Phoenix. We passed a bend in the road (no freeways yet) and the bus driver announced that the bend was named The Tom Mix Wash where a famous cowboy movie star had been killed in an auto accident a few years earlier. 18 miles later we made a rest stop at Florence - the site of the Arizona State Prison. (Little did I know what an influence it would have on my life 30 years later). We arrived in Phoenix, went to the city bus line. I noticed a penny weighing scale so I took a penny and weighed myself. - 94 pounds at age 15. Needless to say I would not go out for the St. Mary's football team. We took a local bus to the home of John and Daisy Huston. The Hustons had owned a grocery store on Chicago Avenue. We did most of our food shopping there and had



known them for years before they retired to Phoenix. They had agreed to put Beryl and me up for awhile. Mother would leave to go back to Chicago the next day. She was nervous about me, fearing I would get under the skin of Mrs. Huston. Before Mother left she warned me: "Please be careful and please get out of the house as much as you can."

Beryl immediately got a job at a dime store in downtown Phoenix. I got a job at the Phoenix Country Club at Thomas and Seventh St. as a caddy. After breakfast Beryl and I would walk to the bus stop. She would get the bus for her job at the dime store. I would walk a mile to 7th St. to the Phoenix Country Club golf course. I tried to hitch-hike and sometimes got a ride. One morning while hitchhiking, a car full of BVM nuns came tearing down the road. I stuck out my thumb and shouted: "Help of Christians." But to no avail. They waved and drove on. I usually had only one caddy job at the Country Club - a dollar a day, but it kept me out of the house most of the day. I made a couple of friends, and thus could extend my time out of the Huston home for a couple more hours. Among the men I caddied for was Bob Goldwater, younger brother of Senator Barry Goldwater.

On Sundays we would catch the 14th – 16th Street bus that would take us downtown for Mass at St. Mary's. After about a month, Dad suddenly appeared at the dime store where Beryl worked! They came home, we had supper with John and Daisy, and Dad took us to a dingy flop house for a night. He then found a place two blocks north of St. Mary's. We stayed in this one bedroom apartment, with a screened back porch, for the rest of the summer, and entertained ourselves playing cards. Dad loved to play pinochle. When we used to gather in Chicago with Mother's relatives, Dad and the men would go down to the basement and play pinochle. He taught us how to play three-handed cut throat pinochle. (This would become the staple card game during my life as a Franciscan.)

I had no bike, so now the Phoenix Country Club golf course was too far; so I did what I had been done for two years in Chicago. I went to the downtown office of *The Arizona Republic* and *The Phoenix Gazette* newspapers and applied for a job as paper boy. I was hired immediately to deliver papers in downtown Phoenix – Van Buren to Madison, 2nd Street to 2nd Avenue. It was the office buildings of Phoenix. There were three downtown routes. Over three years I delivered two and sometimes all three routes. Much easier than in Chicago – smaller papers, no carts, no rolling up the papers to toss to third floor apartments, no snow, little rain, and it only took about an hour. I delivered the Republic in the morning and the Gazette in the afternoon. The pay was 20 to 30 dollars a month. For the delivery, I could carry the papers on a bike. (Dad and I went to the Schwinn Bike Shop close to Madison Square Garden on 7th Avenue. I had my first bike, and zoomed around central Phoenix delivering the papers for the next three years. It would be my prime source of getting around during those years.)

Just before Labor Day of 1944, Mother came with Gwynn, Lea, and Terry. We were together again, and we squeezed into the tiny apartment. The lady next door set up beds for the girls in her screened back porch. For the first month of my sophomore year at St. Mary's, the five of us traveled three blocks to school. In October, Dad bought a house at 822 N. Sixth Avenue in the shadow of the Westward Ho Hotel. They had sold the house on Long Avenue (back east) and were able to buy our new home for \$6,000. (Fifty years later it sold for over a quarter of a million.) (Mother and Dad were there until their deaths in 1975 and 1976. Doris and I lived there until 1977 before we moved to Mesa, AZ.) It was a wide, spacious house with four bedrooms, a screened in back porch, where Terry and I slept, and five doors to the outside. Only one bathroom, but in Joyce and Beryl's room there was a sink. We were moving up the economic ladder. We had no air conditioning; so we slept in the backyard in July and August. We had one swamp cooler in the dining room. The kitchen was hot; so now we ate in the dining room.

As in Chicago, Mother loved to sit on the front porch with her children and their friends. She was really a favorite of all friends we brought over to the house. In the heat of the summer, we even moved off the porch to the front yard for a cooling breeze. After Thanksgiving, 1944 Joyce finished her second year at Xavier University, while living with Aunt Effie. In Phoenix she took a clerical job for a year before completing her studies at Arizona State College (now ASU) in 1947 at age 21.

### St. Mary's High School

(After 75 years, I still have a loyalty and love for the family of St. Mary's. Beryl and I have had lasting relations with schoolmates and friends from our years at SM. In the after years, get-togethers, reunions, socials, marriage celebrations, and funerals allowed us to continue this family-like love. SMHS was run by the Franciscan Fathers of Santa Barbara, California. They would have a profound influence on my life.)

In August of 1944, I enrolled at St. Mary's Boys High School to start my sophomore year, and Beryl at St. Mary's Girls High. The two schools were three blocks apart, separated by Van Buren Street. Gwynn, Lea, and Terry went to St. Mary's Elementary located between the two high schools on the grounds of the church and the priests' rectory. While working at the paper during July and August, I met three boys from SMHS. (One was a friend until his death.) Two were a year younger. When enrolling in August, I was told that twins *from Chicago* would be starting as sophomores. Al and Ed Drolet would become my best friends in high school.

(These friendships have lasted until today. Al and his wife are living about five miles from my home. Ed and Al were best men at our wedding. Al was my son's Confirmation sponsor. Years after graduation we met for lunch every week with other classmates until a few years ago, when death beckoned to so many, including Ed Drolet.)

I was on the look out for a pair of twins on the first day in school. Sure enough – easy to spot. “Are you the twins from Chicago?” Yep, and I had pals immediately. Lo and behold, another Chicago boy, Norman Becker, had just enrolled as a sophomore. We had our Chicago Mafia at SMHS. Two others; Johnny McNeese and Bill Wandell joined our little group.

Al and Ed were asthmatics. Their parents figured that living in Arizona would help them. They lived in a boarding house with three or four other boys who went to SMHS. Rosie, the home owner was an elderly Catholic woman who took in boarders. Father Brian Lyons became surrogate father for the boarding house boys. He would visit in the evening like a thief in the night – when they weren't expecting him. He was there to see that all was above board. However, a lot was under board, which he never found out about. (Two years later he set up a boarding place for boys under his direct supervision. At that time the number had risen to about 20 boys. Father hired a cook and stayed at the house – no more monkey business. The twins hated that. They ate their meals together, had readings at supper and had an hour of study time. Both Al and Ed were quite intelligent, but in the first two years their grades plummeted.)

At the end of our first semester in our sophomore year, we took our semester exam in Latin Class. Afterwards, Ed brought the test out with him; he didn't turn it in. “What happened, Ed?” “I knew I would flunk the test. I couldn't translate a sentence and I only knew one word in Latin – puella, meaning girl.” But in 1945, he and Al moved into Father Brian's boarding house and they had a mandated study hour. Their grades soared. Wonderful how a little study can affect one's grade point average.)

We had football games on Friday nights at Phoenix Union High School stadium and basketball in winter at the PUHS old gym as our home court, and baseball and track were at their stadium. In 1944 there were

only two large public high schools – PUHS and North High School. Racial segregation was the order of the day; so black students went to Carver High School on the south side. However, SMHS was integrated and Blacks made up a small part of the school.

St. Mary's was small – 100 grads from both schools in 1947, the year of my senior graduation! We always had good football and basketball teams. In 1944 there were only six 4A teams: one in Tucson, Mesa, and Glendale. St. Mary's, by far the smallest school, had to face schools like PUHS with 6000 students, but we held our own; as there were only 11 men on the field against the 11 men of the Mighty SM Knights. It was the reserves that hurt; we felt the loss of one or two injured players – lots of sophomores sat on the bench for varsity games. In 1944, because of war time travel restrictions, St. Mary's played each team twice in football. In later years we played teams from Nevada, San Diego, and Texas.

### A Night in Jail

To preface these paragraphs, I believe that most would have considered me a model Catholic teenager. I was an altar server, went to Mass and Communion every Sunday, and even went to those Novena services on Friday afternoon. Maybe, people had the wrong impression of me, for here follows the 'tell-all' of my night of crime...

Johnny McNeese and I hung around in the summers. He was a free-spirited, gangling lad who was a year older than me, but in our class at SM. Johnny seemed to have nothing but the clothes on his back. He would come home with me after I finished my paper route. Mother loved him, which included feeding him his one good meal a day.

John didn't graduate with us; he joined the Army during our junior year. Before that, he had a job setting pins at a downtown bowling alley. This kept him in change. He lived with his dad in a run-down motel at McDowell and Grand Avenue - Five Points, across from the Fair Grounds. One day he told me that he had climbed a telephone pole near his motel and looked into the Fairgrounds. He said that the inner yard was crowded with Army Jeeps that were currently not needed in Europe. He also said that he had climbed over the wall and found out that the ignition keys were welded into place and that he had practiced driving around the track. "Would I like to learn how to drive?" It sounded like a winner.

So over the fence we went, switched on the ignition and off I sped... round and round the track for an hour or so. I was learning how to drive. The next night we returned for more of our mischief. But after a short while I noticed we were being followed on the track by another jeep with flashing lights. An Army sergeant took us to the office and the officer in charge called the sheriff and we were escorted to the court house on Jefferson Street. Two sheriffs interviewed us separately. My statement was signed. Later they came in and told me that our statements had discrepancies – one or both of us were lying. The point of difference was I said that we had been there two days and Johnny said it was our first time there.

So I was given a room at the 'Waldorf-Astoria' with about five other miscreants. Johnny had a 'suite' next door. We were able to communicate through a hole in the wall, where I found out why Johnny had lied. His explanation was that it was better to lie and then admit later that you had lied. Not too smart! I might add that at that time I was delivering the Republic and Gazette to the very Sheriff's Office and to the FBI office in the Ellis Building. I had mentioned this in my interview. So the next morning the Sheriff would not be getting his paper. In the morning we were interviewed by the FBI (federal matter, I guess). They asked if we had stolen anything. "Absolutely not." But I then mentioned that I also deliver the paper to Mr. H. R.

Duffy, head of the FBI in Phoenix. A short time later we were released. Thank God. And I was able to get my papers and deliver the R & G to the Sheriff and in the afternoon to H. R. Duffy in the Ellis Building!

### Employment and Money

In my three years in Phoenix I kept my paper route, but I also found summer time work as a bus boy at Gene Doyle's Steak House. The twins had begun working for 75 cents an hour. At this time movies were ten cents, a hot dog was five cents, a milkshake ten cents. Then I was invited by the R & G to work in their mail room on Saturday nights. Most of the boys were St. Mary's guys: the three Aguires and their dad, Jim and Jerry Gentry, Joe Romero, Dick Rivas and Lionel Pina. I went to work about 10 PM, and worked until 3 AM. After that I did my morning paper route, went home ready for sleep about five in the morning and up for 10 o'clock Mass, which I served. So in my senior year I had enough money. Mother and I set up a bank account. She was happy to have that. As she said: "Jay puts the money in and I take it out." I was happy to contribute to the family finances.

Boys and girls had classes in separated schools, but we joined together for our social life - lunches, assemblies, dances, picnics, and other events. For me it was the best of both worlds. In high school I had entered into an intense social life. We had dances every Friday after the football game. Sometimes at PUHS large gymnasium; other times in the St. Mary's social hall under the church. I now began dating - girls from North High, Phoenix Union, but mostly from St. Mary's Girls High. The girls had sororities and they sponsored dances in which they invited the boys. I was surprised that anyone would invite me, but a blind girl invited me to my first date and dance. Beryl was my dance instructor and I was a willing but inept pupil. Over the three years I went to all the proms and dances at St. Mary's (mostly with girls with impaired vision I guess); also to North and PUHS dances. Mother bought me a tuxedo from a man across the street for five dollars - another five dollars to have it made to fit me. Now I was dressed to the nines for the big dances.

None of my dates proved to be too serious, none steady until my senior year. Then, a sophomore, Barbara Johnston, invited me to a dance. (She must have had weak eyes also.) We hit it off immediately. She was a daily communicant and lots of fun. I seriously dated her, going to dances and movies as a steady couple. After supper, I usually would take a bath, hop on my bike and go visit her, often then taking her out for a milkshake. We had a good time together for about six or seven months. But this came to a screeching halt after I had a chat with Fr. Brian...

### Father Brian Lyons, OFM

Fr. Brian was a charismatic figure in Phoenix from 1937 to 1955. He was the champion of the SM boys. He had an 'in' with police and sheriff, giving him ability to ameliorate difficulties the SM boys might have with these law enforcement agencies. He was beloved by his "boys." But with the SM girls, that was a different story. SM was his second love. His first was the Franciscans of Santa Barbara. He was a recruiter and he had a way of talking to a young man about the Franciscan way of life and the Franciscan fraternity. He was quite successful. In my class of between 50 and 60, Father Brian influenced 13 guys to "try" the seminary for a year or two. (Of the 13 six were ordained - four Franciscans, one Dominican, one Trappist monk. Over the years he influenced about forty boys to try the seminary to see if it might be a life for them.)

I totally enjoyed my years at St. Mary's, **graduating in 1947**; but I didn't know where I was going or what I wanted to do. I might go to Phoenix College, ASC, or to a Catholic college in California. The war was over, and things had been looking up. What profession would I choose? Nothing had really come to mind. In my

sophomore year I had read a book about the Maryknoll Fathers and their work in the mission fields of China. There was a definite pull, but fun and girls drew me another way. In March of senior year, Father Brian called me in for a chat. He asked me if I had ever considered the priesthood as a goal. I had to admit that I *had had a slight pull* to the mission fields of China. He gave me a book to read and asked to see him in a week. In our second meeting I was torn – the mission fields or ‘my’ Barbara – what a choice I had to make. Gradually, I leaned more and more toward the seminary – but which one? Father Brian told me that the Franciscans had missionaries in China for over 20 years, and Santa Barbara was closer than the Maryknoll seminary in New York. Furthermore, I would be with a group of about 20 Phoenician seminarians at Santa Barbara. My mind was made up – I would go to Santa Barbara. At dinner I announced my decision to the family.

Vocations to religious life were not new to our family. Both the BVM sisters and the sisters of Providence had asked Joyce to consider looking into life as a nun; later Terry would go to the seminary; and the nuns at SM had urged both Lea and Gwynn to consider religious life. Dad was ecstatic about my choice. Mother felt she was losing a son and grandchildren (but she eventually had 30). Beryl was upset for awhile. Then I had to go over to visit and tell *Barbara*. That was hard on both of us, but it had to be. (Years later Beryl met Barbara in California – both grandparents by then. What did they talk about?? Me! Barbara mentioned that when I left her that night, she went to her bedroom and cried her heart out. For heavens sake I was only 18 and she, 16.) Still I did take her to the prom that Spring and we had a gala time at the dance. My decision was followed by graduation. My best friends, Al and Ed went back to Chicago – not to see them again until 1968. But I now entered into the most important and gratifying years of my life.

## [Chapter 5 – ST. ANTHONY’S SEMINARY - 1947-1949](#)

13 Phoenix seminarians came home from Santa Barbara in June of 1947. (Nine of them would, in time, be ordained as Franciscan Priests.) I was one of seven new candidates who would leave for St. Anthony’s Seminary, located in beautiful Santa Barbara, California. (I had to repeat my senior at SAS year because of poor Latin skills!) In August, I left home and family for a new chapter in my life. At the same time, Joyce had graduated from ASC, and had taken a job in Yuma; Beryl had enrolled at St. Joseph’s Hospital for training as a nurse, and so was no longer living at home. Mother and Dad’s family had been cut in half.

Among the seminarians, I met Barry Brunsman, who would become my classmate, best friend, and role model for the next 73 years. We would be together for the next twelve years and in constant contact (until his death in 2020). I was immediately taken by the friendliness of all. I now had a new set of friends and pals, who would be much closer than any in the past. Classes began after the Feast of the Assumption, August 15. Life at SAS followed an exact routine: Rise at 6:00 AM, wash up and get ready for Mass at 6:30. Then back to the dorm to finish cleaning up, making beds, etc. Breakfast was at 7:30. Then scurry around doing odd jobs or finishing an overdue assignment and then to class at 8:30 AM. Two classes, and then a half hour break – grab a game of handball or just sit around and chat with friends. Two more classes, and lunch at noon. I loved the meals at SAS. Some of the growing boys were always hungry. We had an some rec time after lunch, and then two classes from 1:30 to 3 PM. Two hours for work or sports, and at 5 PM the long study hour. 6 PM supper, then recreation, or softball in Spring when it was light enough to play. Next, an hour study period, followed by evening prayers. Finally, the ‘Great Silence’ and off to bed by 9:30 PM and sleep, blessed sleep.

SAS was a fifty year old campus, right next to the historic Santa Barbara Mission. Several buildings made up the campus: The newest building, to the west, contained three dorms on the second floor. These dorms housed about 20 young men each for the third, fourth, and fifth classes. Below were showers,

lockers, and a recreation hall for the lower classes. The second building held a huge study hall and stage for dramas, plays, and musicals. In the study hall, each seminarian in the first four years had a chair and a large writing desk. Inside each desk students kept books, pads, pens, and pencils, etc. for class work. On the second floor were the classrooms for all five levels, freshmen thru fifth year. Next, overlooking the canyon, SAS hosted a beautiful chapel with a gorgeous reredos, depicting the Eucharist with both Old Testament and New Testament figures. The 'old main' building (built in 1898) housed the administration offices and the cloistered rooms for the friars. It also contained the refectory (dining room). It was crowded, but a *new* refectory building was being built, (and was completed in 1949). The whole top floor of 'old main' was a large dorm that we called "the barn."

The grounds were green and well kept. They included an area where Father Martial, our prefect, nursed his bee hives. Just down from the chapel was a grotto with a statue of Our Lady of Lourdes, cared for by Father Celestine, a Latin teacher who had a flair for dramatic, making him one of the best teachers I ever had. But the main part of the grounds at SAS were the playing fields; including a sixty yard football field and three baseball diamonds. Off to either side of the campus were basketball courts, horseshoe pits, and handball courts. The Rector and faculty considered sports an integral part of the curriculum – and I loved that part. We played all games outside – no covered gyms – generally nice weather in SB.

Regular athletic competition was a part of life at SAS. I always loved sports (as said, never a star, but always a competitor). I believe that the athletic system at SAS was the best in the world – yes, the world. We were about 150 seminarians. At the beginning of the year, we elected three college men, as a captain of one of three teams - Titans, Lancers, and Vikings. They choose from every class. Every boy became a part of a team. Not every boy liked to play sports, so they had to suffer through it; and a few were exempt because of medical reasons. But they would have a job - scorekeeper, record keeping, or field manager.

The teams were divided into divisional teams based on size and ability. We had three divisions in baseball: Varsity, Intermediate, and Juniors; in football four, and six in basketball. Baseball, football, and basketball were major games (a win would net five points). Then there were minor sports... horseshoes, track, handball, tennis, volley ball – (for this the winning team got two points). Scores and records were meticulously kept and the team with the best record was permitted to have a picnic and a movie as a reward toward the end of the semester.

Classes were held six day a week. We had Wednesday and Saturday as half days. The lower division teams played on Wed and Sat; Sunday was for varsity games. Since there were three teams, the referees and umpires were taken by the team not playing. I was never a star, but now I was on a team with *a uniform* and team mates. I never made it to varsity, but I was the leader on a lower division team...quarterback on the JV football team. I recall in practice I once stepped into a gopher hole and sprained my ankle. I desperately wanted to play on Saturday; so I soaked my ankle in epsom salts, wrapped it, and was able to lead my team to victory. My love was football, but my best endeavors were in softball where I could compete at the varsity level. Usually played shortstop, hit well over 300 and never struck out. However, *baseball* was a different story. I had never faced a pitcher that could throw so fast, so I usually struck out; batted eighth or ninth, and can only remember getting one hit (a long triple) in two years. If my memory is correct, my batting average in baseball of one hit in 100 at bats, would amount to **.001 !**

SAS was a *five year school at that time*, with the fifth year (college) as an integral part of the school. Latin and Greek were taught thru fifth year. In third, fourth, fifth years, students studied Latin, Greek, and Spanish, plus three other classes. Besides academics, the Friars wanted us students to be well-rounded. It was hoped that through classes in music, art, and theater, we would become appreciative of the beauty

that is found in the Arts. (And we DID!) The Friars taught all classes - the two classics, plus a full and loaded curriculum. The Franciscan teachers at SAS were supreme. They were dedicated, clear, concise, and demanded study and attention from the students. In the first years of study, many young guys were unable to master the classics and would drop out after a semester or a year.

Because I didn't really learn much Latin at SM, I had to repeat my senior year at SAS. My classmates had three years of solid Latin and were reading and writing in Latin. The new upper-class seminarians were supposed to learn as much Latin in *one year* as our classmates had learned in *three*. But at SAS I found studies easy, primarily because we had an hour of study before supper and another after supper. I had seriously neglected reading literature at SM. At SAS, I now picked up the habit of reading all kinds of books on various subjects, fiction and non-fiction. Literature became an opening to the world for me.

I fit right in with my classmates. There were no cliques or exclusions at SAS - in the senior class of 28 all were friendly and welcoming to us four newcomers. Immediately, I was surrounded by highly intelligent, moral young men with talents galore. They were superior in studies, good writers and speakers, excellent in song and theater, talented athletes, but above all *nice* – kind and considerate. I never swore or cussed while in grade school, but I had fallen into some bad habits at SM, including lying, swearing, (though I never used the name of Jesus in vain or the f or s word), but I was guilty of stealing (mainly from the newspaper agency). I can't blame anybody but myself. Now I had to turn over a new leaf – couldn't swear any more. One habit I had avoided was smoking. I have always been stingy, and could not see the wisdom of spending 20 cents on a pack of cigs, when I could have two milkshakes for that price! I fell in love with the whole environment at SAS. We had serious studies and chapel services, but we also had daily recreation, class rec nights, walks around the beautiful campus with wonderful friends, and sports.

During summer vacation, after senior year, we got together weekly at one of the seminarian's homes or at University Park pool on Van Buren and 9th Avenue in Phoenix.

I was shy before going to SAS and unwilling to take a forward role – not given to making speeches. But Father Hilary taught public speaking, which affected my life! Priests were expected to stand before a crowd – in church, in class, in public; so public speaking was a must. Father Hilary's system of public speaking was a three part method, called the "Ho hum" system. 1) Ho hum, 2) Why bring that up? 3) So what? These three were the expected reaction from the audience. To counter a Ho Hum reaction was to hit the audience with something that would catch their attention. My friend, Barry Brunsman, was a master at this, and I hope that I learned from Fr. Hilary and Barry. To answer question # 2, why bring that up? - tell them the reason for the talk. Be short, sweet, and specific. Finally, So what? Tell them what they should do. Again, short and sweet. For example: 1) a death of a person who had died in bed while smoking; 2) what are the evils of smoking, and 3) how to get help to escape from this addiction. Years later, when teaching Homiletics, (sermons) Fr. Hilary reminded us that most of the congregation had other things on their mind (a TV football game, a roast in the oven, a sick child); so use the Ho Hum Method. He also reminded us that most people will not remember what was said for very long, maybe an hour, and that most people get edgy when the sermon goes too long. "Never go more than 10 minutes, or at *most*, 10 minutes!"

For me, due to the efforts of Father Hilary, I have always been willing to speak in public, and in fact enjoy it. Of course, never sure if I have been effective or not, but I still try whenever asked. Some classmates were experienced and fluent in speaking before an audience, but strangely enough, one time I was chosen to speak to a Catholic Women's Group in Los Angeles while I was at SAS!

The finest teacher I have ever had was Fr. Francis Guest. He taught English, History, and Greek. He was a dramatist, even passionate about his subject. From Fr. Francis I learned how to communicate in writing. This was another talent I developed over the years. Secondly, I learned and imitated his style of instruction in my sixty plus years of teaching. (The Franciscan Fathers made it possible for me to stay in the teaching field until I was 90!) SAS was gift for me for which I thank God. I had two wonderful years at SAS –good friends, good teachers, a thirst for learning, and an ability to communicate in speech and writing. **I ‘graduated again,’ (1949) but this time after repeating senior year, and one year of college!** Our class was nicknamed “the 49ers,” because we would enter the Franciscan Order in 1949. My brother, Terry, had entered SAS in 1948; so we were together for a year in studies. (We both became Franciscan missionaries years later, although we were never stationed together.) During our years at SAS we came home each Christmas and summer. Even though we were separated by space from my wonderful family, we always remained close. Mother always wrote at least every two weeks, and Beryl (even as her own family grew and took up her time) wrote regularly. We were always one in our thoughts and prayers.

## **Chapter 6 - THE FRANCISCAN CLERICATE - 1949 to 1957**

### **Novitiate Year – 1949-1950**

In late June, 1949, I left for Mission San Miguel with 27 of my classmates, including seven from Phoenix. **We were invested into the Franciscan Order on July 10.** I received the brown habit of St. Francis and was given the name Kiernan. Dad had piled the whole family into his 1937 Plymouth for the investiture. Pictures were taken –Mom and Dad with me (both so proud) – Terry and me, and Barry and me. After the celebration, Dad took the whole family to San Francisco. Whereas, I, with my classmates, began our Franciscan life.

Since we were only one class at San Miguel, our bond of friendship and brotherhood grew deeper and deeper. (Even though only 12 were ordained, all stayed close over a period of 73 years! Over the past 50 years we met, including wives and children, every few years until death gradually reduced the 28 to only four in 2020.)

In our year at San Miguel Mission, Father David Temple, a saintly man, guided us into the Franciscan way of life – prayer, study of the scriptures, and the history of the Franciscan Order from 1215 to the present day. It was during this time that my desire to go into the foreign missions grew. At that time the Franciscans from California had been in China for many years, even during the war years. (This would end when the Chinese Communist took over the government and shipped out the ‘foreign devils’ from all over the world. It was for this reason that our province sent missionaries to the rural Philippines.)

The year of novitiate was a time for reflection and discernment for all 28 men. All stayed for eleven months; but at the end, 7 made the decision to go in a different direction, albeit as devout Catholic husbands and fathers. A year and a day after entering the Order, **21 of us took our first, temporary vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience.** Our friends from the class below us came to San Miguel for their investiture. We left in July for a new step in our Franciscan life.

### **Philosophy Classes at San Luis Rey Mission 1950 to 1953**

St. Francis of Assisi was literate, but never a scholar. Still, he easily found God in BEAUTY, TRUTH, and GOODNESS. Francis was a poet who discovered God in the beauty and perfection of God’s wonderful



creation, as evidenced by his hymn to Brother Sun, and in his love of the birds of the air, and the terrible Wolf of Gubbio; and countless other stories of Francis and Nature.

Following St. Francis, the Franciscan view of studies was to find and embrace truth, beauty and good. During my three years at SLR, we were not trained, not taught, but *imbued* with the idea that we, individually, were to search for wisdom in Scripture, philosophy, science, and the natural world. It was axiomatic that we find God in His creation, most especially in humans, particularly the poor and needy – the little ones of this world.

After three years I was awarded a degree in Philosophy. Our teachers were Franciscan scholars from the St. Barbara Province and elsewhere in the world. Classes were serious – at times intense, but the professors were interesting, even humorous in their approach. I found classes easy, and even tutored classmates who had problems in Logic class.

At this time I began my own teaching career in a small way, when I was asked to teach catechism in the village near the mission. I worked as head librarian in my final year at SLR. Why I was appointed to this chore, I will never know, but I mastered the Dewey Decimal System. From the days when I worked with my father in our victory garden in Chicago, I loved to plant and tend to vegetable gardens. At San Miguel I had a small vegetable garden, and I continued doing this at SLR and Santa Barbara (and never did it again). I even took a hand at milking the cows from our farm at SLR. I also had a coveted job – one of three drivers in my final year. That meant I got to drive the truck and car used for driving other classmates to the dentist and doctor and the like. Our class had entered SLR with 21. By July, 1953, when it was time for our final vows, we were down to 12. In mid July, I drove up to Santa Barbara Mission with my good friend Barry.

#### Theology at Mission Santa Barbara - 1953 – 1957

At the beginning of summer of 1953, before starting theology classes, I had an accident at the swimming pool between St. Anthony's Seminary and the Santa Barbara Theologate. A very good friend, Blaine, (six –six and 250 pounds) the tallest giant in our class and I, still very much a squirt, were in the pool area. He picked me up to toss me into the pool, when suddenly he slipped and dropped me on my head! (Many say that I never recovered.) I was rushed to the hospital and examined for brain damage. It was a concussion. I had to miss two weeks of camp, because I was in the hospital. Blaine wrote to me every day – guilt I guess. We went different directions in 1957.

(But in 1987, while at a swimming pool in Mesa, AZ, as I was calling to my five year old, Raymond; a man sitting nearby asked me what my name was. I didn't recognize him, but he recognized my *voice*. It was Blaine! He was a parole officer in Kingman, AZ, and I was head teacher at the Arizona State Prison. He even came and spoke at one of our commencement exercises. Yes, the inmates had commencement exercises – graduating with GED certificates. Nothing great, but parents, wives, and even children were invited – cookies and lemonade afterwards. He told the graduates that he 'owed me one' for what had occurred 30 years earlier. I called him the other day (September 2021). Still alive, but much slowed down. Along with Barry, he had been my best friend during seminary days.)

By August of 1953 I was back to normal, if that were ever true! During my days at SLR, I had the prosaic job as head librarian; now, at Santa Barbara I became the class photographer. I learned the art of developing and printing photos in the dark room. Classes included Scripture, church history, moral and dogmatic theology, spiritual direction, and counseling classes. Father Francis now taught moral theology and church history, which was my best subject. Father Hilary came from SAS once a week to drill us in

homiletics. The ho hum system was the same. His words of advice: "Remember that you are trying to do one of two things: *enlighten or enflame* the congregation. Therefore,

- 1) Prepare your sermon a week ahead (probably the most important thing you are doing that week)
- 2) Keep it short.
- 3) Know and picture your audience in your mind, as you prepare and practice your sermon.
- 4) To aid them in recalling your message synthesize the entire message in one short phrase of five or six words and repeat it several times in the homily. Such a phrase might be: "You are an ambassador of Christ" or "Find Jesus in the face of the poor."
- 5) Don't forget, most people forget 90% of what they hear within an hour.
- 6) Don't be afraid to act out or show the congregation a picture, or a pencil, or even a bucket, to hammer home your point.
- 7) Use stories that a child can remember.

The four years of theology sped by quickly. My friends from the upper classes left each June for their first assignments as Franciscan priests – high school teaching, assistants in parishes, the Indian Mission field in Arizona and New Mexico. Our four years weren't all studies. I still engaged regularly in football, basketball, softball and soccer. And there were dramatics; I had found a talent (of sorts) in writing skits since my time at SLR. They were always of the comic form, but that was me. And always there were still rec nights, pinochle, bridge, and board games. Walking to parks and to the beach and to the mountains, chatting with friends and companions were regular events. Once, in a rare event, in sunny Santa Barbara a light snow dusted the mission grounds. My good friend, Joe Mahoney and I decided to hike up Mount La Cumbre. As we climbed higher and higher along the path, the snow became deeper and deeper. When we finally reached the top, we met some locals who had *driven* up to see the rare event of snow on top of Mt. La Cumbre. They drove us back to the Mission. These years were a time of study, prayer, discernment, and four final years of camaraderie with my closest friends.

**We, twelve of us, were ordained on December 22, 1956.**

Mother and Dad had visited me regularly during my ten years of study. They loved to visit California during the hot summers of Phoenix. During the ten years of seminary life, my brother Terry had also been invested as a Franciscan in 1953. All four of my sisters had married and had begun their own families. Joyce had become an officer in the Navy, worked in the Pentagon and had met her husband, also an officer. They resided in Rhode Island, his home. Beryl and Lea had both become nurses, working at St. Joseph's Hospital in Phoenix. Gwynn married Eduardo Carrillo Lopez and began the task of raising eleven children. Mother was beyond proud with 30 grandchildren – pictures of all, and a memory of every birthday. She had a remarkable memory and an ability to entertain with stories of her grandchildren. However, in 1956, Mother was diagnosed with cancer. Her one wish and prayer: "Doctor, will I live until December to see my son ordained?" Her prayers were answered. (She even lived to celebrate her 50th wedding anniversary in 1974.)

We drove home to Phoenix after my ordination, and **I celebrated my first Mass at St. Mary's** on Christmas Day, 1956. It was one of the happiest moments of my life!

After two weeks in Phoenix, my friends, Barry, Bruno, Joel, Joe, and I (all from Phoenix) returned to Santa Barbara to finish our last semester of studies. In May, 1957 I finished my written and oral exams and was granted a degree in theology and homiletics. In June we were given our first assignments. Seven of us were assigned to teaching posts... (Barry and I went to Serra High School in Salem); three were named as assistant pastors, and two were sent to missions in Arizona and the Philippines.

## Chapter 7 – TEACHING AT SERRA HIGH IN SALEM, OREGON - 1957 to 1962

Over the next five years, my friendship among the friars grew. Eight Franciscans taught at Serra High School, which had just become a co-ed school. Three nuns, living in Salem, also began teaching at Serra that year. Among the eight friars, three were especially close to me: Vince Fitzgerald, Andy Galligan, and Christian Mondor. A few years later two friends from seminary days joined the staff at Serra: Fr. Lester Mitchell and Fr. Sam Bigelow. Like so many of the friars they would be close to me until they died.

About 25 friars lived and worked in the Great Northwest serving in three parishes in Portland, one in southern Washington, a seminary, and a retreat house, plus the household at Salem. I now met older friars, whom I had heard of, but had not yet met. Once a month we gathered for a fraternal dinner, singing, laughing and getting to know one another and what we were doing. It was truly a brotherhood of St. Francis.

Still, the reason we were sent to Salem was to teach. In the summer of 1957, Barry and I enrolled at Portland University, where we worked toward an advanced degree in education. On weekends, we returned to Salem to say Mass and preach at one of many parishes in and around the city. After we finished classes at Portland U, and before classes began in September, we found plenty of work at the campus of Serra. It was newly founded and much had to be done regarding the grounds, where we had a football field and small grandstand; also a baseball field, but no gym for basketball. That meant working outside, pushing a wheelbarrow, grooming the fields, and checking the watering system. After Labor Day, it was time to begin my long career in education.

Fr. Kevin Murphy, our principal, discussed with Barry and me what classes we felt we could handle. He assigned five classes to me. I would teach two math, two science, and one class of bookkeeping. I had never studied that last subject. I was literally “one chapter ahead” of the students, but it was an easy class to teach, since it was a hands-on class. I learned a great deal and it came in handy in my later career. A high school assignment meant much more than teaching classes; we had multiple jobs that dealt with extra curricula involvement of the students. Barry became assistant football coach for the frosh team. Fr. Joe Scott, who had been an All CIF running back at a California high school, was assistant coach for the JV team. My good friend, Fr. Sam Bigelow, was in charge of drama and glee club. Fr. Christian was supervisor for the school paper and annual. Of all things, I was assigned to coach the wrestling team. In my third year, I got the unenviable job of prefect of discipline. Someone had to do it. Fr. Christian also announced the play by play action at the Friday night football games. When he moved on, Vince and I took over that task and I loved it. (Years later, in 1991, I did the same for Seton High in Chandler, AZ.) It was a busy schedule for all of us that first year in Salem.

We had every other Saturday off. When the snow came, I learned to ski at Mt. Hood, east of Portland. On weekends we filled in at the parishes in Salem, Staryon, Shaw, Independence, Stayton, or other parishes for confessions and Mass. Fr. John was vice-principal and pastor of two rural parishes outside of Salem. Frequently we traveled to the Franciscan parish in southern Washington; so six of the eight had gospel work on the week-end. In the course of my five years at Serra, I worked in several rural and city

parishes. We also taught catechism classes in the various rural parishes surrounding Salem on one evening each week. This way, I got to know the towns and pastors of Independence, Monmouth, Shaw, Stayton, Woodburn, and Scio.

In 1961 I was named as pastor of two parishes: - Shaw to the east of Salem and Independence-Monmouth to the west. I now lived at the rectory in Shaw, I said Mass every morning at Shaw and had the Sunday Mass at one of the two towns. Shaw was an interesting town, or more truly a village, that was totally Catholic. We had a Catholic elementary school, but there was no public school. Two nuns from Mt. Angel drove in each day to teach the eight classes. The school was a financial burden on the people of Shaw, but they bore the cost over the years. The parish of Independence-Monmouth was the complete opposite of Shaw. The Catholic parishioners were a tiny minority in the two towns and local high school. In one class there were only two Catholic boys (luckily excellent athletes) in a class of almost a hundred. But the parishioners were superb. The men's group and the women's group were both vibrant. They fit into the local population and at the same time supported the parish in every way. All this time, I was still teaching four classes and reigning as disciplinarian of boys and coaching wrestling.

### The Great Wrestling Fiasco

In my final year at Serra I was still the wrestling coach; and I had hired a young collegian to train our wrestlers. He was an excellent wrestler, but a poor trainer. We had regular meets throughout the Willamette Valley - never won a single competition, although a couple of boys did win a match or two. One evening, Serra had a meet at the small town of Scio. I was also still a pastor and had an evening meeting at the parish in Independence. I asked my young trainer to take and supervise the wrestlers at the meet.

About 9:30 PM, I got back to the school, and two of the boys came and asked to see me. "What's up, guys?" Their reply: "Bob Wolf wrestled." That was strange, since Bob had left the team after a week and had never engaged in a single match. "What's *really* up?" Their reply stunned me. "Ah, the trainer decided to show off his prowess and took the name of 'Bob Wolf' and wrestled against one of the Scio boys. A 20 year old collegian against a high school competitor! This also meant that our Serra team had no adult supervision. Oh, my God. What to do? The trainer was immediately fired. What else? Say nothing and hope it would blow away; or contact the Scio officials and fess up?

We, Father John and I, decided to call the principal at Scio and meet with him about the wrestling incident. It would be private and all would be forgiven. Wrong! Scio is a small town and telephone calls coming in were handled by a woman at a switch board. It took about an hour for all of Scio to learn about our dirty laundry, and about two days for all the schools in our conference to know what had happened! I wasn't worried about the wrestling team - we weren't going any place, but both our basketball team and baseball team were championship contenders that year. Would they be penalized? Luckily, they were not. But it made the papers, and Serra and I were the butt of a few jokes. That was the last year for wrestling at Serra; and then I was assigned to the Philippines. (As far from Serra as possible!)

### Chapter 8 – THE PHILIPPINE MISSIONS - 1962-1968

I left Salem in June of '61 and moved to St. Joseph's Parish in Los Angeles. I visited various businesses, begging for supplies for the school which we would found in the Philippines. For two months I packed maps, books, clothes, athletic and medical supplies, and assorted other items. Bruno was in summer school; so I was left with this task. We were due to leave from San Pedro on a Norwegian cargo ship that had cabins for about six passengers. In late July, Bruno and I were commissioned by our Franciscan

superior. Mother and Dad came from Phoenix to say goodbye. Dad was elated, but Mother felt she would never see me again. (We had a six year 'tour of duty'.)

A week before our ship was to leave, Fr. Martial, Mission Secretary, wrangled a free trip for us to cross the Pacific on a luxury liner as chaplains. We brought our crates to the cargo ship in San Pedro and we set out for San Francisco to board the SS Roosevelt. We celebrated Mass every day for the passengers. I was dining like a king, eating food that I had never heard of, and engaging in entertainment and games for two weeks. Three other Catholic missionaries were heading for Japan; so we had a table of clerics, joined by an Anglican priest and his wife (his kids had their own table for teens). On the trip I got seasick twice. The first night out it was miserable, but after that... smooth sailing until we hit a typhoon near Japan. I won two championships – the bridge and shuffle board competitions. The ping-pong competition was captured by one of the Japan-bound missionaries. We stopped for a day in Honolulu, Tokyo, and Hong Kong. In each of these stops we were met by local Franciscans and given a royal tour of the city.

In mid August we landed in Manila. Fr. Cyprian McCaffrey, a classmate who had arrived in Negros in 1957 and Fr. Canute Rockenstein, a friend who was a year behind us in studies, met us. We spent a week in Manila visiting the Franciscan parishes and schools, while waiting for our cargo ship to arrive. When it arrived we supervised the transfer of our crates from the cargo ship to a local Filipino ship which would bring our goodies to the capital of Negros Oriental (116 Km from Guihulngan). Once this was finished, we flew to Cebu City. Brother Norbert met us and ushered us into the sights of Cebu, including Magellan's Cross. (Historical note: Magellan, flying under the Spanish flag, first espied the Philippines at Cebu, where he was killed. But he first named the islands after King Philip II of Spain.)

We stayed a night with the SVD Fathers at the University of San Carlos. Early the next morning, we experienced our first ride on a crowded Filipino bus. When I say crowded I mean **crowded**. Every seat was taken, people in the aisles, pigs and goats and young men on *top* of the bus! Luckily, no underpasses to cross. On one such trip a man lost his toes on one foot because he was standing in the door and the bus edged a cliff. No one pays when they enter the bus. A young guy collects fares based on the distance they travel. I have no idea how he remembers. Often he has to slide in and out of the windows to get the fares. We crossed to the west side of Cebu Island and came to a tiny village and port, Tangil. Then we boarded a small ferry boat and crossed the Tanyon Straights to Guihulngan. Like the bus ride, we were joined by a number of squealing pigs and bleating goats – packed in the rear of the boat. An hour later we spotted the island where I would be living for the next 12 years.

At the pier the local friars welcomed us. That evening all the friars came together to greet us. We met some for the first time – Fr. Erwin, our superior, and Brother Norbert (both would spend the rest of their lives in the Philippines and are buried there, along with Fr. Cyprian); Fr. Pascale and Brother Damian, who had spent a short time in the China mission field before it was closed, Fr. Melvin who was the best linguist and had been in Negros for five years, all greeted us with open arms. Others were well known: Fr. Clifford, Fr. Ulric, and Fr. Cyprian were in studies with me, and Brother Dennis, who became one of my closest friends until his death. On my first night I learned the value of the mosquito net. The nights were cool, since we were on the seashore, but the *mosquitoes were murder*.

### Negros Island and the Visayas:

The Santa Barbara Franciscans served in extensive missions among the Indian Nation in Arizona, New Mexico, and in China. But, after 1949 American missionaries were expelled from China. So the Province was looking for another foreign mission field. Friars from the Midwest had founded missions in Leyte and

Samar in the Central Philippines. In 1956 the St. Barbara province opened a mission in Negros. These three islands plus Cebu and Panay are the largest islands and provinces in the central Philippines, called the Visayan Islands or the Visayas. The people living in the Visayas basically speak four related dialects. Negros Island is divided into two provinces: Negros Occidental and Negros Oriental. Filipinos on the island speak two different dialects. The people living in Negros Oriental (where we worked) speak Cebuano. Necessarily, I and the other American friars had to learn this dialect. The dialect in no way is related to Spanish, although many Spanish and English words found their way into the language. One example: the Spanish "Como esta usted?" was transformed into "Komosta Ka ba" (in English "How are you?"). The first word was taken from the Spanish, but the second word Ka means "You" and the third word Ba is necessary in asking a question. Other examples: 'ante-ojos', 'sapatos', 'jeep', and 'okay.' One thing that militated against learning Cebuano was that many Filipinos speak excellent English. English is the language of the schools in the Philippines. By third grade, students are taught in English. Difficult for the students, but it becomes possible for educated Filipinos to speak English fluently. However, in Negros most of the people do not speak English.

## 1962

In April, 1962 my classmate and good friend, Bruno Hicks, and I were assigned to the Missions in Negros Oriental. (When I first entered the seminary in 1947, I had envisioned myself as a missionary in China. However, in 1949, the Chinese Communist dashed that dream.) Bruno and I were chosen for the Philippines because we had degrees and experience in education. The Friars had made a decision to open a network of Catholic schools in Negros. The Philippine Constitution (modeled after the American) contained a clause – separation of Church and State. So the Catholic schools were not government financed. However, we could teach catechism in the *government school!* Most of our financial support came from mission collections in the States.(FMU) By and large the private schools were of a much higher quality than the government schools.

## Guihulngan

The Province served in Manila and three heavily populated parishes in Negros Oriental. A single highway, mostly unpaved, circled the island. One road dissected the island going from Vallehermoso to Canla-on (where I would later serve for six years) to Negros Occidental and the city of Bacolod. Smaller roads, all unpaved, led into the interior. We served the parishes of Guihulngan, La Libertad (about 12 miles south), and Vallehermoso (about 16 miles north).

In Negros Oriental, the Friars served about 20,000 Catholics. Most of the Filipinos in Negros were Catholic, but there was a small Protestant Church and a Filipino Church (Aglipayan) in Guihulngan. It was something like a county. Imagine an area 20 miles long and 15 miles in depth. This is Guihulngan. Within that district is a government center called the Lungsud (town). The Lungsud was a bustling market town with eateries, stores, a movie theater, a government office, the police station. Our church was in the main square across from the police station and government office. Guihulngan was made up of 30 or more villages or barrios and many small family farms. Each barrio had a chapel and a feast day. The larger barrios were found up and down the main 'highway,' where Mass was celebrated each Sunday. The barrios deepest in the mountains were reached only by foot. The padre and assistant hauled a backpack and Mass kit for miles up into the mountain villages. Some were reached only once or twice a year, usually on the feast day of the village. Hundreds of babies were baptized at this time. I estimate that *I baptized over a thousand babies* in my 12 years in the Philippines. (Matthew 28: 18-20)

## The Rats

Rats were everywhere! At night, under the mosquito net, I heard them gnawing at the studs and beams above me. In Vallehermoso, our house had no ceiling. In the morning I often saw them scurrying around on the beams, and, of course, in the pantry. One famous story: While at dinner one evening, Fr. Ulric spotted a tail coming down from the second floor. Absolute silence. Then Cyprian, the bravest of all, silently stooped over and grabbed the tail and hung on. He called for a pair of pliers to grip the tail. Then someone went to the second floor to dispose of the invader with a broom handle. Years later, Brother Dennis and I were going upstairs when he spotted a movement against the wall. "Don't move." He took off his size 13 sandal and waited. Just then Bruno who was sick that day came out of his room. The ugly intruder scampered across the floor toward Bruno's room. Dennis let fly his sandal, missed the rat, but startled Bruno, who fell back on his bed. Dennis: "I know where that rat is going – to the chest of drawers." We entered Bruno's room. Denny got a 12 inch ruler and gave it to me. Why? Denny pulled out the bottom drawer. A tail was exposed. Out came the second – the tail moved upward, same with the third drawer. "Jam the ruler on his tail" so I did and Denny pulled out the final drawer. Brother Rat was trapped by the ruler and exposed. He ran along the ruler almost to my hand. I held on while Denny pummeled him with his sandal. We walked a block to the seashore and fed him to the fish.

## Parish Work

Even tho Bruno and I were assigned to work in the school, we immediately went to work in the huge parish of Guihulngan as well. Erwin and Ulric were pastors. Each Sunday we celebrated three Masses in the town and seven barrios along the coast and one in the Bukid - the mountains. On my first Sunday, I got into a Jeep with a young man and headed north to the villages of Calamba (7 am) and Basak (9am) and Hiaitan at 11 a.m.

Mass was still celebrated in Latin but my young assistant read the epistle and gospel in Cebuano. I gave a pitiable sermon in English. Most of the congregation understood very little of it. I preached in English for about a year, and then was able to preach in the dialect. A few months later the bishop okayed a Cebuano translation of the Mass. After this, we celebrated Mass in Cebuano. I mastered the reading of Cebuano and was able to give a ten minute sermon and also converse in the dialect, but I never mastered it so that I could fully understand two Filipinos carrying on a discussion. The fact that educated Filipinos could speak excellent English worked against the total mastery the dialect.

## Teaching at St. Francis School

Our main duty was to take over the newly founded St. Francis High School and then build a college and high schools in the other parishes. In 1962, St. Francis School was located on the church grounds next to the friary. SFHS was a four year school. Most students started high school at age 12, since they only had six years in elementary. However, many were much older, since the government did not force children to go to high school. Many waited years before continuing their high school education – some were in their mid-twenties. Yet this was not a problem for anyone. Usually, the 12 and 13 year old students elected the 20 year olds to serve as class officers.

In the Philippines, the school year began in June and ended in March. Vacation came during the dry season. Bruno and I taught and administered the school of about 400 in a dilapidated building with bamboo slats for windows. Two stories and bare necessities...chairs, desks, and a blackboard. (While in

Los Angeles I had succeeded in gathering a plenitude of basketballs and soft balls from a local manufacturer.) The students played on a dirt-based basketball court, a volleyball court (of sorts), and a softball field that was a rectangle – some 20 by 60 feet. I might note that the metric system is the norm in the P.I., and I soon learned to understand what 2 or 3 kilometers meant. I also found that I was head of the student athletics – not my forte, but I pulled out a coaching manual from De Paul University in Chicago as my guide.

## 1963

In June, 1963, we opened St. Francis College – the first in Guihulngan. College classes were held at night in the high school building. High school students used the building during the day. The town at that time had no electric power, but we had a generator and electricity for night classes. I was the dean of the college (very little to choose from). Bruno was the president of the high school and college. The local people were hungry for college classes close to home; so we had full classes immediately. By American standards, it was very primitive conditions. I totally enjoyed the mostly adult students who enrolled.

While working at the school, we began plans for expansion. We would found a college system: college and four feeder high schools. Land had to be purchased, financed from the Province mission fund. A dollar goes a lot further in the Philippines. In the end we built new buildings for the college, high school, and an elementary school for our teacher training. We also built high schools in La Libertad and Vallehermoso, and later incorporated a high school in Canla-on into the school system. This might cost several hundred thousand dollars (in 1962) in the USA, but St. Francis College cost something like \$ 20,000. A good bang for the buck. In 1963 we purchased ten hectares of land, about two kilometers from the center of town. A hectare is about 2.3 acres. Building began under the direction of Brother Dennis, one of my closest friends for fifty years until his death in Pasadena. Unlike all other buildings in the town it would be built of hollow block. The new beautiful school opened at its new campus in June, 1964.

## Franciscan Fraternity

A year after our arrival in the Philippines, Santa Barbara Province sent three young friars to join us with the idea of expanding our mission. All became close friends, Lloyd, Bill, and Max. We had a six year stint in the mission fields and then came home on furlough for six months. The new men filled in the gaps and added priests to the large parish of Guihulngan. Bruno worked largely for the bishop, doing Cursillo work. Bill and I worked in the school.

As in Oregon and in all my days as a Franciscan, I found and enjoyed fellowship and fraternity with the brothers. At every dinner, Brother Norbert set out a cold bottle of water for each man. He wanted all to remain hydrated in the sweltering heat of the Philippines. After supper, we walked to the seashore or around the town and talked with one another and to the locals along the way. No TV to bother us. As a result we communicated with each other. Prayers and Mass every morning in the parish church— usually celebrated by Fr. Erwin. Then the other priests would celebrate Mass in small chapels for a handful of the faithful in local barrios. Once a month we had a day of recollection – prayer, scripture, spiritual reading and discussion. In that afternoon, we discussed problems, projects, and plans for our mission in Negros.

Friars from the other parishes came together every Sunday afternoon for fraternal get-together. Fellowship included a fine dinner followed by singing, chatting, cards (Bridge and Pinochle,) and drinking San Miguel Beer (the local, brewed by the Augustinian Fathers of the Philippines). Late in the evening the friars from the outlying towns hit the road. It was in Negros that I forged my closest friendship with other



friars. (All but three have passed to their reward.) Over the years, I made it to the nursing homes and funerals of many of these wonderful buddies. Father Max and Father Joe are still alive (2020). Since they work in Phoenix and Tucson, I make it a point to see them and chat with them about the good old days in Negros.

## 1964

1964 was a big year for the friars. We moved into our new school and campus. We held high school classes during the day and college in the evening. With about 25 acres, we had a two story high school with 10 classrooms. An amphitheater overlooked an all-weather basketball court, which was also used for all exhibitions, dances, assemblies, and performances by and for the students. We now had a large field for softball and soccer, and another small lawn area for volleyball games. We had room to build the college and elementary school buildings. These would make possible day classes for all students. I am so proud of this!

(But in 2012, a 6.5 magnitude earthquake hit Negros, most particularly in Guihulngan and our St. Francis College. The damage to the school was extensive to the tune of several million pesos, about \$50,000 USD today... a far cry from the cost to build in 1963. I ache all over about this loss. I hear that classes continued in makeshift classrooms of bamboo and thatch. Hopefully, things are looking better for SFC. (Please God!)

Another wonderful friar and friend joined us – Fr. Donan Paskey. Donan arrived by October, 1964 in time to join us for the St. Francis Day celebration. The friars challenged the boys team in softball; and also to a game of basketball. Max and Cliff had been captains at SAS, but Lloyd was the best athlete. Most of the friars were good or fairly good in both sports and we won easily. That evening a nice celebration, including ice cream, brought all the way from Dumaguette (116 KM away) – a real treat. Brother Norbert always did a great job at feeding us. Most of the time for lunch and supper, it was rice and fish with bread and water - meat maybe twice a week on market days. I longed for a cheeseburger and milkshake when I got back to the states.

The biggest change was that Bruno brought the Cursillo Movement to the Philippines. Our bishop and the archbishop of Cebu asked that Bruno organize the Cursillo in both islands and to train teams for the other Visayan isles and Mindanao. It would be a full time job. Bruno was also in demand for retreats to the many groups of nuns in the southern P.I. As a result, I became the director of St. Francis College and High School. At the same time, Fr. Erwin, our superior, was assigned to the seminary in Manila. Donan became pastor of Guihulngan. Lloyd and Ulric were in charge of the mountain parish of Canla-on City in the middle of the island.

## 1965 to 1968

In the next three years new friars came - including, Fr. John Peterson from Portland, Oregon. We had opened a minor seminary and I was in charge of it until John came. We had a close relationship. When I was on leave in 1968, his father died in Portland, and I was there to say the funeral Mass and meet his family.

(In 1972, I was once again home when President Marcos declared martial law and John and Bruno were tossed into the stockade in Dumaguette. When I heard they were incarcerated, I called his sister and we broke the news to his mother.) (In 2012, I was with him at his death bed in Phoenix. He had been severely burned and had been rushed to the County Hospital- Burn Unit. I am grateful to God that I was

able to visit and pray with and for him every day for a week. He was unconscious and sedated until the decision was made by his sisters and the friars to pull the plug. He had been pastor in Tularosa, New Mexico after serving for years in Negros and then in Mexico. While visiting Fr. John in Tularosa, Doris and I found out that he had terminal cancer. He planned his funeral even to having his big, black dog parade up the aisle behind his casket. He had asked Doris to sing his requiem song- Lead Kindly Light. She was thrilled to do it and promised that she would when the time came. It came earlier than expected, because of the fire. The problem for Doris was that she had to sing in total darkness. John's idea was that he was going from darkness into light! Doris did a great job with the help of a little pen lite. We actually attended three ceremonies for John- Tularosa, where he was pastor; Phoenix, because of his connection with people from the Casa de Paz y Bien, and his mission in Mexico; and Portland, where he was born and raised.)

By 1966, the California friars in Negros were in charge of four parishes, five high schools, one college, one elementary school (needed for the degree in education), the seminary, the Cursillo Movement, and retreats and days of recollection all over the Visayas and Mindanao. We also opened a Catholic radio station, which reached Cebu and Leyte. It was a busy schedule for us all.

By this time the Catholic Church had changed from Latin to the vernacular (Cebuano for us) in the Mass. I thought this was a wonderful change. Now the congregation could understand the readings and the meaning of the entire Mass. But it was a loss of much of the beauty and tradition of the Latin Mass. Also the strict requirement for priestly celibacy was loosened. The Vatican now allowed priests to resign from their work as priests and pastors. They could marry, but they had to leave the Order and the priesthood. Several friars took advantage of this – three married local Filipinas – two remaining there until death. They are buried in the Philippines.

## [Chapter 9 – A TRIP AROUND THE WORLD AND HOME -1968-1969](#)

After six years in an overseas mission, we would come home for a few months or take on another mission in the states. I choose to re-up and came home in August, 1968. I was given a round-trip around the world, from east to west. I had the addresses of Franciscan houses in Hong Kong, Jerusalem, Rome, Budapest, Cologne, Amsterdam, Paris, London, Dublin, Galway (western Ireland was the site of my Irish ancestors), Montreal, Boston (where I met my sister, Joyce), Chicago (where I met my relatives), and finally Phoenix.

Everywhere I landed, I was welcomed by friars as a brother in Christ. I usually stayed two or three days in their houses, toured the cities and went on my way to my next stop. I actually visited Hong Kong five times in my 12 years overseas. A great city to visit. I was able to get round on their buses, bought myself a new suit (tailored) and a nice watch there.

### The Holy Land

Israel was next on my itinerary. I landed at Tel Aviv and suddenly heard my name called. Since I was traveling on American Air Lines, they offered me a ride to Jerusalem. This was one year after the Six Day War between Israel and several Arab States. Israel was now in charge of the entire city of Jerusalem. The Jews lived in the newer part of the city; the Arabs in east Jerusalem. As we drove into Jerusalem, I noticed a group of Franciscan nuns crossing into the center of the city. I had met members of this group in Manila so I hopped out of the auto and spoke to them. They were French, but one of them spoke English. They

told me that they were going to the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, where the Franciscan Minister General (from Rome) would celebrate Mass.

I traveled light (one bag) and joined them at the Mass, where I met many friars. After the Mass, I found my way to the Franciscan House of Scripture Studies, where I would stay for three days. I walked into the refectory during lunch and introduced myself to the startled friars. A bearded Italian friar brought me a bowl of soup and a half loaf of bread. Nice! Then an English-speaking French friar moved over to my table and offered to show me the sights in the city. After lunch I had a walking tour of this historic city - - the places where *Jesus and his Apostles walked, taught, and suffered!* This friar was a scripture scholar, translating the Bible from the ancient languages into modern living sentences. He knew the geography and history of the city backwards and forward. We went to the site of the Agony in the Garden, the streets of Christ's journey from the Roman Court to the hill of Golgotha and crucifixion of Christ, and the empty tomb of Jesus in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. After this inspiring tour, I returned to the house. My wake-sleep time was all out of kilter; so I fell asleep immediately, and then awoke about 5 am and went to the roof to look over the Holy City at dawn ... an amazing vision that I have to this day.

After breakfast, the French friar took me by bus to Bethlehem. I saw the Church of the Nativity – the reported spot where Jesus was born. The next day we went to Nazareth, Cana and Capharnaum. (Historical note: since 1400 the Franciscans had been custodians of the shrines and churches in the Holy Land. This was true during Arab, Turkish, British, and now Israeli control of the land.) From Nazareth I took a bus to Tel Aviv, found the Franciscan house, was welcomed, got a room and fell asleep without supper. Again, arising before dawn, and again to the roof to possibly see the most beautiful sight of my life – sunrise over the blue waters of the Mediterranean, touching the shore of the Holy Land.

### Rome and Assisi

Now well-rested, I flew for a quick stop in Greece. I got off the plane to say that I had touched the land of Plato and Aristotle. Then I flew into Rome, garbed in the Franciscan habit. The American sitting next to me on the plane remarked that I spoke English like a native American. He presumed I was Italian and I let him think so.

My good friend, Fr. John Vaughn (later Minister-General of the Franciscans) was studying at the Antonianum, a huge study house with friars from all over the world. John was wonderful. He took time off from his studies to show me the sites. Rome was grand – St. Peter's, Michelangelo, Raphael, Leonardo da Vinci. (My SAS art classes came alive!) I especially loved the sidewalk cafes and the Italian ice cream, said to be the best in Europe. A Filipino Franciscan priest, Fr. Joe Valencia, from Guihulngan, was also studying in Rome. He accompanied me to Assisi, the birth place of St. Francis. We celebrated Mass at the Basilica of Our Lady of the Portiuncula of the Angels. (Historical note: In the 18th century the Spanish Friars named a small town in southern California after this Basilica. The full name of "L.A." is "El Pueblo de la Senora de Portiuncula de los Angeles." So really, L.A. is not the City of Angels, but the city of *Our Lady of the Angels*.)

(Another historical note: When Francis was trying to find himself and a reason for his life, he was praying in a small dilapidated and abandoned chapel in Portiuncula, near Assisi. He heard a voice from the cross: "Francis, build my church". The rich young man took this literally, and begged stones and mortar from the mocking townsfolk, who considered him a nut. Later Francis understood this as a charge to build up the Catholic Church, which was badly in need of reform).

The Basilica of Our Lady was built around this tiny chapel; and that is where we had the privilege of celebrating Mass. My stay with John in Rome was all too short.

### Budapest, and into Communist Hungary

I had originally planned to go from Rome to Prague. In 1968 the Communist leaders of Czechoslovakia had moved toward a softer, more 'democratic' form of Communism called the Prague Spring. However, the Russians feared that this would spread to all the Communist-run governments in the Balkans. So in July, Shirley Temple, the US ambassador for that nation, awoke to hear Russian tanks rolling into Prague to end the Prague Spring. I could not visit Prague; so instead I opted for Budapest.

I flew from Rome to Budapest on Air Magyar. On arrival, I approached the desk at the airport with passport in hand. The clerk took my passport and told me to take a seat. I sat down. After a few minutes, I noticed that I was the only one left in the waiting room – all the other passengers had sailed through without a hitch. A second plane landed and all the passengers went thru customs. Nervous, I was in a Communist nation, and I did not have my passport, and very little money. Time to face the music. I marched up to the clerk and asked what the problem was. He told me that they needed the minister of something or other to okay my stay in their lovely city. Since it was Saturday they were having a hard time finding him. Did they think that I was some kind of CIA agent in clerical attire? My plan was to stay with the Hungarian friars Saturday thru Tuesday. But now what? Then the clerk told me that the minister could not be found and that I would have to stay in the airport hotel until Monday. Would I ever see my mother and father again?? Would I disappear into a Communist gulag?? I got a little feisty. "Who will pay for my stay in the hotel??" "You will" "I won't." Advantage Kilroy in this debate. The clerk was having a hard time of it. "I will stay in the waiting area and sleep on a bench out here." "You can't" "I will." "Be reasonable." "I won't, and I want my passport and the next flight out of here to Vienna." "There is none until Monday." "I'll take it." He gave me my passport. I felt just a bit safer. "Where were you planning to stay and for how long?" "I was planning to stay with the Franciscan Provincial house in Budapest for three days. Now I am thinking that I will get a plane today for Vienna." "There is only one plane today – leaving for Constantinople." "That is going the wrong way. I want to talk to your supervisor." (My passport gave me courage.) "Please, sit down. I will see what we can do."

Five minutes later, he told me that they had found the minister and that I was free to visit the beautiful and 'free city'. Wow! I made it! Now a cab ride to the Franciscan church in downtown Budapest; a ride to the other side of the Blue Danube. I went into the lobby of the church and somehow indicated to a very fat man that I was a Franciscan and wanted to meet the local friars. Shortly thereafter, a priest in a black cassock approached me. He took me upstairs and introduced me to a tall friar, dressed in the Franciscan habit. He was the provincial of all friars in Hungary. Later I found out that he was the only Franciscan in Communist Hungary allowed to wear the habit. His English was limited; so we tried to speak in Latin. I flunked that one. He knew German, Italian, and French. Again I flunked. I volunteered Spanish, but that was one he *didn't* know. So we went back to English.

He was a patient gentleman, welcomed me like a brother, gave me a room, and told me that one of the friars taught English in a local high school. Eureka! I went to Mass on Saturday night in the church. It was crowded with young people, unlike the church attendance in Rome. In Communist Hungary and Poland the churches were full. In Catholic Italy it seems that only women, old people, and the very young went to Mass regularly. Martyrdom and repression bring out the best in the young.

I came down for dinner after Mass. Entering the dining room were several men, dressed in work clothes, also the fat man from the clerk's desk, and the priest in a black cassock. All the friars, except the pastor of the church and the provincial, dressed in work clothes. All had to have jobs, approved by the government, - secular work for the friars. At dinner on Saturday the food was sparse, but the friars welcomed me in Hungarian. But the English teacher sat with me and offered to take me around Budapest the next day.

Sunday morning I came down for breakfast of coffee and bread. It seems that Europeans do not eat a hearty breakfast, as I found out in Rome and now Budapest. But there was a treat on the table – honey. I slathered it on the thick bread and took a big bite. Yikes! It wasn't honey; it was lard! I spent five minutes scraping it off my slice of bread.

The English professor was my guide to the graceful city of Budapest. Now I only had one day – Sunday – to see the sights. I loved traveling with this fine person on street cars and buses to castles and town squares. We went by the American embassy, where the Cardinal Primate of Hungary, Cardinal Josef Mindszinty had taken refuge in 1956. He had been imprisoned, given a life sentence for treason earlier. Then released, and in 1956 was about to be resented. At that point he fled to the American Embassy, where he spent most of the rest of his life. I love history and historical sites. The square where the Franciscan church was located was called Martyr's Square. In this square, thousands of Jews had been murdered by the Nazis and their collaborators. The next day, after breakfast of coffee and thick bread (sans the 'honey'), I left for Vienna.

#### Vienna, Cologne, Amsterdam, and Paris

My 1968 trip around the world was half over. Vienna is a beautiful city with churches, cafes, a fabulous opera house, and the famous Spanish Riding School and the Lipizzaner Stallions. As usually, I was greeted by the friars with welcome arms. I arrived at night as the friars were having supper. I introduced myself to the gathering as from the Philippines and California. Lo and behold at the head table was the Cardinal Primate of Austria. He was not a Franciscan, just a visitor. He had been a major player at the Vatican II Council. After dinner, he came over to me and asked me if I knew Cardinal McIntyre of Los Angeles. "I knew of him, but have never met him. Your Eminence, you are the first Cardinal I have ever met." In fact, these two Cardinals were at the opposite end of the spectrum at the Council. The Los Angeles cardinal was a total conservative, and the Austrian was a total liberal, pushing for change in the Church. One of the friars showed me the city sights. We went to the Spanish Riding School to see the stallions practicing their routine. In the afternoon we visited the Capuchin Church where Empress Marie Theresa and other Hapsburg emperors were buried. At night we went to the Vienna Opera House to see "La Boheme." I never was very interested in opera, but I felt it behooved me to imbibe some culture while I was in Vienna.

From Vienna I took a train to Cologne, Germany. ...a little more cultural education for me. (And who knew that my daughter, Annette, would take a nanny job in Cologne 29 years later.)

The most impressive thing was the medieval cathedral that survived the bombing raids during WWII.

Again, the train, this time to Amsterdam. I did not stay with the Franciscans in Amsterdam, but rather, with the Carmelites. Back in Negros, the Dutch Carmelites had a mission about fifty kilometers from us. We worked with these wonderful men, who were great linguists. They were involved with us in the social justice work. One of their men had become ill and returned home. He gave me a welcome in their house and found someone to take me on a tour of the city.

On to Paris, the City of Lights! One of my school mates, Fr. Peirre, was studying sacred music and theology in Paris. He was my guide to the sites in Paris; and then on to Versailles and the palace of the Bourbons.

### London and Ireland

The weather had been wonderful for my entire trip...late August and early September. Now I was on the last leg of my journey. I flew into London, got directions from a 'bobby' to a rectory of the Oratorian Fathers, not Franciscans. Still it was a warm reception. I had only two days in London. (Little did I know that fifty years later I would be back to visit my daughter and her family there.) I saw as much of the sites as possible. Actually, the highlight for me was seeing *A Man for all Seasons* right there in London, close to the place where Thomas More was jailed and executed for his faith.

Next, a flight to Dublin – I stayed with the friars there in the parish church which was called Adam and Eve's Church. Under Henry VIII and his heirs, the Catholic Church was banned and the Friars and other priests were jailed or exiled, or went into hiding. The churches were confiscated by the British; so the Catholic Church went underground. The friars celebrated Mass and heard confessions for the faithful in secret places. One place was a tavern, called Adam and Eve's. After 300 years, the Catholics were emancipated, and the friars built St. Francis Church (later Immaculate Conception) on the place where the tavern had been. Thus the nick name Adam and Eve's Church. As always, I was treated royally. Went to a pub with one of the friars, entertained by songs and skits, and introduced to the terribly strong local beer, the famous *Guineas*. I was able to get around easily and was always treated with smiles and courtesy by the people, who directed me to what I was looking for.

After a couple of days I set out by car with a friar to Shannon Airport in the south. I had to stop off at a ruined monastery, named the Monastery of St. Kyran (Kiernan) of Clonmacnoise. This monastery on the River Shannon dates back to 540 AD. For years it was the center of learning in Ireland, with students from all parts of Christian Europe. It was nostalgic for me (he was my patron saint). On to Shannon Airport and a trip across the Atlantic on Aer Lingus.

### Montreal

Montreal, Canada is a beautiful, French-speaking city. I stayed with the friars for two days. All spoke both French and English – totally fluent. While I was traveling on one of the buses in the city, I noticed that all the addresses were zero – very strange. How did people get around? Later on I discovered that the 0 was for O'est meaning West. An education for me.

### Home

My sister, Joyce, met me at Boston's Logan Airport. She gave me a quick tourist trip around Boston and then on to Little Compton, Rhode Island. Joyce had enlisted in the U.S. Navy and was an ensign assigned to the Pentagon. She met Ensign Dick Rogers, fell in love with him, and he to her. He owned a seafood restaurant and bar right on the ocean. Joyce had seven children in ten years of marriage. I met them all – a wonderful Catholic family. That night I ate with the family at the Foc'sl. Lobsters were taken from a tank in the basement and boiled before my eyes. A problem – I had been used to bland food for six years - largely rice and fish. The rich dinner was too much for me. In a matter of two or three hours my guts were turned inside out. But my visit with the Rogers' family was nice...once I 'recovered.'

Now on to Chicago...

It was the beginning of football season and the 1968 Olympics. I hadn't seen TV for six years; so all of this was welcome to my eyes. In Chicago, I met a cousin, who had an office overlooking Grant's Park, where the riots and beatings took place. Being in the Philippines, I had no idea of what had happened at the Democrat Convention. I stayed with friars at St. Peter's Church in downtown Chicago. I walked to the Chicago library of the University of Illinois, where another cousin worked. From there I took a couple of buses to visit my Dad's sister and sponsor at my Baptism, Aunt Eleanor, who lived in a small apartment with another aunt, Aunt Mamie Dunleavey, who remembered me; but I couldn't remember ever meeting her. They invited me to lunch and we took a cab to a restaurant. I had contacted Ed Drolet, my friend from St. Mary's Phoenix and he showed up. He drove my aunts home. It was the last time I ever saw my beloved Aunt Eleanor. Ed and I regaled one another about our days at St. Mary's for a day. After this, I spent several days in Chicago renewing my friendship with cousins, aunts and uncles. And then, on to Phoenix.

### Phoenix - September, 1968 to February, 1969

I called Dad from the airport. Both Mom and Dad came. Mom was radiant, bubbling over with antics about her 27 grandchildren. I stayed at the St. Mary's friary. Usually had supper with Mom and Dad and then walked over to the friary at night. My Phoenix sisters had large families, and I spent time with all of them. My good friend, Fr. Lester, was principal at St. Mary's High School. They were football champions two years in a row, and Lester, Al, and I went to many of their home games. Fr. Alan, our Provincial Minister, asked me to preach about our mission work during my furlough. So every Friday or Saturday, I flew out to Franciscan churches from Spokane to Huntington Beach. In this way I was able to visit almost every friary in the Province and renewed time-tested friendships.

Fr. Alan also asked me to represent the Province at a national meeting of mission-sending societies in the USA. This included both Catholic and non-Catholic Christian churches. The seminar was held in Washington D.C. and it gave me a chance to visit my sister, Joyce and her family on weekends. Once that was completed, my good friend, Fr. Barry Brunzman, was assigned to a church in San Francisco and we were able to take a ten day vacation, visiting various places, including Salem, where we had begun our priestly lives.

All too soon it was time to complete the last leg of my trip around the world... San Francisco to Honolulu. There I visited a nun I had known earlier and I recognized that there was a mutual attraction. Two of my classmates and a few other Franciscans had received permission to leave the order and the priesthood to marry. It was a grave temptation for me, but I persevered. I also had a cousin, Dee Stibolt, living in the city. My nephew, Roddy Standard, a mature 16 year old, had run away from home. Beryl, my beloved sister, knew he had flown to Hawaii. She asked me to look for him while in Honolulu. Dee and I searched the beaches and other hang-outs, but to no avail. So now it was back to my home in the Philippines...

### Chapter 10 – CANLA-ON CITY, PHILIPPINES - 1969- 1974

Unbeknown to me, I was now at the beginning of the most exciting, fruitful years of my life. I was welcomed back to the Philippines by the Friars in Manila. Fr. Erwin and Fr. Max met me at the airport. My classmate, Fr. Cyprian, was also with them. He had been in the mission field for 12 years and had decided to marry a Filipina – a beautiful woman and a catechist from Negros. He received his dispensation and began a fruitful, apostolic life in Mindanao, as a lay Franciscan. (Cyprian was a remarkable man, adept in mechanical matters, fluent in the Cebuano dialect. He sired three children and spent the rest of his life in the P. I., dying at age 92 in 2019.) I was always impressed with his zeal as a Franciscan and as a lay man.)

When I arrived in Negros, I was named as Pastor of Canla-on. I would replace my good friend, Lloyd, who was returning to the USA with a decision not to return to the mission field. Canla-on was the mid-point between the Province of Negros Oriental and Negros Occidental. The people living in the two provinces spoke different dialects. So the people in Canla-on generally spoke and understood both. I never learned the second dialect, beyond counting to ten. I used Cebuano in preaching and in meetings.

Towering over the town was Canla-on Volcano (a sleeping giant). The volcano was the highest point on the island and one of the three highest points in the nation. During my years in Canla-on it twice erupted, spewing ash over the area. The town was not in danger, but it was an exciting event. In my years there I made two treks up the slopes to peer down into the volcano. It was safe and very interesting.

Canla-on had a delightfully cool and healthy climate - different from the sweltering heat on the coast. Economically, it was dominated by the hacenderos who owned large acres of land with hundreds of field hands. The land was fertile and good for growing sugar and rice. But what made it different from the other three parishes was that the climate allowed for growing vegetables, making Canla-on the vegetable capital of Negros. The small vegetable farmers living higher up on the slope of the volcano were economically better off than the small farmers on the coast. Market days were held on Wednesday and Sunday. At dawn I would be awakened by thump, thump, thump - barefoot men carrying carrots or beets on poles from their little farms to the market in town. Sunday was huge in town. Thousands came in from the neighboring barrios; buying and selling, drinking, and going to the cock fights. Buyers from the large towns in Occidental came in trucks for the vegetables. It was a sight to see the buses leaving town in the afternoon for Bacalod. Full, I mean *full*. There was a second floor, not exactly a London double-decker, but they were crowded with goats, pigs, and guys, brave enuf to make the ride down to the coast and beyond.

I was in charge of the parish of over 5,000 families and director of our high school. As in Guihulngan, the main church was in the Lungsud or city center. Outside the Lungsud, were chapels, in many barrios of various sizes. The larger barrios were along the road to Bacolod in Negros Occidental, and on the Oriental side on the road back to Vallehermoso and Guihulngan. We celebrated Mass each Sunday at the main church and four chapels along the road – a total of six Masses. Fr. John or Fr. Donan would come up for Sunday Masses – a very busy morning for the two of us.

Next to a ram-shackled church, seating about 200 on a tiny bit of land, was a high school, and a small two story convent or rectory. The students had no land for sports, dances, or plays. Shortly after my arrival in Canla-on, a hurricane hit the church and knocked it off its foundation. The old school survived and served as school during the week; but on weekends it became the church until we could build a new one. The good news - we had purchased about 20 hectares of land a kilometer from the church. We began building the new St. Joseph High School – more according to American standards...hollow block, large classrooms, a basketball court, soft ball field, and a soccer field, and an outdoor seating area looking down on the court, where dances and programs were regularly held. When finished it would be the finest collection of buildings in Canla-on.

One thing I am most proud of was saving land. The large land tract we had purchased was divided in two by a gully. When the torrential rains came, we could look up to the top of the mountain and see two tiny silver streaks appear on the mountain. That meant trouble, because about an hour later, the two streams were a small river running down the middle of town and right into our gully on its way to a river behind our land, which led to the ocean. I always found students during vacation time who wanted to work off their tuition. So, over the years, we built a dam of banana trees and rocks. The rush of water carrying sediment and dirt hit the dam, and then was funneled to the side. Gradually, the gully rose in height and became usable land.



An interesting incident occurred during one of those terrible rain storms. Couples to be married came to the main church, where they would be registered and later married. It was always prepared weeks in advance. Somehow, one particular couple managed to rent a suit for the guy and a white dress and veil for the gal. In this case, on the night before the marriage, it poured and poured. A small stream separating their home from the town became a swollen, raging torrent. A young man, dripping wet, came to the convent. He told me that the young couple would not be able to get to the church. Could I come to them in the morning? The lad stayed with us, and in the morning, in the pouring rain, we set out for the home amidst a cluster of homes and farms. I drove the jeep to the swollen river – but it was impossible to cross. But a stout man was waiting for me. He gripped my arm and led me across the rushing water. I had visions of my mother receiving the news that her son had drowned in a river in the P. I. But we got across. I looked back at the jeep and realized that I had parked too close to the raging river. Would the river rise? Would my jeep be there when I returned? I was soaked to the skin when we finally arrived at the house. The place was jammed, so I celebrated Mass and married the couple in the house.

After dinner, we set out for the river and my jeep (I hoped). The rain had stopped and, lo, there was the jeep on the other side! My barefoot guide led me across. And away I went to finally get into dry clothes.

I had built up a lay team, who worked with me, as catechists and facilitators in organizing the farmers. Fr. Barry, back in the states, was my largest financial support. He had the ability to win people over to work for Christ in one way or the other. When one of his friends or parishioners, wanted to offer a donation, he would direct them to me. As a result, I was able to pay my team. We started a credit union in Canla-on which mitigated the problem people had with loan sharks. We also organized Third Order groups in the Lungsud and many of the outlying barrios. Each year the bishop came to the parishes for confirmation. Canla-on was the furthest parish from his office. The nuns from Vallehermoso had prepared the school children for the sacrament. All went well. At night we had a celebration at the school. The various Third Order groups came in from the barrios to entertain the bishop for several hours. I was so proud.

Generally, I would go to the interior barrios during the week. The team and I would meet with the farmers, the families, and the teachers in these outlying barrios. We left pictures of the Sacred Heart and blessed many of the homes. One incident stands out... I was driving the jeep which stalled in a small stream. Nothing could be done to get it to move. Then Demetrio, my main aide, went to a nearby farm. The farmer came back with a caribou (water buffalo). We hitched the jeep to the caribou. He strained and strained, but gradually pulled us up and out of the stream. That jeep was a good mode of transportation.

I did have my problems in Canla-on. The mayor was a land owner and a power in the town and province. We clashed over various things and it was unpleasant. I was involved with a farmers' group, the Federation of Free Farmers, a national group working to alleviate the working conditions and income for tenant farmers and sugar cane workers. It was opposed by the land owners, including the mayor. A public meeting was set up to discuss problems and solutions. In one sense, it was my finest hour. Before the meeting the men of the FFF, led by Demetrio, marched into town. I now had support against the power of the local government. One thing I learned was to gain control of the microphone. They had it and I didn't. I was able to use my best Cebuano, but they had the last say. So, sadly, nothing was really accomplished.

### Social Justice Activity

Bruno and I engaged in the social rights movement, most particularly with the tenant farmers and sugar cane workers in Negros. After Castro took over Cuba, U.S. corporations began buying sugar from the

Philippines. The Haciendas of Canla-on and Negros Occidental were the principal areas for sugar growing. The Hacenderos (Sugar Barons) owned large tracts of land. Rice and corn had been the primary agricultural products, but now this was changed to sugar – a much more lucrative crop. The tenant farmers and families had lived on the acreage, worked it, and gave a percentage to the Hacenderos. But after the change to sugar growing, many of the tenant farmers became peons working in the sugar fields. Their meager living standards sank. The Jesuits and Franciscans now became involved in the cry for social justice. The FFF (Federation of Free Farmers) was re-formed as a union of sugar cane workers hoping to alleviate their plight. In Negros, Bruno and I were closely associated with the FFF.

### 1972-1974 in Canla-on

I came home on furlough in September, 1972. I flew into Spokane to begin a preaching tour from north to south. A brother met me at the airport and told me that President Marcos of the Philippines had declared Martial Law, and began ruling as dictator. No news from Negros. What was happening there? Bruno had been a marked man because of his radio station. I was able to call the Franciscans in Cebu City. A Cincinnati friar told me that the radio station had been closed, the FFF had been put on the black list. Nothing further was known.

A week later I was in Portland. I called again and found out the Philippine Constabulary had arrested Bruno, his radio staff, the leaders of the FFF, and to my surprise, Fr. John Peterson. His crime - he had opened medical clinic deep in the mountains of Ghihulngan. The PC suspected that he was operating a Communist insurgent movement out of his clinic. Some 40 of our men were in the stockade in Dumaguette. I was informed that the PC came to Canla-on to arrest me; but, of course, I was in the United States. Two weeks later, Bruno and John were expelled. I met them in Oakland. I was due to return to the P.I. but found out that my visa was not approved. I was now asked by Fr. Alan if I wished to be a prison chaplain, or perhaps work in the Indian Missions, where my brother was working.

However, just a short time later, I received my visa from the P.I. For the third time I was on my way to Negros Oriental. I was definitely worried. (Note: prior to Martial Law, Marcos had torched the airport, claiming that it was the work of communists, thus giving him an excuse to declare martial law. Now the incomplete building was lined with plywood for walls. I got off the plane, went thru customs, and to my utter delight, I saw two tall Franciscans, my friends, Fr. Max and Fr. Mel on the other side of the plywood! They were working at the Manila seminary. They told me things were not too bad, but Marcos and the army were in control. What awaited me in Negros?

### 1973

I arrived back in Canla-on with a special mission. Before I left the States, Fr. Alan, our Provincial, told me that my priority was to work to get our co-workers in the FFF and the radio station out of the stockade in Dumaguette. Two gung ho nuns from Cotobato joined me in this work. We visited every parish, every convent of nuns in the diocese. We wanted to get a list of all the clergy and nuns in the diocese and present it to the military governor of Negros Oriental. Every group of nuns, except one, signed our petition. The one exception was an order of cloistered nuns. In our second meeting there, Mother Superior told us that they would not sign, but that they would pray for us. I felt like telling them to take their prayers and #\$\$%&\*, but I resisted and said “thanks” but under my breath “for nothing.” We three got an audience with the MG. He was gracious and said that he had no problem with all our workers from our parishes, but he had a problem with one other man, who was considered an insurgent. We told him that we would guarantee his good conduct. SUCCESS! On Easter morning, the MG freed all members of the FFF and the radio station.

The bishop named me as coordinator of social justice to replace Bruno. This meant frequent trips to Dumaguette, Cebu City, Manila, and Bacolod for meetings with other co-ordinators. I was impressed with my Protestant brothers, who seemed so dedicated to the word of God and social justice. At one large meeting in Cebu City, the religious of the Visayas drew up a memo to President Marcos to lift Martial Law and restore the Congress and civilian governors to their place in government. The same was done by the religious of Mindanao. The memo was to be read at all Masses on Sunday. It would have been a bomb shell. But faint-hearted members decided that the memo would not be read. I had a copy of the memo. I also had contact with an underground anti-Marcos group. I got the copy to them for distribution. But in the end nothing came of it.

### Kilroy and the Law

During this time, I was being scrutinized by the PC. On one occasion I visited a former student, who was jailed in Cebu for possible anti-Marcos activity. At first he hesitated when he saw me, but I insisted. He told me that during his interrogation my name was brought up. In Canla-on we had regular meetings with both the Third Order and the FFF. All meetings had to be approved by the local PC. One such meeting was held in a mountain barrio for two days. On the second day, after breakfast, we saw a line of armed men coming up the mountain, walking along the rice paddies. The men became larger and larger as they drew near. It was the PC. They were polite, but asked to see the meeting permit, which was given to them. Nonetheless, we were ordered to break up the meeting and return with them to the police office in Canla-on. They took all our names and released all without incident.

In yet another incident, I received a notice that the police chief of Canla-on wanted to see me. Earlier I had talked with a very wise Jesuit, who had been questioned by the PC. He said that he demanded all the questions before he would answer the first. This would not have worked in Nazi Germany, but in the P. I., the Marcos government wanted to have good relations with the Catholic Church. So when I visited the police chief, I had my battle plan ready. He asked me my name. I said what is the 2nd question? He said "Why are you here?" "What is the 3rd question?" He was now flustered. Advantage Kilroy. He dismissed me and warned me not to get involved in the wrong business.

All this time I was doing pastoral work in the town and mountain barrios, and was still director of the high school. I also was working with Protestant pastors in the work of social justice. They impressed me as wonderful Christian men with love and care for the poor and needy. They were also married. This fact along with other things put me into the gravest crisis in my life. I had my vow of celibacy and the constant desire for womanly love.

For 25 years I had loved and enjoyed the camaraderie and mission of the brotherhood. But more and more I was being drawn to marriage and family life as the future for me. This was an agonizing moment in time for me...to leave what I loved for a future that was unknown. More and more of my fellow friars were taking advantage of honorably leaving the Order and marrying. Many of them were classmates and good friends. I do believe that I had neglected my prayer life with so much of the active ministry that I was involved in. Three of my fellow friars had married Filipina women - all very good men and women. Many of my lay companions were women, nuns, catechists, and teachers. No question it was a temptation to a celibate. I talked over my situation with my friends, Fr. John and Fr. Donan. They took over the parish of Guihulngan and advised me to take a long trip around the Islands. I did. In the Maryknoll mission in Davao, Mindanao, I met a Benedictine monk, who was giving a retreat to the Maryknoll priests and brothers. His advice: You have served Christ for many years as a priest; maybe you can serve Him as a layman. I then flew to Manila to talk to Fr. Erwin, our superior. I told him that I had decided to ask for

permission to leave the Order. He was most kind and said he would let our Provincial in the USA know of my decision. I returned to Negros to say good bye to all the friars, friends, and co-workers.

## Chapter 11- LIFE AS A LAYMAN

### Decision to Leave the Order

I arrived in Oakland in early August, 1974, and spoke to Fr. Alan, our Provincial. He asked me to take a week or so at home and then write a formal letter asking for permission to leave the Order. The Church and the Order were wonderful to me. The friars in Rome put in my application for separation from the Franciscans and the priesthood. By January, 1975 I had received my official dispensation and separation from the Friars, but in my heart I will always remain a Franciscan. I am eternally grateful for my 25 years with all of them.

I came home in time for my parents' Golden Wedding Anniversary. The next day I told my mother about my decision. She was heartbroken, but bore it as a burden. Mother would live another six months. Dad, sadly, was declining with loss of memory. (He lived another year and a half and died at age 80. He is buried beside his wife of 50 years. God bless them both.)

### A New Life for Jay

I immediately entered my new life. I was a fish out of water. I had jumped off a cliff into a stream of unknown depth. I was on my own. The Order had been my mother, my home, my work place, my security blanket. Now I had to find a job, a place to stay, and a car to get around. I had never bought a car in my life, never had to find a place to live. In fact, I had done very little in the line of cooking or washing and cleaning my clothes. But I felt that God was watching over me as I entered a different world and life style. Luckily, I was able to stay at home with my parents. I had support from my family, most especially, my sister Beryl. She took me out on a shopping tour to get the 'right' clothes. She had eight children, but was always so organized that she had time for others. She was a natural born counselor and I could count on her for advice on how to live this strange new life that I had entered.

Second, Fr. Barry, who was stationed at the Casa in Scottsdale, AZ, was a rock on whom I could count. Barry, ever the innovator, had formed a group of former religious. – *The New Ministry*. He discovered that there were over a thousand former religious in the Phoenix area. His idea was to use this potential for evangelical work. *The New Ministry* turned out to be a god-send for me. I made immediate friends who knew what I was going through. We met regularly - had parties, dinners, and even baby and wedding showers – all new for me. I garnered advice from them on how to navigate the waters of my new life.

### Employment

#### Arizona State Prison – Florence 1975 - 1981

After a life with the Franciscans, where I was assigned a job, I now had to go out and *look* for a job, for gainful employment. By good fortune, I landed a job with the AZ Department of Corrections. I was first hired as a counselor at the Arizona State Prison, and as a supervisor of teachers in a GED program for the inmates. I was quite comfortable in this task. For the first year, I rented a small apartment in Florence, and did my own cooking. Came home on Fridays and did my laundry. (Later, when married, I drove fifty

miles to and from the prison. Usually, I drove with three other teachers as we shared the driving.) I remained in this position for 17 years.

### Stories of Arizona State Prison

In August 1978, after my marriage to Doris and we had our first child, (MORE ON THIS BELOW) our Iowa in-laws came to visit us. Two of my brothers-in-law were avid fishermen and wanted to try deep water fishing off the coast of Sonora. On a Sunday in August, we were driving south to Mexico with the radio playing. Then a news flash - two dangerous criminals had escaped from ASP - both in for multiple murders. I knew them both! One, Gary Tyson, was editor of the prison newspaper – La Roca. The other had been my clerk at the GED school there. Gary Tyson had earlier spoken to me about a previous escape, and how no one had the right to imprison him; and if necessary, he had the right to kill anyone trying to capture him. Terrifying! Now we were heading to Mexico and quite likely so was he. If he saw me at the border, he would not hesitate to kill me. We were all in danger of this cold-blooded killer. Despite an all out manhunt, they managed to elude the police for over two weeks, and eventually they killed six people.

After our trip to Mexico, we drove up to Flagstaff. Unknown to us, the killers were hiding out *there*; but they were finally caught after a high-speed chase. Gary Tyson died in the desert of exposure. The other, Gary Greenwalt, was executed a few years later. Saddest part: the three teenage sons of Tyson were also involved by helping him escape. One was killed, and the other two, now around 70, are still in prison after 40 years.

As an ASP supervisor, I hired and fired a number of people. One case of a female teacher stands out. Teachers had inmate helpers to assist them in various ways. When the school day was finished, I went around to check the classrooms. One of the doors was locked, which was very unusual. I had the keys and opened the door. Inside was this teacher. Her inmate aide, in prison for killing his wife, was in the room with her. Suffice it to say that they were fraternizing.

My supervisor and I decided that she should be let go; (she was in her probationary period as a teacher). A few weeks later I was talking to the prison chaplain who informed me that she had requested to marry the inmate. The warden refused their request.

Shortly, I received a notice that I was being sued for \$25,000, because I would not allow “two white Christians to marry.” The warden and the Director of Corrections were also sued, for a much more substantial sum. The warden relented. Dressed in his finest inmate garb, the inmate wed the former teacher. I often wondered how her children felt about this.

In 1981 at age 62, I decided to retire from the State of Arizona, and I would receive my social security.

### Teaching at Mesa Community College - 1981 – 2019

Once again God blessed me. I applied for a part-time teaching position at Mesa Community College, in Mesa AZ, three miles straight down Dobson Road from my home. It would be for a short time, or so I thought. Oh, so wrong. I would be there for 28 years until my 90th birthday – the longest position of my life! I could walk (one hour) or take a bike (15 minutes and good exercise), grab a bus (45 minutes), or drive (ten minutes). I first taught philosophy at night. Then two years later I moved to the history department (my love). Now I was teaching two or three classes a semester during the day. We had an actual workroom with a file cabinet in the main office. I felt like full-time faculty. It was wonderful – easy – like water off a duck’s back. In fact, it was so easy, I felt that they should not be paying me! But they did! Not a single problem with the students. Most enjoyed the classes I taught – mainly my humor. How

much they learned is a mystery, but they enjoyed my skits on Napoleon, Franklin and Eleanor, and my rendition of Gungha Din. Best of all, they were young and I felt that they kept me young. A standing ovation when I returned from my surgery in 2000, and again when I hit 90 in March of 2019. I loved it! Be I was once more able to bond with companions 40 or 50 years younger than me. I was always able to find 'family' with my associates.

## Chapter 12 – MARRIAGE AND FATHERHOOD

### Social Life 1974-1975

Remember above I mentioned MORE ON THIS BELOW? Well, here it is: Back in 1974, after leaving the Order, I was a babe in the woods. It had been 27 years since I went to any dances or on any dates. One of my new friends from *The New Ministry*, Joe, told me of dances for singles of a mature age. We went to a Friday night dance, and I didn't know what to do. Beryl had taught me to dance back in high school, but what would I do now? That night I just walked around feeling very uncomfortable. Joe told me that a dance instructor was holding classes for people like me. I took advantage of this and became at ease in the new fangled dance steps. I was so green. One time a woman asked me what sign I was born under? I had no idea what she was talking about; so I replied: "Under the Sign of the Cross." Obviously, the wrong answer! Beryl told me that some people are quite serious about the zodiac signs. I found out that I was a Pisces – big deal.

For almost a year, I was a regular at the weekend dances. I dated several women, but none seemed to click. Joe also told me about the Catholic Alumni Club. It was a group of college-educated Catholic singles. They met regularly for socials and religious activities. They had arranged to have tennis lessons at Central High in Phoenix. I thought that might be a good place to meet someone.

Lo and behold, one young lady named Doris caught my eye. After the lessons, we all went out for lemonade. The young lady told me that she was hosting a pool party for members of the group. That Saturday, I went to the gala and managed to speak to her for a few moments. I asked her if we could go out for dinner soon. "Walah" she agreed!

The next Tuesday at the end of June, I took this lady, Doris Richard, out for dinner. Very nice!! We hit it off immediately. On Friday Doris hosted another pool party for the CAC. I volunteered to help her prepare for the party. That was it. I knew that I would marry Doris Richard. She was all that I looked for in a partner for life. She was from a good Catholic family. Her father, when I first spoke to him on the phone, asked one question – are you a Catholic? (You think?)

### Doris Ann Richard – (October 2, 1945- )

Doris is quite a bit younger than me, but she was completely mature and ready for life as a wife and mother. She came from a large Catholic family (ten children) from Dubuque, Iowa. She is beautiful, well-educated, intelligent, and works very hard at whatever task she accepts. What more could a newly minted husband-to-be want or need? She has a beautiful voice; in fact she was the soloist leading the congregation at the evening Sunday Masses at St. Theresa's in Phoenix.

**We were joined in the Sacrament of Matrimony there on Thanksgiving, Nov. 21, 1975,** at St. Theresa's. (In the next seven years God blessed us with two beautiful, intelligent, highly moral children – Annette Marie and Raymond James.)

We visited Dubuque that December, and I met my new wife's siblings and their spouses, and the many offspring from the Richard line. They were a great group – fun-loving and welcoming to me. I think her parents were uncertain about me, since Doris lived away from the Dubuque area. But all in all, by the end of the visit, I think I passed the test.

In our second year of marriage, my father died. We talked it over and decided to move into that house on Sixth Avenue. Doris is an excellent handy woman. She learned the trades from her father, who had built seven houses as his family grew. Doris dived into this work, painting, plumbing, electrical – whatever needed repair. After the house was fixed for sale, we found out that she was expecting. Now it was time to find a permanent home.

We chose Mesa, AZ as the location for our home. It would be closer to the prison for my daily commute. On July 1, 1977 we moved into our new home on West Decatur (and 40+ years later we are still there!) Doris immediately took up the task of making a house into a home. Our first child was due in December, and Doris was preparing a room for our new family member. I knew nothing about what was needed, but Doris knew exactly what to do, and what to get for the baby. Doris is an excellent wife – she can do almost anything that is required.

In the early years of our marriage Doris was hired to work for Maricopa Community College - one task was the creation of TV programs for the college. Later, she got a job as a postal clerk – much better pay and benefits, and was much less stressful. During these years, her main job was not the jobs outside the house, but those *inside* the house. These included raising a family, and caring for yours truly. She also loves gardening, especially growing roses and other flowers.

### Annette Marie Kilroy

Now another challenge for a middle-aged man... children!! In December, 1977, Doris gave birth to the most beautiful baby girl in the world, Annette Marie. She was wonderful. She slept thru the night, ate well, was a joy-filled girl, and spread joy to all around her. We had moved to Mesa just before her birth. When she was six months old, I took her to the YMCA for swim classes. She took to the water like a fish. Lucky for us, Mesa had great schools and in the summer time a swim program for children from age 5 to 18. At age five, she began competing in the swim program. It was wonderful - summer vacation was taken care of... early rising, off to Carson pool for two hours of swim practice. Lunch, nap, and swimming when I came home. The day was filled. She competed well, and took home several gold ribbons, and competed for ten years

Annette grew into an intelligent, articulate, young woman. She made friends easily. She entered kindergarten at age 4 ½, the youngest in her grade. She learned to read easily and was at the top of her class from the beginning. In second grade she took first place in an essay contest. She was involved in athletics, drama, and the band while at Whittier Elementary and Carson Junior High. As a tiny 11 year old, she walked from Carson, and took a class in French with giant 16 & 17 year old high schoolers at Westwood High.

Annette was assertive and set goals for herself. As a 12 year old at Carson Junior High School, she entered into the Odd Fellows oratorical contest. She wrote her ten minute speech, practiced it in front of me. Some 12 girls were entered into the contest; she was the youngest by a year. Just before she was to deliver her speech, she rushed over to me. "Where shall I stand when I give my talk?" Because of her size, I told her to stand *in front* of the podium. She understood 'in front of the podium' as the opposite of my

meaning. There she was - all five foot one inch of her- standing behind the podium. I groaned inwardly. Only the top of her head was in view of the judges. I figured the best would be third place, but at least she could look forward to three more years of competition. The names of the 3rd place and 2nd place were called. And then - "and first place for the girls is *Annette Kilroy*." My little gal did it. She won it for the next three years and went to State where she took second place. In high school, she also entered the American Legion oratorical contest and again went to State.

When she entered Seton Catholic High School, she knew no one, since she came from Carson. All other freshmen came from local Catholic elementary schools; so had their classmates as immediate friends. Nonetheless, Annette ran for vice-president of the class. She gave a speech, and like a pro, won the office two years in a row. Because she was out of the country for her third year, she could not run for office after that.

She had taken up French in elementary and high school and mastered it. As a 15 year old, she spent a year in Belgium, taking classes in French. She received her Confirmation in Belgium. Our gal was a straight A student at Seton and a member of the National Honor Society. Despite a heavy load of classes, Annette lived a full social life. Her friends were the best at Seton. Petite as she was, she competed in track and tennis, was a cheerleader and mat maid. During her high school days, Annette worked at McDonalds and other stores. Annette is my pride and joy. At 17 she graduated from Seton and was granted a scholarship to the University of Dallas.

#### Annette leaves home for University of Dallas

She delighted in life at UD. Always with wonderful friends and a full social life, Annette was again a top student. Even with a full load, she was a working student. As a freshman, she worked at the coffee shop on campus. Annette was always industrious; her roommate was not, and frequently missed both class and work assignments. Both worked at the coffee shop. One day Annette arrived right on time for work. Her supervisor called her aside and told her that she would no longer be working at the shop. "But why, why me? I come on time and stay to the end. The other girls is often late and absent -why me?" " That is easy, Annette, it's because today is April First." Relief and laughter now replaced tears. Among other classes, she began studying German along with Philosophy and French. Study of German would have a profound influence on her.

As a sophomore, she and her best friends spent a semester at the UD Rome campus. The Rome curriculum was set upon a six-day week for the first 8 weeks, and four days in the second half of the semester. This made it possible for Annette and her friends to visit much of Europe on the long 3 or 4 day weekends. Because of her fluency in both French and German, Annette was able to see and enjoy many of the capitals of the continent. She was a big help to her friends because of her language skills. In Greece, she went swimming in the Aegean, while Plato, Aristotle, and St. Paul looked on from above. Ever the daring young lady, she took a job at Cologne as a nanny in the second semester. She planned to join her classmates for the following Fall semester in Dallas. However, things do not always go as we plan. In April, on a break from her job in Cologne, Annette and other young nannies went to the Alps for a week of skiing. While shushing down the slopes in the shadow of the Matterhorn, her skis went one way, but her knee the other! Now she was forced to return home for surgery.

But in August she was back at UD, carrying 21 credit hours and working at a hotel and tutoring. At the same time she never neglected her social life. She won the honors of Magna Cum Laude and Woman of the Year at the University of Dallas. During her school days, she mastered French and German.



After her degree at UD, she was granted a fellowship to a university in Germany. During her three years in Germany she received an advanced degree in European Studies. On and by the way, she met a tall Finn at the university. That became very important. Annette returned to the states and settled in Dallas, where she pursued a third degree – in finance. Her Finnish friend, Sakari Jaaskilainen, proposed and they were married in Dallas. They both worked in a financial institute there. In time, Matias and Sofia were born in Dallas. Later Sakari was offered a job in London, which he took. Helena was born in London. All three children are fluent in both English and Finnish This is handy, because Sakari and Annette moved to Helsinki in 2019, and the children are in a Finnish school there. The separation from our extended family is a cause for pain that must be borne, but in this age of electronics it is made less painful.

### Raymond James Killroy III

Four and a half years younger than his sister, Raymond was born in May, 1982. As said, my parents had 30 grandchildren, but not one single Kilroy boy. Now we had achieved that. It would be up to Ray to keep up the Kilroy name.

Both Annette and Ray were night sleepers. Rarely did I have to get up at night to walk them. However, as Annette was easy to raise, Ray was active – super active from the beginning. We went to the YMCA for baby swim lessons. One year old Raymond was the star. He had no fear of the water. A super joy for me was when he went between my legs and with a smile as wide as the Grand Canyon. At age three, he could swim the length of the pool and was on the swim team (smallest boy in the group) at age four. Despite his size, he excelled in sports, including ice hockey. In all baseball games, Ray would get to first on a walk or hit and immediately race to second before the catcher knew it. On the next pitch, he was at third, and would score shortly after. I took him skiing when he was in sixth grade. We paid for lessons for half a day. After lunch, he and I took the lift to the top. Ray got off the lift, turned around and began skiing backwards! Amazing to me, who never skied well.

His hockey background made skiing easy for him. By his second year in high school, he began to grow and passed me up in height. While in high school he joined the junior ROTC. At NAU he enrolled and played for the NAU hockey team and also joined ROTC, which helped pay for his college tuition. 9-11-01 was a call to Raymond. In January, 2002 he enlisted in the U.S. Army.

After training, Ray became a member of the 101st Air Borne and was shipped to Kuwait in preparation for the invasion of Iraq. With his battalion, Ray marched all the way to the top of Iraq. Ray and his battalion were housed in Mosul. Once, the battalion hosted a swim meet. Ray beat his nearest competitor by a lap.

In January, 2004, he returned to college, opting for the Air Force ROTC and a degree in justice studies. In December, 2006, Ray received his diploma and his bars as a 2nd Lt in the Air Force. Raymond was trained as a navigator on the B-52. As a result Ray and his family have lived in several places around the globe. Ray married Heather Simpson, a Westwood High girl from Mesa. She was baptized as a Catholic at Queen of Peace at the Easter Vigil in 2015 with the daughter, Kinsley, who was born in Shreveport, LA in 2015. Kendra was born in 2018 in Minot, ND. Kaycen, the 3rd daughter was born in 2020 in Germany. In January, 2022, the three girls were joined by a son, Raymond James Kilroy IV, at Camp Humphreys Base in South Korea. During this time, Ray had risen to the rank of Lt. Colonel, and the Kilroy name lives on.

Wow, the empty nest happened quickly. Where did the time go? Everyone is well, happy, and doing fine where they are living. Doris has retired from the Post Office – we have their medical insurance. She volunteers at the Mesa Arts Center. By 2020, Doris was a beaming, proud grandmother of six. She couldn't be happier, except that Annette lives in Europe with her three children. Also, Raymond, with his three beautiful daughters, continues in the Air Force and is currently living overseas.

## Queen of Peace Parish

Essential to our family life is our faith. When we moved to Mesa in 1977, we looked at various parishes in the area. Three were about the same distance from our house. Eventually, we chose Queen of Peace. We talked to Father Joe the pastor. He asked Doris to be in the choir; and me, in the catechetical class for high school students. We also became part of the Parish Council. I would remain on it until 2016, when I figured I was old enough to 'graduate.' During these years, I continued on the catechetical committee and also taught English as a Second Language in the parish. I was a lector and Eucharistic Minister for years. Even Annette taught catechism while she was in high school. Doris is still in the choir.

## St. Vincent de Paul Society

When we first met Fr. Joe, I told him that I wished to join the SVDP. He, however, wanted me to teach catechism; so I did. But by 2005, I felt a pull toward the Society. In 2005 the local conference had experienced some problems and they were re-organizing. A coordinator from the diocesan council (headquarters) spoke at the Masses that October and asked for volunteers. Doris and I joined and began full time work shortly after we finished our training session. I fell in love with SVDP. We learned to visit families, who are asking for help, in their homes.

Help consists of food or finances for rent or utilities, but we help out in any need, if we have the resources. I was immediately asked to be chaplain for the group. The chaplain always led the prayers at the weekly meetings and gave a fervirini based on the scripture. Very soon, I became the treasurer, but we only had some ten full-time members. I do have some speaking ability and was asked each year to speak from the pulpit to request assistance from the parish members. Our goal was more full-time members, food donations, and an increase of our monthly collection. I had some success, as we soon had over 40 members working regularly (once a week or more), and the monthly collection has more than doubled. In time, I became president of the parish conference for two terms of three years. Doris would follow as president of QP Conference and is presently President of the 8 SVDP Conferences in the East Valley. She is also on the Diocesan Board in Phoenix. For the last 15 years, this has been our *life, love, and vocation*.

And once more I have found family – a group dedicated to God and to the poor. And, as at MCC, they are younger by far than I. It keeps me young, working with young folks. As long as God gives me health and breath, I will continue this work of being the hands of Christ to the poor and needy.

**The End...**

**(at least so far, at age 93, on my birthday, March 15, 2022)**