

# SISTERS OF SAINT JOSEPH OF CARONDELET

St. Joseph's Provincial House

1880 Randolph Avenue Saint Paul, Minnesota 55105

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Date (s) of recordings: November 30, 1980

Oral Author Sister Margaret Pierre McQuere

Interviewer Sister Ann Thomasine Sampson

Subject of the Interview Autobiographical - 65 years old

Signatures:

Oral Author Sister Margaret Pierre McQuere

Interviewer Sister Ann Thomasine Sampson

(Kindly return this sheet to Sister Ann Thomasine Sampson at the above address.)

Parish: St. Malachy  
Kinkora, P.E.I. St. Joseph's Provincial House P 3-19-37 P. 107  
St. Paul, Minnesota

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SS. 476-68-6644

Date May 4 1937

Sister Margaret Pierre

Family Name Emily Genevieve McIver

Place of Birth Kinkora, Prince Edward Island

Date of Birth April 17, 1916

Father's Name Peter D. McIver

Father's Place of Birth Kinkora, Prince Edward Island

Mother's Maiden Name Margaret Ann McKenna

Mother's Place of Birth Bedeque, Prince Edward Island

Name and Address of Nearest Relative <sup>3-29-43</sup> Mr. Peter D. McIver (father)

Kinkora, Prince Edward Island

McIVER, SISTER MARGARET PIERRE

St. Columba

" "

G-1  
G4

August, 1969

Sept 1970

MISSIONS

*Sister Margaret Pierre*

Place	Work	Dates
<u>St. Joseph's Provincial House</u>	<u>teaching (Holy Spirit)</u>	<u>Aug. 1937-Aug. 1940</u>
<u>St. Margaret's Academy</u>	<u>teaching (Basilica)</u>	<u>Aug. 1940-Aug. 1941</u>
<u>Olivia, Minnesota</u>	<u>teaching (Aloysianum)</u>	<u>Aug. 1941-Aug. 1942</u>
<u>St. Joseph's Academy</u>	<u>teaching (St. Vincent's)</u>	<u>Aug. 1942- Aug. 1949</u>
<u>St. James Academy, Grand Forks</u>	<u>teaching (St Michael's)</u>	<u>Aug. 1949-Aug. 1952</u>
<u>Crystal, Minn.</u>	<u>teaching (St. Raphael's)</u>	<u>Aug. 1952-Aug. 1954</u>
<u>St. Joseph's Academy</u>	<u>teaching (Cathedral)</u>	<u>Aug. 1954-</u>
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McIver, Sister Margaret Pierre  
 Sister Margaret Pierre McIver

*M 35-1*

St. Joseph's Provincial House, St. Paul, Minnesota (Studying)		
Holy Spirit School	G 2	Aug. 1937
Saint Margaret's Academy, Basilica School	G 2	Aug. 1940
Aloysianum Convent, Olivia, Minnesota	Grades 1 & 2	Aug. 1941
Saint Joseph's Academy, Saint Vincent's School	G 1	Aug. 1942
St. James Academy, G.F. - St. Michael's Sch.	G 1	Aug. 1949
St. Raphael's - Crystal Village	G 1 & 2	Aug. 1952
St. Joseph's Academy - Cathedral School	Grade 2	Aug. 1954
St. Mary's, Maberly	G 1-2	August, 1958
St. Helena's Convent	G 1	August 1961
St. Pius X, White Bear, superior	& G 2	August 1965
St. Anthony's Grade School	G 1	August, 1967

ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

Sister Margaret Pierre McIver (Autobiographical - PEI to St. Paul, 65 years  
(old)

November 30, 1980

Interviewer: Sister Ann Thomasine Sampson (on tape)

SAT: Today is Sunday, November 30, 1980, and I am sitting up in a bedroom on the second floor of St. Columba's Convent, and before me is Sister Margaret Pierre McIver, the Mother of our reception. I am going to be interviewing her. Before we start, Sister, I want to find out, whether or not, we can hear you on that microphone. What did you do this morning?

SMP: I got up kind of late, and had breakfast, and went to the 10 o'clock Mass. I came home, and worked on the books, getting my monthly report ready.

SAT: O.K. Everything is fine. Would you like to start out, telling about your birth, and your home life, in Prince Edward Island?

SMP: That is a big order! I was born April 17, 1915, and I understand that it was a very stormy night.

SAT: Did you live in town?

SMP: No, we lived out in the country. It must have been on a Saturday, and according to all the books that I have seen, I don't know if I was sick, or it was the custom of the times, I was baptized.

SAT: How many brothers and sisters did you have?

SMP: We were 13 all together, and I think that three died. I think that some were dead at birth, and some lived just a short time.

SAT: How many brothers do you have? And sisters?

SMP: I have 6 brothers, and 6 sisters.

SAT: Where did you rank in the family?

SMP: I am number 5.

SAT: Did you have a hard time?

SMP: Do you mean surviving?

SAT: Yes.

SMP: No! Not really! My brothers used to get kind of rough at times, and hit me on the arms, and things like that. We got along pretty well.

SAT: What town were you born near?

SMP: <sup>Kingston?</sup> King Coray. It is about 30 miles from Charlottetown, the capital city. It is closer to Summerside, which is a larger town.

SAT: You said that you were born on a farm, so your father was a farmer? What kind of a farm did he have? Diversitified farm?

SMP: I would call it a potato farm, mostly.

SAT: Is that right?

SMP: Yes. Most of the farmers made their living on selling potatoes. Whe

SMP: and oats are also grown there.

SAT: Did you have to help with the outside work, on the farm?

SMP: No, there were enough boys, and my Father did not want the girls to work outside. I used to like to go out, but he would chase us away! (laughs) That was the boys work, he thought. I used to be dying to milk the cows, and he said, "No, because the cow did not give the large amount of milk when the girls do it, because we didn't pull hard enough!"

SAT: So your job was in the house?

SMP: Yes.

SAT: Your Mother died when you were quite young?

SMP: Yes, when I was 12 years old. She went in and had her appendix out, and in those days, she didn't have it out, soon enough! She had a blood clot, and died very suddenly.

SAT: Where did you go to school?

SMP: I went to school in our little school, called Newton. That is where I lived. <sup>Kincora</sup> King-Coray was the town, and Newton was what you would call the county, I suppose, not even a village. It had just the school, and a store, and church. I went to a country school for 6 years. After that, we all went to the Sister's school.

SAT: Which Sisters did you have there?

SMP: Sisters of St. Martha.

SAT: I have heard many stories about the fact that one of the founders of that community, had entered our community, at one time? What did you hear about this?

SMP: Yes, I don't know what her name was, but I think it was Hughes girl. I guess that she did come to our community, and for some reason, she left, and she came back to Prince Edward Island, and started the Marthas.

SAT: Are the Marthas a distinct Island group?

SMP: They have many convents there.

SAT: Where is their Mother House?

SMP: I think that it is in Nova Scotia some place. They are in Toronto too. I think that they have a hospital in Nova Scotia someplace. I'm not sure just where they originated. They did have a Novitiate on the Island, in Charlottetown. That is where their Mother House is, now. I think they are a branch of the Marthas.

SAT: What is their title? Sisters of St. Martha?

SMP: Yes.

SAT: Were they founded originally to do teaching?

SMP: Yes, and hospital work, like our own.

SAT: Are they a diocesan group?

SMP: Yes, I would say that they were. They are not now. I think that in the beginning they were.

SAT: Would you say that they were one of the few groups around that were, mostly a teaching group?

SMP: They are, on Prince Edward Island. The Notre Dames taught down there too. They have a boarding school, where I boarded for a year. But that group were from Montreal. They are French, really.

SAT: Are they the ones that wore that high piece in the front of their head dress?

SMP: Yes, that peak. They called that the steeple!

SAT: Did you go to high school with them?

SMP: I just boarded with them for a year.

SAT: How did you happen to go there?

SMP: I was in grade 11, and at that time, we didn't have grade 11 in our school. After grade 10, you had to go someplace else. I went there, and boarded with the nuns.

SAT: What was boarding school like? Were they strict?

SMP: Yes, it was strict. We could room alone, or it was cheaper to have a room mate, which I had. Or cheaper still, you could be in the dormitory. I had a room mate, and the nun in charge really used to keep her eye on us, you know?

SAT: What would your schedule be like?

SMP: We would get up at 6 a.m., in time for Mass at 6:30. Then, we would have breakfast, and we would have study hour after breakfast.

SAT: Did you have to make your beds, and all that sort of stuff?

SMP: Yes. After breakfast. Then we would go to the study hall, and study for a half hour, and then we would go to school.

SAT: Were your subjects taught in English or in French?

SMP: English. I took French, in grade school, in the 8th grade. Then, I continued it when I went to grade 12.

SAT: What other subjects did you study with the Sisters?

SMP: That really wasn't from the Sisters. It was just a boarding school, but I didn't go to school there.

SAT: You just lived there?

SMP: Yes, and I went to what they called the Prince of Wales College. It had grades 11 and 12 there. I went there, to finish my high school. When I got to the Novitiate, in St. Paul, they said that I had to have another year of high school! We took 2 years of grade 10, at <sup>Junior</sup> King Coray, and that was supposed to be like grades 10 and 11. Then, we went to Prince of Wales College, to finish. I really had 4 years

SMP: of high school, but when I entered the convent, they said that I didn't have my high school finished, so I had to take another year, in the Novitiate.

SAT: I think that one time you told me that you had the principal duties of the housework, after your Mother died?

SMP: Yes, I did that. My Aunt Minnie helped us. She did all the sewing for us, and she used to show me how to bake, and things like that.

SAT: And to cook? Sister Aimee didn't have to show you very much when it came to cleaning?

SMP: No, I knew all of that.

SAT: Now, you came from a family that produced many religious? Two Aunts in the community? How often did they come home?

SMP: I think they came every 3 or 4 years, when I was home.

SAT: Would they stay at your home?

SMP: Yes, some of them stayed at our home, and some stayed at an Aunt's home her own sister. They would be back and forth, but that is where they made their headquarters.

SAT: Who usually stayed at your home?

SMP: Sister Damien. Sister Mary Charles usually stayed with Aunt Minnie. It was the same parish, but different homes. They came home the year that I finished, what I thought was high school, it was grade 11. I decided that I was going to be a Sister of St. Martha! As soon as I heard they were coming, I thought, "Oh dear! Why are they coming this year? It was an off year." Because I remember thinking if they come home, I will have to go back with them! I had already made up my mind to go to the Marthas. I was really disappointed, when I heard that they were coming home! You know?

SAT: Yes I do. They would throw a monkey wrench into your plans?

SMP: Yes. They came home, and I never said anything to them, and they never said anything to me about entering. I guess they had heard my plans. Finally, about a week before they were supposed to come back, they said "We will be leaving in another week. Will you be ready to come with us?" I said, "No, I couldn't possibly go with them. I am going to enter the Sisters of St. Martha." They gave me a pep talk, and I knew from the time that they came home, that I was coming back with them. It was that plain to me.

SAT: And you already had 3 first cousins in the Order too? So you had 5 against you?

SMP: Yes. They got an extension of time, then, to get me ready! (laughs) I guess there was a method in their madness! They got sewing for me, and I traveled back in this postulant's uniform. I felt like a fish

SMP: out of water! The idea was, that I could travel on clergy fare, if I had the black uniform on. I came back with the 2 Aunts.

SAT: How did your Father feel about it?

SMP: He knew that I was going to the other place, and he was wishing that I had stuck to that.

SAT: But you had 5 against you? Oh dear!

SMP: Yes, and he thought that I was going so far away.

SAT: What did the Sisters do when they came home? Do you remember any of the things that they did?

SMP: Mostly they visited the people. Visited relatives, and we had a lot of them. I can remember that we would have dinner for them, and we would take turns entertaining them.

SAT: They must have been wined and dined?

SMP: Yes, we were! That has sort of died out, as time went on and on. They would go different places, but in the beginning, I can remember it meant an awful lot, big dinners, and all the relatives would get invited. It was a pretty big order, when it got going! For whoever the cook was. They mostly visited. Their time was scheduled, and they couldn't stay very long, at one place. Sister Damian was very friendly with everybody, and she was very soft hearted. Everybody just loved her. She had those piercing brown eyes, and people used to just look at her! Sister Mary Charles was a stricter type of person, and a little more quick tempered. If she didn't agree with things, she would be more outspoken than Sister Damian would. I think of the two, Sister Damian won the hearts of all. They were both very smart people. Each one was directly different in politics! Sister Damian was democratic, and Sister Mary Charles was Republican.

SAT: Is that right?

SMP: Sister Damian always tried not to talk politics, when Sister Mary Charles was around, because she knew that she would be rebuffed. Sometimes, Sister Mary Charles would come in on top of her remark about Roosevelt or who every was running for office. Sister Mary Charles, right away, would correct her on it, on that viewpoint. (laughs)

SAT: Were they close to each other? You know how some sisters are never close?

SMP: Yes, and no. They were, but they were very different, because of the viewpoint. I noticed that when they went to Bethany, they became close and Sister Mary Charles used to go and read for Sister Damian, and bring her things, and things like that. While she was active, she was very active in her own way. Toward the end of their lives, they got



SMP: older. The relatives all bent toward Sister Damian, I think. If anybody made a mistake, Sister Mary Charles corrected them, just like that. Sister Damian, wouldn't do that, but would let it pass.

SAT: She was the teacher? And Sister Mary Charles was the nurse?

SMP: Yes, and Sister Damian always saw the best in everybody. She would bring that out, and she would laugh and said, "I think that is really cute." She would look at my brothers and sisters, and see the very best in them. She would laugh at the funny things they did, or said. Sister Mary Charles might not think that it was a bit funny at all. You know

SAT: Who was your Father's favorite?

SMP: Sister Damian.

SAT: That is probably why she stayed at your home?

SMP: Yes, and she was called after him, his name was Peter Damian.

SAT: Did they know what they were going to do, before they entered? Were they rather young when they entered? Or were they trained in a profession?

SMP: In those days, I don't think that anybody had degrees. They got Teaching Certificates. Sister Damian had a teacher's certificate, and she taught a few years, before she entered. I don't think that she even thought of what she was going to do, when she entered. They did put her in teaching. I don't think that Sister Mary Charles had any nursing, before she entered. She had no certificates. They put her in teaching, too.

SAT: Oh, they did?

SMP: Yes, and she couldn't hack it at all, I guess. Then, they put her in nursing, and she was a top nurse, all her life.

SAT: Absolutely. And a wonderful administrator too.

SMP: Yes. I believe that she was out in Pasco, Washington for awhile, and Tucson, Arizona too, for a few years. She was the administrator at those two hospitals. They said that she was a wonderful nurse, and one relative of ours, that went to visit her, said that she could be away at the other end of the hall, and you knew exactly what was going on, in all four corners of the hospital. That was how they described her. She was very quick, and very alert.

SAT: You went back with them, and when did you actually enter? You were the first of our group to enter.

SMP: I came back in August.

SAT: Did you go to the Novitiate right away?

SMP: No, I went to St. Lukes and stayed with Sister St. Hugh. I entered a few days before the 15th. I was there when you came.

SAT: I came on September 8th.

SAT: How much had you seen of Sister St. Hugh?

SMP: I stayed with her for a week, after I left home.

SAT: Did you really know her very much?

SMP: No, I got to know her after I entered. She had entered by the time that I was born.

SAT: And she didn't get home very often?

SMP: She entered when she was 13 years old! I wasn't even born then. I think that she came home about every 5 years. I was young, and wouldn't see too much of her.

SAT: How about the other two, Sister Francis Marie, and Sister Georgetta?

SMP: Sister Georgetta was a little more my age. Sister Francis Marie is the same age as Sister St. Hugh. I remember them being home, and I was kind of in awe of them. I didn't get too close to them.

SAT: What do you remember about the Postulancy, and the Novitiate?

SMP: I think that it was a great big place, and I remember asking myself, "What am I doing here?" I really didn't know what it was all about. I just knew that I wanted to be a Sister. I didn't think about what I was going to do, or anything like that.

SAT: How old were you when you entered?

SMP: I was 19 years old.

SAT: Did you find all the silence hard? And the regimentation? Being in lines?

SMP: I had a couple of weeks there, before you people came, and I kind of went along with the Novices. They let me do pretty much what I liked. In that way, it was a little easier. I did get on the uniform, and I remember going to chapel, and they had to tell me where to go, all the time. They were good to me, and they tried to not leave me alone much. Sometimes I was glad to be alone! I can remember them saying, "Miss McIver is there all alone. We should go out to be with her." I would say, "You don't have to worry, because I am enjoying being alone." (laughs) I was! Glad to be alone.

SAT: Were Sister St. Margaret, and Sister Aimee there, by this time? When you first got there?

SMP: No, Sister Carmelita was there, when I first got there. She must have left, in September, or August, I don't know. I had her for about a month. Did you have her at all?

SAT: No.

SMP: Then, she must have left by the first of September. Sister Carmelita is really the one who accepted me.

SAT: What is your over-all remembrance of Sister Aimee, as the Mistress of postulants?

SMP: I thought that she was pretty nice. She was very kind, and nice.

SAT: How about Sister St. Margaret?

SMP: The same. They were both very kind, and nice to me. I think that Sister St. Margaret was a little too easy on us. But very kind, and careful, and simple.

SAT: Did you see a difference when Sister Mary Bertrand came?

SMP: Yes, she was stricter, and I was a little more afraid of her.

SAT: And the penances that we had to do?

SMP: Yes.

SAT: What classes did you study, to finish your high school?

SMP: I took Psychology from Sister Edwin, American History from Sister Constance Marie. Did we take an English course?

SAT: I don't know.

SMP: I think that I took English from some Novice there, who was going to teach in high school. I can't remember who it was.

SAT: Was it Sister Mary William?

SMP: No, I wonder if it was Sister St. Gabriel?

SAT: I don't know.

SMP: I am not too sure who it was. I think that I took a course in English because I needed 4 credits. I know that I took the History, Psychology, and something else.

SAT: Where did you have your classes? Upstairs?

SMP: Yes, in one of those classrooms.

SAT: We were going over to the college then. We never paid much attention to what else was going on.

SMP: Sister Gertrude Marie hadn't finished her high school either, and we took classes together. She had a year of high school to finish.

SAT: How about Sister Jean Margaret. Was she in any of your classes?

SMP: I don't think so. I don't remember her studying with us. It is all kind of vague, after all these years.

SAT: Yes, it really is. We had quite a motley group, you might say. We had all ages, experiences, etc.

SMP: Yes, and some were Juniors in College.

SAT: Yes, Sister Charlotte Ann, and there were 3 of us who were Sophomores. Sister Agnes Veronica and Sister Elizabeth had taught school, before they entered.

SMP: And Sister Ann Josephine?

SAT: She was in college with me.

SMP: Was there another one there, who hadn't finished high school? Beside Sister Gertrude Marie, and myself? She went to St. Margarets. I am not sure now, who they were. Sister Ann Pauline was older.

SAT: And she had been engaged?

SMP: Yes. She was in bookkeeping, or something?

SAT: Yes, we had a good mixture. The two years flew by, and the six months flew by, and we were professed. What happened to you, then?

SMP: I stayed at the Novitiate, to study for the rest of the school year. Did you?

SAT: No, I went to Grand Forks to teach.

SMP: We studied at St. Catherines, for 6 months.

SAT: Where did you live?

SMP: At the Novitiate.

SAT: I think that some people said it was like "No Man's Land."

SMP: We used that old place downstairs, the old Bakery there? We fixed that up into some kind of a study room. We were down there.

SAT: Who really had charge of you, then? For those 6 months?

SMP: I can't remember. I don't think that anybody had charge of us! (laugh) Maybe we were under the Superior of the Provincial House? I doubt it. I think it was under the Novitiate! Sister Mary Bertrand, I suppose.

SAT: I remember that it was a great shock to most of us, because we all thought that we would go out on the missions.

SMP: Yes. In August, the missions came out, and I was assigned to Holy Spirit School, and taught 2nd grade. Then, I moved over to the Provincial House to live.

SAT: Do you remember that we had Sister Mary Ellen and Sister De Lourdes for Method Classes?

SMP: Yes. Sister De Lourdes used to come in, at least every two weeks, when we were beginning teachers.

SAT: Is that right?

SMP: Yes, or once a week.

SAT: Would she come into your classroom?

SMP: Yes, to see if I was getting along O.K.?

SAT: Who was your Principal at that time?

SMP: Sister Leo Marie, and then she died, and Sister Mary Michael came in there, to take her place.

SAT: How many years were you there?

SMP: 3.

SAT: Was that the first year that Holy Spirit opened up?

SMP: Yes, I was on the first faculty. The parish opened at Cretin, and Father said Mass at Cretin High School. When the school was built, and we started teaching there in 1937.

SAT: Was it kind of exciting to be starting in a brand new school?

SMP: Yes, it was. There were some hard things about it too, because we

SMP: didn't have much to work with. You would go to do things, and there wouldn't be any supplies to work with? Like filling a whole new school took time. Supplies, and things like that.

SAT: What did you do about the noon meal? Do you remember? Did you bring your lunch from the Provincial House?

SMP: No, we had a kitchen downstairs, and a lady used to come in, and cook our noon meal for us. It was kind of nice. We had an hour at noon, and sometimes we had to be in the lunch room, and you would have to eat kind of fast. That turn only came once every two months, or so. Then, we would have to clean up, and rush back to your classroom again.

SAT: And rush back for 5 o'clock prayer?

SMP: Yes. Sometimes we walked, from Holy Spirit, to the Provincial House. Sometimes, if you were tired, you could drive with Mr. <sup>Repps</sup> who was that man?

SAT: I can't remember his name.

SMP: We didn't take the street car, it was always this private car, driven by Mr. Repps. He is dead now.

SAT: He drove an awful lot of Sisters back and forth to school.

SMP: I know it. A lot of the time I walked, because I liked to get out in the fresh air. Sister Rose Carmel, Sister Rose Francis, and I walked together. I stayed there for 3 years, until I made finals.

SAT: How did you like living at the Provincial House?

SMP: I liked it. I really liked it.

SAT: Did you have Mother Agnes Aloysius for the Superior?

SMP: Yes. Sister Agnes Clare came after her, and was the Superior. I think I had Sister Agnes Aloysius for a couple of years, and then I think I was Sister Agnes Clare. They were both really nice, and I liked both of them. They were good to the young Sisters.

SAT: Did you have recreation down in the Juniorate?

SMP: Yes, and the Seniors were upstairs.

SAT: There were a lot of old Sisters at the Provincial House then, weren't there?

SMP: Yes, and they were upstairs.

SAT: Did you get to know any of the old Sisters, very well?

SMP: Well, we used to help some of the nuns, on Saturday, to clean their rooms, and things like that. We were sort of assigned to do that. Two of us would be assigned for one person.

SAT: I never did that, because I was studying that year, and I was also teaching the Novices.

SMP: Where were you living?

SAT: I was living at the Provincial House too. In 1938. 1937-8

- SMP: her. I can't remember the one that I helped. We didn't get too close to them. We weren't in their community room, or anything like that.
- SAT: After you left Holy Spirit, where did you go?
- SMP: At the end of the 3 years, I went to the Basqiliá for a year. I thought it was the end of the world, when I left Holy Spirit. That was my first school, you know? I thought it was the end, when I left there. Sister Rose Carmel and Sister Rose Francis walked down with me, to pick up my stuff at school. It was a hot summer day, and we were sitting in my room, and I was crying, because I was leaving. Who should walk in, but Father Keefe? I was mortified! To think that a priest would come in, and find me crying! He thought that was just great, that I was crying because I was leaving there. It took that as a compliment! Anyway, he sat down, and talked with us. I was feeling a little better. I went to the Bascilia for a year, and Monsignor Reardon was the pastor. I got along famously with him, because he was an Islander too.
- SAT: Did you know anything about his family?
- SMP: Yes, his nephew had taught me one year. When I was a boarder at Notre Dame. I went to this Prince of Wales College, and he was a teacher there. He taught me English.
- SAT: Was his name Reardon?
- SMP: No, it was Conway. He is a very smart, young person. I took English from him. He was a marvelous teacher.
- SAT: That would go down very well with Monsignor? Who was the Principal at the time?
- SMP: You mean at the Basicila? Sister Bernard. She was Father Dumphy's sister. She was awfully good to me. I was just a young teacher, you know?
- SAT: What difference did you see between Holy Spirit and Basicila?
- SMP: Sister Bernard was much more easy going. She used to come in, and joke with me. Laugh at the kids, and she was very fond of little children. She was very Irish, and she would go on raving about the kids, and how cute they were. Then, she would laugh at the things they would do. She was really great.
- SAT: What was it like to live at St. Margarets?
- SMP: It was kind of institutional. Of course it was everyplace like that, in those days. We had Sister Eileen for the Superior.
- SAT: And you knew her when she had been the Provincial, when you were in the Novitiate?
- SMP: Yes. We had to be at recreation on time, and prayer on time, and all packed into that little chapel. We recreated in the classrooms, they

SMP: used it for a classroom all day, and it was our recreation room.

SAT: Do you remember which one it was?

SMP: Right inside the back entrance.

SAT: When I was in school, that was the library. Or part of the library.

SMP: Oh, was it? It was a nice room, and had a fireplace.

SAT: I think it was called M3.

SMP: I can't either. At 7:30 p.m. we would usually go over to the other building, the "Flats", and study there. We had to report back for night prayer, at 9 o'clock, and be in bed at 10 o'clock. We sometimes went to bed early, at 7:30 p.m.

SAT: Even on snowey nights, did you have to come back to the other building or could you say night prayer in the other building?

SMP: Every night we came back to the chapel, for our night prayers. It might be that we said night prayer together at 7:30, and then went to the other building to study. If you did, you couldn't talk. I don't know, how that worked. We had the night silence after night prayer. I can't remember studying in my room, and keeping quiet. We didn't talk in our rooms, anyway, in those days.

SAT: No.

SMP: We studied in that study hall, where we recreated, too. I think that is what we did. We stayed there, and studied until 9 o'clock. I think that was it. Then, we went over to the other building.

SAT: How long did you stay there?

SMP: I was at St. Margarets for one year, and I liked it very much. I had to leave.

SAT: And then what happened?

SMP: Then, I went to Olivia.

SAT: Did you get any warning that you were going to be changed?

SMP: No.

SAT: Just having it read out of the mission list?

SMP: Yes. I went to Olivia, and I loved that place too.

SAT: How long were you there?

SMP: A year.

SAT: Who was the Principal there?

SMP: Sister Claude.

SAT: Was Father ~~Pomejay~~<sup>Pomaye</sup> the pastor?

SMP: Yes. I liked the country, and it was a small mission, only 5 of us. It was really nice, and I enjoyed it. I was very disappointed when I had to go. Father ~~Pomejay~~<sup>Pomaye</sup> tried to have me stay, and he said, "Don't you move that trunk until I tell you to!" He was going to try and he

SMP: me stay there.

SAT: What grades were you teaching there?

SMP: I had first and second grades.

SAT: Was that the first time that you had first grade?

SMP: No, I had second at Holy Spirit, and second at the Basicila, and then I went into first grade, in Olivia.

SAT: Did you live in the school in Olivia? Or the part that had the boarding school?

SMP: We lived in the school, downstairs, and we taught upstairs. There were 4 classrooms upstairs.

SAT: Wasn't there a section that had been the boarding school? Do you remember any of those rooms?

SMP: No, just the nuns, and we had the whole first floor. We had a dormitory where 3 of us slept. I remember that Sister Virginia Mary was in there, and she snored. Sister Mary Madeline had nightmares! The Superior had a little private office off of that room. She used the big room for supplies, her bookkeeping, and everything. On the other side, we had the chapel, and the kitchen, and the guest diningroom.

SAT: Who was the music teacher?

SMP: Sister Mary Albert was the music teacher, when I was there. Upstairs were the 4 classrooms, so it was kind of nice in the mornings, all we had to do was run upstairs. It was nice in the winter time.

SAT: So you didn't have to go out?

SMP: No.

SAT: You stayed there one year?

SMP: Yes, and then I came to St. Joseph's Academy, to teach at St. Vincents. This was in 1941.

SAT: It was right after the Eucharistic Congress, then?

SMP: Yes, because I was at the Basílica the year of the Congress.

SAT: I see.

SMP: And then I went to Olivia. This must have been 1942 that I went to St Vincents. I was there for 7 years. I really liked those 7 years. I think it was my favorite school!

SAT: Who was the Principal there?

SMP: Sister Vincent, and Sister Francis Carmel. I was there with Sister Vincent for 5 years, and with Sister Francis Carmel for 2 years.

SAT: What did you like about it?

SMP: It was small enough, and you just had one grade of everything. You were kind of your own boss, you know?

SAT: You had a self contained classroom?

SMP: Right. You had the children all day, and there is a lot to be said



SMP: about a self contained classroom. There is a lot to be said about moving around, too. I had nice children, and it was in a nice area to teach in. The kids were nice. We didn't have too many problems. And the school was small. The Principals were great providers. At night, we came home to the Academy.

SAT: Who were your Superiors there?

SMP: I had Sister Agnes Gonzaga, Sister Annetta.

SAT: What do you remember about each of them?

SMP: Mother Annetta was quite strict, you know? I liked her, but I was a little afraid of her.

SAT: Did you ever tell her that?

SMP: No.

SAT: I did. I thought that I couldn't stand this any longer, so I will tell her.

SMP: What did she say?

SAT: She gave me a scolding, and from then on, she didn't bother me. I used to get all twisted up inside, when I walked into her office.

SMP: Sister Agnes Gonzaga is gentle and nice. I liked her very much.

SAT: Did you teach Catechism over the week-ends? Did you ever go out to the Preventorium? Yes, I went out there with Sister Jean Hare.

SAT: Did I go out with you to teach there?

SMP: No, I went with Sister Noella, you remember Mary Crea? And Sister Jean Hare. I think there was another nun that went with us.

SAT: Was this during the days of Monsignor Dourghty?

SMP: Yes, he drove us there. I had the chapel charge, and I went to school on Saturdays. I would come home from St. Catherines, and go in to clean the chapel. It was a rush. We would go to the Preventorium, after we cleaned the chapel! It was terribly busy on Saturdays.

SAT: Do you remember any of the stories that Sister Mary Frances told, about the equipment that we had there?

SMP: I never worked with her, in the sacristy.

SAT: You cleaned the body of the chapel?

SMP: Yes.

SAT: She had a crew to clean there?

SMP: Yes, and we had to sweep, and dust. I never really worked with Sister Mary Frances.

SAT: When you were working at St. Catherines, had you been told to start your work toward a degree? Is this the time for the great push for all the Sisters to get their B.A. degrees?

SMP: When I lived at the Academy, most of the time we went down to the Hill School, the Teacher's College. It seems to me that we just chose our

SMP: own subjects. Of course, it was always Religion. I think that they caught up with us, after awhile. Somebody took the bull by the horns, and told us what to take, then, at St. Catherines.

SAT: How many years did it take you to get a degree?

SMP: I think that I got it in 1957. Would that be about right? I graduated in 1934. It was over 20 years! That is terrible, isn't it?

SAT: A lot of Sisters had to work that long. It was considered par for the course. They were trying to get everybody through College.

SMP: I would have to look that up, but I think it was about 1957, or somewhere in the 50's.

SAT: Did you go to summer school?

SMP: Yes, every summer, and on Saturdays. We went to school on Saturdays, and I went to teach at the Preventorium for 7 years, while I was at the Academy. When I was in the country, I took some Correspondence Courses, in Grand Forks. I took English by Correspondence, for a couple of years. In Olivia, I didn't study while I was out there, for a year. I don't think that I studied for the year that I was at the Basicila either. There was probably no way to get over to the College on Saturdays.

SAT: Did you go to the programs, and stuff like that, at the Academy?

SMP: Yes, I went to all your MESSIAHS, operettas, and things like that.

SAT: I could always tell if it was good or not, by the number of times that the Sisters would show up! (laughs) What year did you leave St. Vincents?

SMP: I was there for 7 years, so I must have left around 1949. Then, I went to Grand Forks. I thought the end of the world was here! It was hard, you know? I was there for 7 years. I loved Grand Forks.

SAT: What school did you teach at?

SMP: St. Michaels. I had first grade, and it was different up there. You felt so free, and it was so different from living in the Cities. We were away from going to school, away from teaching on Saturdays, the C.C.D. classes. I don't know . . .

Side B

SAT: Who was the Superior?

SMP: Mother Grata.

SAT: What was she like?

SMP: She was a scream. She was very quiet, you know, and she would sneak up on you! You would never know when she was listening, and I used to work there with Sister Zita. We had lots of fun together, Sister Zita and I.

SAT: Was Sister Zita teaching piano there?

SMP: She taught at the Academy. I think that she had charge of guests, or something like that. We used to do dishes together. We used to help her with the guest's dishes.

SAT: I think that it was always a happy situation up there?

SMP: Yes.

SAT: What priest would come to say Mass?

SMP: Father Scheller was there, as the resident chaplain.

SAT: Was this the time that Sister Irmina being there too?

SMP: Yes, Sister Irmina was there.

SAT: As the Principal. <sup>SMP</sup>I remeber the joke. I took my little first graders over to the Academy, to dramatize the THREE BEARS. I don't remember if it was for the nuns, or the students there. Anyway, this little Bobby Saumer, who was the nephew to some of our nuns, and he was so cute. He was the baby bear! After the performance was over, Sister Irmina talked to this little Bobby, and he said to her, "Are you the Principal here?" I always remember Sister Irmina saying, thinking it was great that he knew that she was the Principal. She said, "Yes, how did you know?" He said, "Because you are so fat!" (laughs) She got quite a surprise there.

SAT: I can imagine.

SMP: She said, "I thought it was great that he knew that I was the Princip.

SAT: Were they talking about building the new school, at that time? Or no

SMP: Yes, there was a little talk.

SAT: Was the hole in the front yard, where Sister Yvonne had started?

SMP: No. I don't think that there was any hole. Maybe there was! One corner there, had a hole in it. Yes, there was. She was there before I was there. Yes, I guess there was, now that you speak of it.

SAT: Who was the Principal at St. Michaels?

SMP: Sister Francella was my Principal.

SAT: What was she like? As a Principal?

SMP: She was nice. We all liked Sister Francella.

SAT: Why do people like her so much? She is 73 now, and is the co-ordina at the Provincial House.

SMP: She is quiet, and she keeps her mouth closed. She is very prudent. I think that she leaves people alone, too.

SAT: But she stood back of you?

SMP: Yes. The thing that I liked about the Principal was, that if something happened in the school, you didn't hear about it, from outside. If there was some little scandal, or something with one of the kids, with the family in school, she would tell you. At recess time; she would say, "Now, I am telling you this, so you won't be hearing it elsewhere

SAT: Or a different version of the story?

SMP: Right. She always kind of let us know things that were going on. She was very human too. You know? We enjoyed a good time with her. She got along well with the priests.

SAT: Did you ever feel tension between St. Michaels and St. Mzrys? While you were up there? With Monsignor Fletcher?

SMP: Yes, a little bit.

SAT: I started up there, when I first went out to teach. I got to know some of the people there, then.

SMP: Sister Ann Celine was the Principal at St. Marys school. We didn't communicate too much, between schools.

SAT: How many years were you there?

SMP: I was up there 3 years. I really enjoyed being there.

SAT: Did you ever know where you were going next?

SMP: No, I was on the list! Then, I got posted to Crystal next. They had a new school there. I came down there for 3 years, and lived in the school.

SAT: I didn't know that. Is this at St. Raphaels now?

SMP: Yes. I was one of the first teachers there.

SAT: Who was the Principal?

SMP: Sister Ellen Joan was the Principal. We lived up in the classrooms, at one end of the school.

SAT: Did you take a number of classrooms for dormitories?

SMP: We took one classroom for the dormitory.

SAT: How many of you slept in there?

SMP: I think about 4 of us. Sister Ellen Joan had a little private room, up three or four steps, and it was kind of an office there. That was her private room. Then, for one of those years, the priests had no place to live, and he lived in the office, downstairs. That was it. He slept in one of the little cubbyholes <sup>upstairs</sup> ~~upstairs~~. He lived there, for a year, too.

SAT: Was this Father Fenelon? Was this before he had the polio?

SMP: Yes, the poor man.

SAT: Were you there when he got the polio?

SMP: No, I had just left there.

SAT: Were you there just that one year?

SMP: No, I was there 3 years.

SAT: What did you see different there, from Holy Spirit? In starting a brand new school?

SMP: I had much more experience. I could cope with situations better. The

SMP: families were all real young families at Crystal. There were so many of them. I had about 50 children in my room, you know?

SAT: Was this second grade?

SMP: Yes, I had second, and one year I had part of the first. Sister Henry Ann had too many first graders, she had 60, so I had to take 10 of her first graders. I had 40 second graders. It was a hard year. Then, we had C.C.D. on Saturdays.

SAT: Didn't you have as many in C.C.D., as you did in your regular school?

SMP: Yes, we did. It was hard in some ways, because it was muddy and dirty around the school, because the playground wasn't finished really. But I liked being at St. Raphaels, because the parents were so great. Always helping with everything. They were awfully good to the nuns. Always bringing us stuff. Then, they starting building the convent, and they had everything finished, and I stayed home that summer to scrub, and wax, and clean, and then my name was on the mission list! I heard Sister Ellen Joan say, to Mother Bertha, that I was very disappointed that I couldn't live in the new convent. "Well," she said, "You know that we wanted her for a co-ordinating teacher at the Cathedral."

SAT: What is a co-ordinating teacher?

SMP: I had a student teacher, with me. She wanted me to go there, because not everybody would take a student teacher. I suppose that they call on the young ones to do it. I got shipped back to the Academy again.

SAT: Who was the Principal at the Cathedral?

SMP: Sister Ignatia.

SAT: And that was a long trip to the Cathedral school, and back?

SMP: Yes, and it was a hard school. I was there for 3 years.

SAT: Who was the Superior at that time, at the Academy?

SMP: Would that be Sister Annetta? Would that be in the 60'?

SAT: No.

SMP: The 50's?

SAT: Sister Agnes Gonzaga had come back, and then we had Sister Elizabeth Marie come in, around the time of when you went to Crystal. What year did you go to Crystal, can you remember?

SMP: I left the Academy in 1949, and went to Grand Forks for 3 years, and that would be 1952. Then, I went to Crystal for 3 years, and that was about 1955. I must have gone to the Academy about 1956 or 1957.

SAT: About that time, I wouldn't know who was the Superior.

SMP: Weren't you living there then?

SAT: No, I left there in 1952.

SMP: It must have been Mother Annetta?

SMP: Yes, it was Mother Agnes Clare!

SAT: She was much easier to live with, than Mother Annetta?

SMP: Yes, that is right. I was there for 3 years, then.

SAT: Is this the time when all the young ones are coming in? Had they started to do something with the dormitory upstairs? Making it into small ~~rooms~~ <sup>rooms</sup> ~~rooms~~ <sup>rooms</sup>?

SMP: I remember when I was there, I was in that big room downstairs, and it was supposed to be a kind of Infirmary. Sister Amelia Francis came home from the hospital, and she was in there with me. She was sick, you know? I couldn't sleep at night, and I told Sister Agnes Veronica. She said, "We are going to put a partition up, in that room." They put a partition between us, and made private rooms in there. I think that was my first private room! From 1934 to 1957!

SAT: They were beginning to realize that they couldn't do that anymore. What came into your classroom? A series of potential teachers? At the Cathedral?

SMP: Yes. People would walk through.

SAT: Who were the Supervisors?

SMP: Sister Mary Ellen, and Sister de Lourdes. That was in the 50's. I stayed there 4 years, I think. Things got hard, and you got tired the walking up the hill, and it wasn't only that. You had to take the line in the evening, because of all the vandalism going on, with the kids.

SAT: Did you have to take them over to church?

SMP: Yes, and practice for first communion, up the hill, and down the hill. It was hard. Where did I go after the Cathedral? I think that I went to Waverly.

SAT: Out to the country?

SMP: Yes, and I was 3 years there. That was another nice location. Really, you know? It was really nice.

SAT: Who was the Superior there?

SMP: Sister Mary Bertrand., followed by Sister Michaeline.

SAT: Was she the Superior?

SMP: Yes, one year. Then, she got transferred, and Mother Mary Bertrand came.

SAT: Was this the time that Sister Mary Bertrand was beginning to show signs that she was getting senile?

SMP: Yes, in fact, she had a little stroke while she was there. It happened one night, and the next morning she could hardly remember things. We didn't know what was wrong with her? She said, "I think that I had a little stroke."

SAT: I think that the other Sisters found it rather difficult to be there?

SMP: Right. She would fall asleep a lot. It is funny that they left her i

SAT: Sometimes the message just didn't get through. They did as they were told. Probably when they went out there, they didn't see what you saw every day.

SAT: Did you teach second grade then?

SMP: I had first and second grades. I had the 2 grades in the room. I was in the new school, of course, when I went to Waverly. It was a beautiful room. That school is gone, too, you know?

SAT: Yes. But some nuns from another order are there, to do the C.C.D. wor aren't they?

SMP: Yes, and they find it nice to have that place. It belongs to the pari I suppose that they have their C.C.D. classes in there?

SAT: Yes, and the Sisters who were teaching there, lived there. They had part of it sealed off, for their living quarters.

SMP: I went there when I left the Cathedral. Where did I go after Waverly? I went to St. Helenas in Minneapolis.

SAT: Did you live in the new convent?

SMP: Yes.

SAT: How old was it when you were there? It was 25 years old, when we left there.

SMP: It was probably 15 years old, when I was there.

SAT: Was Monsignor Rowan still alive?

SMP: Yes, he was still going on.

SAT: Who was the Principal?

SMP: Sister Clarinda.

SAT: Was she the Superior too?

SMP: Yes.

SAT: The same person did the 2 jobs?

SMP: Yes, all the time that I was there. She was still there, when I left.

SAT: Did Monsignor come in very often to your room?

SMP: No, he didn't come into the rooms at all. He would come into the offi and he didn't like to see the kids in the hall, going to the bathroom! He couldn't understand why the kids would be always in the hall!

SAT: Is that right?

SMP: Every time that he came into school, he said that there were children in the hall! Sister said, "They are going to the bathroom." He said, "Can't they control their kidneys?" (laughs) He couldn't understand it! He didn't mind the first and second grades, but he couldn't see why the bigger kids had to go.

SAT: Until it was recess time?

SMP: We knew what time he would be around, so we tried to keep the kids in

- SMP: the classrooms. He came in about 20 after 9, or 9:30 a.m. Sister Clarinda said to get our periods in, after that. (laughs) I had the first grade, so I tried to get that in, before he would come into the building. Then, the rest of the classes would go later on, after he would leave! It was a nice school though, St. Helenas. I liked it.
- SAT: Did you find the people there, co-operative?
- SMP: Yes, I liked the people there. I was there for 4 years.
- SAT: That was kind of a long period of time.
- SMP: Yes, and when you teach the kids, it is pretty much the same, what goes on, day after day, no matter what school you are in.
- SAT: Yes, and you get into a routine?
- SMP: Yes, and there isn't anything too exciting that happens.
- SAT: Normally, you would have to get the children ready for their First Holy Communion, wouldn't you?
- SMP: No, not in first grade. When I got into second grade, then I did.
- SAT: That is what I mean.
- SMP: When I had a double grade, like in Olivia, you would have to do it. You would have to get your second graders ready. At St. Vincents I had first grade for 7 years. Here, at St. Columbas, I have second grade.
- SAT: You should be quite an expert on knowing what to do?
- SMP: Things have changed so much, and I am not doing now, what I did before like 15 years ago. It is so different. From St. Helenas, I went to Pius X .
- SAT: I never saw Pius X. I saw White Bear Convent. Was Pius the X a new school?
- SMP: Yes, but I wasn't there the first year that it opened. It must have been about the 4th year, when I got there.
- SAT: Where did the Sisters live? Did you go out from St. Agathas? Or did they have a convent there?
- SMP: In the beginning they lived at St. Agathas, and went out every day. When I went there, they had a convent. A new convent, and it was lovely. I was only there for 2 years, and that is the year that I got sick. I got sick in January, and left there.
- SAT: What did you say that was called?
- SMP: I know that I forgot it before! I'm trying to think of the name of it. It was a virus. It attacks the largest nerve in your head, near the brain. It is the nerve that controls your sight, and hearing. It struck that nerve. It starts with R.
- SAT: It is very unusual.
- SMP: Yes. There is only one in a million people, to get it.



SAT: Isn't there a special Doctor who diagnosed it?

SMP: Yes, and that is the name of the disease. It was Doctor Holman, here in St. Paul, who is the German Doctor who treated me.

SAT: How did you happen to go to him?

SMP: My Doctor knew about him. He got him to come in to see me. He ordered these X-rays for my head.

SAT: How could they tell from the X-rays? Did they see damage done to the nerves?

SMP: I suppose that he could see that the nerve was thrown out of line. He started the treatment.

SAT: What kind of treatment did you have?

SMP: Intervenuous feedings, and there was medicine that they put in them.

SAT: How long did that take?

SMP: The feedings took all week. I got so sick from them, at the end of the feedings, when I started getting very sick from them. He said, "There is just one more!" I could take that, and then they stopped the treatment. It starts with an R.

SAT: The name will come back to you. You had the effects of that, for quit awhile, didn't you?

SMP: Yes, and I still have. My eyelid droops, and the muscles are weak.

SAT: It is marvelous to think that you got over it. Sometimes your face twists a bit?

SMP: Yes, it was twisted from the damage to the nerves, and never really straightened out.

SAT: I think that you have done remarkably well. What were the chances of you getting over it?

SMP: He didn't think that I would get over it, but that I would be a vegetable, for the rest of my life! He said that I was really a good patient and I responded to the treatment.

SAT: How long were you out of school?

SMP: About a year. Then, the next year I went back, and had the surgery.

SAT: Where did you spend your year out of school?

SMP: Some of it was the summer, so I stayed at Blessed Sacrament for awhile 2 or 3 months. Then, I went back to Pius X. I stayed there until I got a mission. I got sick in January, and went back to school the next September. I was out of school about 9 months. But then, I had surgery at Thanksgiving time, and I was out of school again for awhile. I was at St. Anthony's then.

SAT: Was that for the same thing?

SMP: Yes.

SAT: What kind of surgery was it?

SMP: He wanted to operate on the bone, because the bone was leaning on the nerve. The nerve was not getting any nourishment, so he wanted to scrape the bone, so the blood could get in.

SAT: Was this the same Doctor?

SMP: Yes. Once the blood started getting into that nerve, it got better.

SAT: Do you ever see that Doctor now?

SMP: Yes, I still go to him. Anytime that I have trouble. He said that he would know in 6 months if my hearing would be restored. The next day, when he came in, I said, "I can hear better already." He said, "No, you can't." I said, "I know that I can." He didn't pay any attention to me. As soon as I left the hospital, I went into his office for a hearing test, and it was better. He was very pleased. It is going again, a little bit, because there is a loss of hearing.

SAT: Well, we are reaching that age, anyway!

SMP: Yes, that is what he said. Sometimes it is hard to hear the little voices of the children, but I am still able to teach.

SAT: I think that is tremendous. You went to St. Anthony, after Pius X?

SMP: Yes, and I was there for 3 years. Then, the school closed. That brought me here, to St. Columbas. That was 12 years ago.

SAT: Was that about 1968?

SMP: Yes.

SAT: What do you remember about the closing of St. Anthony?

SMP: I just remember that it was such a sad thing, because it was a beautiful school. It was the nicest first grade room that I ever had. Beautiful counters, all the way around. The room had a sink in it. Lovely floors, and it was a beautiful school. It wasn't too big either. We had about 30 pupils in each grade.

SAT: And the grade and high school were together?

SMP: Yes.

SAT: Who was the Principal there?

SMP: Sister . . . the one that left.

SAT: We have had so many that left!

SMP: The one that married the priest there.

SAT: Oh, you mean Sister Jonathan?

SMP: Yes. She was the Principal, of the high school.

SAT: Who was the Superior?

SMP: Sister Sarah was the co-ordinator I think. They had co-ordinators by this time.

SAT: By this time, the changes had come?

- SMP: Yes, I think that Sister Sarah O'Neill was the co-ordinator, and Sister Mary Calder was the Principal of the grade school.
- SAT: Had they been talking about it for quite a while? That they would close it?
- SMP: No, not the first two years that I was there. They started talking about it toward the end of my third year there. Sister Mary Calder came and told me that they would probably would be closing the school, and that our kids would be going to St. Cyrils School. That would be quite a little walk from St. Anthonys.
- SAT: Was this the time that they were consolidating?
- SMP: Yes.
- SAT: Did anyone come around, as a committee, to evaluate the school?
- SMP: No, they didn't come to St. Anthony. I didn't know if I could take the long walk, every day, as I had had surgery. I wasn't supposed to be out in the cold too much. She couldn't guarantee a driver, every day, either. I said that it would probably be better if I would move, to someplace near the school? I got in here then, at St. Columbas.
- SAT: Did any of our Sisters teach over at St. Cyrils?
- SMP: Yes, Sister Sylvia did, Sister Sylvia Kroftchek. There were only a few of us, at St. Anthonys. She and I were the only nuns there, with Sister Mary Calder.
- SAT: What did Sister Mary Calder do, then?
- SMP: She was the Principal, and she taught at St. Boniface, across the street.
- SAT: I see. So the classes were split between those 2 schools? Why do you think they decided to close St. Anthonys, and keep St. Boniface and St. Cyrils open?
- SMP: I think it was the money thing. The high school went down, after our grade school closed.
- SAT: Did it?
- SMP: They had built that new building, and they had to pay for it. They had a big debt there.
- SAT: I think that was still true in Father Moins' time.
- SMP: I imagine that it was the debt on the building.
- SAT: I think the high school closed the same year that St. Joseph's Academy closed, in 1971.
- SMP: It was too bad, because it was a lovely school.
- SAT: Did you see a lot of turmoil in the convent, at that time?
- SMP: Yes, and so many of the Sisters were leaving the community. Four of them left there, in one year.
- SAT: Were you there when Sister Jonathan left?

- SMP: I had just left there, in August, and I think she left during the next year.
- SAT: But you had no inkling that she was going?
- SMP: No, because that new priest just came in, when I left. I left in August, and he had just come in June.
- SAT: Who was the pastor when you were there?
- SMP: Father Mertz.
- SAT: The one that is at Assumption now?
- SMP: Yes. He left, and this other one came. Father Gene Somebody? In fact she was kind of scared of him coming in! He didn't seem to be too fond of women! I was going to meet him in the hall one day, and he turned and went the other way! (laughs)
- SAT: That was a switch!
- SMP: I don't know what happened?
- SAT: During that time too, our prayer life got all changed around too? Our habits got changed around.
- SMP: I changed when I went to St. Anthony. After I left Pius X. I changed the mornigny that I left Pius X. I switched into the new xontemporary look.
- SAT: Did you spend a lot of time getting ready for the switch?
- SMP: No, because I had been sick, and wasn't able to sew. Different people helped me get ready. I wasn't too interested, because I wasn't feeling well. But I did sew, when I got here, the first year. It was kind of quiet at St. Anthonys. The nuns weren't around, because they were all young, and they were out a lot. I was home alone, a lot. I had the sewing machine to myself, so I got sewing.
- SAT: How did you ever get through those years?
- SMP: I did.
- SAT: Then you came to St. Columbas, and have been here for 12 years? What changes have you seen here? How many Sisters were here, when you first came?
- SMP: I think there were about 17. There are 10 of us, now. There is a great change in the school, and I am the only full time teacher, Sister teacher, left here. There must have been 8 or 9 nuns in the school, when I first came here. Sister Lucienne, Sister Afra, Sister Nicola, Sister Alice Gertrude, Sister Rose Cecile, Sister Justin, . . .
- SAT: And yourself?
- SMP: Yes, myself.
- SAT: Who was the Principal?
- SMP: Sister Francis Mary. And the one that just died, at Bethany, Sister ~~Hermine~~ <sup>Hermine</sup> Hermoine. She was here.

SAT: You had both the old and the young?

SMP: Yes. Sister Marion Riley was here too. There were a lot of nuns, when I came here, that were teaching in the school.

SAT: What did some of them give, for reasons for leaving? The school? Was it age?

SMP: Sister ~~Hermoine~~<sup>Hermine</sup> retired, and Sister ~~Lucinee~~<sup>Lucienne</sup> and Sister Afra. Sister Afra died while she was here. Sister Nicola was getting out of school because of her hearing. But I think that she went to St. James and taught there for a few years. Sister Alice Gertrude retired. I guess most of them retired. Sister Rose Cecile is taking care of her Father. Sister Justin is still here, part time. Sister Ann Celine just came, and she is part time.

SAT: And Sister Francis Mary left and is at St. Pascals?

SMP: Yes.

SAT: What difference do you see when the school was run by a Sister, and now when it is run by a lay person?

SMP: There are good things, and bad things. Men aren't quite as fussy about how things look, now. They get the overall picture, of everything, and they are good managers, you know? Tom is a very Christian person. He has some very good ideas, but he doesn't see the dirt. Which is kind of hard on women!

SAT: And especially for a Sister?

SMP: Yes.

SAT: What about the curriculum? Is there a big change in the curriculum?

SMP: Yes. I think the Junior highs are down.

SAT: What about your curriculum in the second grade. Do you have a big change in what you taught in the beginning, and now? They way you are now teaching?

SMP: It has improved, I think. I think the program has improved. You teach according to levels, now. You put the child on the level, where he belongs, so that now in second grade, we have level 5. We started with 4, and we have 5, 6, and 7. The child can be on one of those levels, where he belongs. If he is slow, he probably belongs on level 4.

SAT: Would that be like the "Bluebirds?"

SMP: Probably. You would have 3 groups for reading, but that was harder, because you had the other groups down there, that you had to take care of. This way, you just have your one level. I have level 7.

SAT: What do you do with the rest of the children?

SMP: The rest are in Miss Kochevar's room. Her level 7's come into me.

SAT: Oh, I see.

SMP: My level 5's go into her room. If we had 3 teachers, it would still be better. We used to have 3 teachers.

SAT: What other changes do you see in the curriculum?

SMP: I would say that in Reading there is a great improvement. I think that our Language-Arts program is probably better. We have a definite text for it, now. And a definite outline.

SAT: Who does the Supervising? You had Sister Mary Ellen, and Sister de Lourdes in the beginning.

SMP: Sister Bernadette Newton is one of the Supervisors. She came, but she didn't supervise the rooms. She just talked to the faculty.

SAT: Kind of like a consultant?

SMP: Yes, I think so. There is really no supervision.

SAT: They don't come in, and write a report on what you do?

SMP: No. You are kind of on your own.

SAT: And these Sisters who are consultants, they are for the whole Arch-diocese, aren't they?

SMP: I guess so, yes.

SAT: Not just for our community?

SMP: No.

SAT: Is Sister Lucy Knoll still in that kind of work?

SMP: I don't know.

SAT: I interviewed her, and Sister Angela Schreiber was in that, too.

SMP: She and Sister Angela were together. I don't know what they do now.

SAT: I will have to find out.

SMP: Isn't Sister Lucy teaching?

SAT: I think so, but I can't keep up to what they are going to do! What about the Religion program? You used to have the CHRISTIAN INHERITANCE program?

SMP: Yes, and we just transferred this year, to something else. Now, we are all feeling our way again.

SAT: Is that right?

SMP: Yes, and I don't know if I like it or not. It is so hard to get away from CHRISTIAN INHERITANCE, but it was getting sort of outdated.

SAT: And nobody was picking it up, to re-write it?

SMP: No. It is too bad, because I like the second grade one on the Holy Eucharist. It is good. The SUNDAY VISITOR course, you have to do a lot of it, yourself. It is not very well developed, I don't think. However, we put it in the school, and we haven't had an evaluation of it, yet.

SAT: Did you vote to put it in? Or who decided on it?

- SMP: No, but Tom just put it in, and told us to try it out. He never has asked for any evaluation. He just sort of put it in.
- SAT: Do you think that he will ask for an evaluation?
- SMP: I don't know what is going to happen.
- SAT: Did he just put it in this year?
- SMP: Yes.
- SAT: What about Music and Art?
- SMP: They are the forgotten arts. There is a Music teacher in the school, and she takes each class about once a week. That is all they get. She teaches Junior High in the morning, or until 10:30, and then she has Music. From 10:30 until noon. She gets to each class, about once a week. I think that is for the first 6 grades.
- SAT: Do they learn the fundamentals of reading Music, and the Theory, and things like that?
- SMP: No, that is all gone.
- SAT: What about Art?
- SMP: Each one teaches their own Art.
- SAT: Where can you go for help, if you need it? Do they have classes in the summer time, if you wanted help in these classes? Where do these teachers get help, if they need it?
- SMP: I don't know. What ever they get, they get in college, I guess.
- SAT: In the old days, it was a whole different ball game?
- SMP: Yes.
- SAT: What about the Liturgy? Do you see the changes? Do you have the children help get ready for their Mass?
- SMP: Yes, and they are sort of used to helping. We have Masses for the children, like the 3rd grade had the Thanksgiving Mass, and the teacher there, helped them. They planned that whole thing. They made banners gifts of God, and had pictures on it. And a verse. They brought up food for the poor, at the Offertory. The children led the petitions, and the Readings.
- SAT: That is wonderful.
- SMP: And the whole school did the singing. The second grade is supposed to have December 8th, but that is a parish Mass, so Father said not to have the second graders do it. I am glad of that.
- SAT: Will you have a Mass before Christmas, with the children?
- SMP: No, I don't think so. Some other rooms are scheduled for that. I will just be out of it, and I am just as glad. It is hard to get these little people get ready for it. Last year, we had the Ascension Mass. We dramatized the Gospel. The Apostles going up to the top of the mountain!

SAT: That takes a lot of practice?

SMP: Yes, it does. It takes a lot of time.

SAT: But those are the things that they never forget! It leaves an indelible mark on them.

SMP: Yes, it does.

SAT: What changes do you see in community living?

SMP: I think most of our community is at the table together. We are an older community here, and it seems that the older ones go off to their rooms. Those older ones who are teaching, and are tired, go to their rooms. There are not many people around.

SAT: What do you think is the biggest problem that we have in our community today? What area?

SMP: I think it is communication. It seems to me, that there are some that we can't communicate with. If they are around, nobody wants to communicate with them.

SAT: What do you think about this whole area of authority? Do you think that Sister Kathleen Marie has enough authority? Or that she has been hampered by the way our Government plan works?

SMP: I think that she should have a little more authority, to make very definite decisions. Like that vow question for instance. I think that someone should step in there, and say, "You have to make Final Vows after so many years, or leave!"

SAT: What about getting missions?

SMP: I think that she should feel free to ask people, if she wants them to go places. If they don't want to go, they should speak up. I think it would probably be easier, because now nobody wants to go, because they don't know where they can go! Where would you go to teach, these days?

SAT: I don't know, because we are at that age, where we are ready to retire.

SMP: Sister Mary left here, and she didn't know where to go? To St. Patrick's. She said it was the same there, as it was here. What she wanted to get rid of here, is over there. Like Christmas programs, and all that stuff.

SAT: Does she still have to have them over there?

SMP: Yes.

SAT: Well, I think that we are definitely in a state of transition. It is not going to change overnight.

SMP: You know what you have, and I am too old to change! I don't want to go into a new school, now. I would rather finish up here.

SAT: I am sure that they are glad to have you.

SMP: Yes.



SAT: pletely alone?

SMP: He leaves us alone. Tom does the hiring and firing!

SAT: And you sign a contract?

SMP: Yes.

SAT: What does the contract call for?

SMP: Teach 2nd grade, and any different duties that you have around the school, until June of one year, to the June of the next year. There is no tenure.

SAT: How much vacation does it say that you have?

SMP: Until June until August 15th.

SAT: And there is a certain amount of money specified? What does a Sister get today, for teaching full time? In a parish school?

SMP: It went up this year. We don't get the checks anymore, but I think that it is \$5,500. That includes your retirement. I don't know anymore, because the checks don't come to the house.

SAT: How do you run the finances here? Do you get the amount of money that you need?

SMP: Yes, we send in for like \$2,000 a month.

SAT: What does the \$2,000 include? Budgets for the Sisters?

SMP: Yes, and we get the Social Security money, and that is another thousand. It is a little over a thousand. We get our budget, our food, pay our rent, etc.

SAT: So any Sister working in the school, the parish pays for their rent?

SMP: Yes.

SAT: What do they ask for rent?

SMP: \$25.00 a month, here. Some of the others are paying \$50.00, which isn't very much.

SAT: No.

SMP: That is just for water, heat, etc. I don't think that is very much to pay.

SAT: No, because in an apartment you would pay at least a hundred, for a bedroom. Do you make the arrangements with Sister Elaine Conrad? What do you think that you need? Or what?

SMP: No, it was set here with Father. We got a letter from him, over a year ago, that he was raising the rent to \$45.00 a month. We kind of leave it to him to decide. Nothing comes from the Pro House, or the Ad Center. I just kind of play it by ear!

SAT: Where do you send the checks that you get for teaching to whom?

SMP: It is sent right in to the Ad Center.

SAT: And the money that you get from the Social Security?

SMP: That is kept in the house.

SAT: Is that all?

SMP: Yes.

SAT: Do you run your house on the Social Security?

SMP: No, we ask for say \$2,000 a month, from the Ad Center.

SAT: Do you have to make an accounting for everything that you spend?

SMP: Yes. That is what I am doing now.

SAT: Do you find a big difference in this way of doing the bookkeeping? Than in the olden days, when we had the annuties, and all that? Or do you ever take care of the books before?

SMP: It is about the same. You take what you need, anyway. You have to pay your bills! It is the same idea. Only you get your money from them, instead of the check coming to you.

SAT: And you don't have a Music Department bringing in any money?

SMP: No.

SAT: Thank you so much Sister, for this interview.

SMP: You are welcome.

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