

Interview with Adrian Lederman, Francis Voelker and Ludmila Voelker

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Interviewed by John LeDoux and Al Nielsen.

LeDoux: Okay. This is an interview being conducted for the Central Minnesota Historical Center on June 26, 1979. Interviewing is John LeDoux and Al Nielsen. Today we are talking with some folks at the Newman Center. We are talking with Pastor Adrian Lederman and Professor Francis Voelker and Ludmila Voelker, who have been members of this parish for some time. How many would you say it has been about?

Mr. Voelker: We started in 1964.

LeDoux: Okay. First of all I'd like to get a little bit of personal background but with you Pastor, if you could give just a little of your parishioner background—date of birth--

Lederman: Oct. 25, 1936, Brandon, MN.

LeDoux: Brandon, MN, okay.

Lederman: Went to Duluth District School for 8 years and 3 at Brandon High School and then spent some time in the vocational school doing some mechanic work and the service and finally went to St. John's four years after high school. I think I started 1957. And graduated from St. John's in 1962 and went on to St. – to Washington, D.C. and the seminary, the National College and was ordained in 1966. And spent 5 years at St. Mary's Cathedral here in St. Cloud, and few

months at St. Paul's and since 1971 at the Newman Center. This would be the 8th year-no actually the 9th year. Not as a doctorate is.

LeDoux: When did you first feel that you received a calling to the priest? When did you first become interested in pursuing that?

Lederman: Oh, there was no really definite time. A few years before I went to St. John's, I started getting my degree, it was getting kind of strong. I kind of resisted for a while. I think it gradually evolved and I didn't really know for certain until about 1965, after about seven years in college at the time.

LeDoux: Okay. And you were at following graduation from the seminar, you were going to Cathedral. Was it your first assignment?

Lederman: Right.

LeDoux: And you were at St. Paul's for 3 months?

Lederman: Ah-huh, St. Paul's for 3 months.

LeDoux: Okay, and you have been here since 1971 you said?

Lederman: Yes, since 1971.

LeDoux: Okay, Mr. Voelker, do you want to give us essentially the same general background about yourself then?

Mr. Voelker: 1931 born in Wisconsin, _____, Wisconsin. Went to prep school and college at St. John's. Graduated from prep school in '49. Jan of '53 graduated from St. John's, that would be -- 2 years in the service and another semester at St. John's to get my education credits to be

certifies to teach. And went to Foley, taught English and coached a whole bunch of sports for four years and during the summer time I picked up my masters at St. Cloud. And the summer of '59, I was hired for one year, I thought, and now twenty of them have gone by. I started out in the English department and I can't recall just when it happened, it was an evolving kind of thing from English to Mass Communication sometime in the early 70s. Part time everything to finally full-time Mass Comm.

LeDoux: Uh-huh. And you have been a member of this parish for how long?

Mr. Voelker: Well, ah, we got involved with Newman, in a way, I guess, 59-60 but that then was just a house and Newman was a club. There were about 20 active members that, ah-club is the best way to define it, a social organization. About the earliest was Japland and our association with him goes back to St. John's, when we had a tri-college social organization. I won't tell you about that, since we got into trouble with it.

Mrs. Voelker: What can I say?

Mr. Voelker: But that is it essentially, unless you want something more.

LeDoux: We'll get to the details in a moment. Mrs. Voelker will you give a little of your background then?

Mrs. Voelker: Okay, I was born in Dodge, Nebraska, in the heart of Bohemian country in 1930 and I grew up at Litchfield, Minnesota and from there went to St. Ben's where I got my B.A. degree. I taught for 3 years at Holdingford as an English teacher and a Librarian. I took ten years out to raise a family of 5 children and when the last one was old enough to go to nursery school, rather than running an informal one for no pay, I decided to get back and work my Masters of

Arts in English. I got that degree 1968 and in that year joined the faculty full time and I have been here ever since.

LeDoux: And what was your maiden name then?

Mrs. Voelker: Padrnis.

LeDoux: How was that spelled, the Padrnis?

Mrs. Voelker: P-A-D-R-N-I-S.

Mr. Voelker: People in her family really pronounce it Smith.

LeDoux: Okay, I don't know what was your birth date?

Mrs. Voelker: November the 8th, 1930.

LeDoux: And?

Mrs. Voelker: I don't think you got his.

Mr. Voelker: Jan 5, 1931.

LeDoux: We touched on it just briefly, but I would like to talk about how Newman Center originated. Will just start there and then anybody who can remember can--

Mrs. Voelker: Well, I know there were some early names which are still around the diocese.

Father ____, who featured in The Visitor, not this past week but the week before; had been an early chaplain. Father Eisermans had been here. Father Illies had been, I guess like-officially like a statesman at St. Mary's and then would come over here to help, you know, around the Newman Center.

LeDoux: Was this on an assigned basis or was this strictly a volunteer show?

Mrs. Voelker: Ya.

Lederman: It was assigned basis. Ya. Most of these priests were from a chaplain's _____ of St. Cloud, operating as an assistant from St. Mary's.

LeDoux: I see.

Lederman: An extension of the ministry of St. Mary's. Perry _____ was another. I think Perry _____ was the original appointed pastor for the University students.

LeDoux: I see, Then there was no on the job training?

Lederman: No.

Mrs. Voelker: You see there was no parish as such here until 1964. Prior to that time all faculty and students belonged to whatever their parish was, according to the territory. For instance, we were members of St. Aug's. And then when the church was established here and the Bishop gave us a choice to stay in our territorial parish or to come to Newman Center.

LeDoux: Ah, also like to ask, was this started, you know, by the actual church here, as an organized parish by diocesan action then pretty much?

Lederman: It started out as a ministry basically for students out of St. Mary's Cathedral. The Center was built by the diocese through the assistance of Holy _____ program, which was through the educational funding Catholic Education and College Ministry. Then in '64, when this place was completed, it wasn't actually a parish, it was sort of--

Mrs. Voelker: What was the official name?

Lederman: Well, officially, I guess, I could give the--

Mrs. Voelker: You have a chart.

Lederman: Ya, I have a ____ tree. They found it hard to place, but a quasifare, I guess, would be the best.

Mr. Voelker: An extension of St. Mary's – like a chapel of St. Mary's or something like that.

Lederman: It became a full parish, I think, in 1972 after I came here. One of the first things that, I think, I helped work on and planned to establish is, I think, the full parish.

LeDoux: But the center itself, ah the construction of it, that was when? 60--

Mrs. Voelker: That was '64.

Lederman: It was finished in '64.

LeDoux: So until 1972, it remained basically an extension of St. Mary's, right, that correct?

Lederman: Ya, well, uh-huh.

Mr. Voelker: Semi-semi-public oratory. That's it.

Mrs. Voelker: That's it.

Lederman: That's the name.

Mrs. Voelker: Now own of the extinctions is that we had almost all of the services of the church here, but one of the things we did not have until it became a full-fledged parish in 1972, was that we couldn't have marriages here.

Lederman: Nor confirmation.

Mrs. Voelker: Nor confirmation.

Mr. Voelker: So we had, several of our children were confirmed at St. Mary's.

Mrs. Voelker: Ann ___ had to be married at St. Mary's, rather than here.

LeDoux: Did that put you at zero budget then?

Mr. Voelker: No there was a budget then.

Lederman: No, well, the budget came—well, they had a couple of budgets, then that were figured in that time, so that when the place was built... Even before than they had a budget. They had a house—ah--

Mrs. Voelker: It's now the Gate's Nursery School.

Lederman: I'm going to come to that.

Mrs. Voelker: Ah-huh, the Kitty Cat, the Big Kitty cat.

LeDoux: Okay.

Lederman: And that was year what? 1957, I think it was purchased. We were in the house that year.

Mrs. Voelker: I don't know. It was here when we came. And we used to have mass. There was a chapel upstairs in that house and upon large occasions they would have a special mass for the faculty, you know, to be invited along with the students. I think they had mass every day at noon. And sometime of the day for students, for that small week of students that was really involved.

LeDoux: This was in the very early days?

Mrs. Voelker: Ya, in the house.

Mr. Voelker: There was also an education program. There were a number of us faculty, and number of priests in the St. Cloud area who would come over and a – offer something for students had asked for or-- It was a very informal program.

LeDoux: Were you, when you came here, ah, the only priest? Were those two priest, were the ones that Ludmila was saying?

Lederman: Um, well, Father Voss was here. He just left here now. He'd been here ten years. So he was there 9-10. And he'd have part-time help, ah, priests from Cathedral High School -- was working part-time just in the _____. And then Father _____ was here. And just in the year previous, a few times, he was here full time.

Mr. Voelker: It started out with Father Illies alone. And then Father Zimmer came as an assistant. And then sometime within the same year both of them left. And ah, Vos came and _____ helped for a year and after he left I think you came.

Lederman: Uh huh.

Mrs. Voelker: In fact, I know, ah, Father Zimmer was here before the parish was, ah, before we joined the parish, because he is the one that came to our house to ask if we wanted to stay at St. Aug's or to come here. And so he was here to help. However, everybody knew that, if fact, that this was going to be finished. And that we would be making that election, of where we wanted to belong.

LeDoux: I wanted to get back to that point now a little bit later. Ah, I wanted to ask you though about the different services you can provide, ah, in addition to, for example, theology classes. If we could possibly get a little background on how the programs first started and what activities still exist today? Like to give it a shot?

Lederman: Well the liturgical programs – like the masses and the sacraments. We talked about the exceptions, and from the very time they were a house and they began to provide such things, and that still in between such service that we provide, worship services, um. Counseling, we ah, do extensive counseling and we try to see that one or two of our staff people are qualified and be able to do that. Counseling _____ very widely, pastoral counseling, personal counseling, marriage counseling, marriage would come a little bit under pastoral counseling. Preparation for marriage, preparation for some of the sacraments.

LeDoux: Is there some involved counseling with college students also?

Lederman: Primarily so, ya. You get the personal thing, it might be spiritual direction. It might be ah-- By personal I mean it might be effecting during the college season, so if they are a student going through some crisis, it might be family oriented, directly within the family. Ah, within the dorm, so that counseling is a large part of our time. In fact, I think, when Bill was here, Bill and myself, the greatest percentage of our time was spent in counseling. Then our educational programs, we do have the, ah, theology for credit programs, now. We have a lot of informal educational programs. Like every quarter, we run an instructions and college _____. We have inter-faith marriage seminars, baptisms seminars. Those are all formal. They were quite well organized now.

Mr. Voelker: CCD.

Lederman: Oh ya. The whole religious educational program for the children.

Mrs. Voelker: It started out as a few children in this room and a few across the hall and maybe one other spot. And it has mushroomed to what? Like a hundred.

Lederman: About 241 really. We have quite a few different types of student groups. There would be a combination of fellowship groups, training groups generally. Right now we have two pre-ministry training groups, ah, Bible study, those types of things.

LeDoux: Now does the Newman Club still exist, around yet?

Lederman: No. we don't have the Newman Club as such. In fact, that's kind of universal throughout the Newman Centers, Catholic Centers, non-private and public, ah, colleges and universities. They have gone from their idea of a club to a full parish. Students participate in various ways with the parish community. And that's the primary focus.

Mr. Voelker: Ah, ask maybe the relationship of the Newman to other religious student organizations?

LeDoux: That is what I was going to ask.

Mr. Voelker: (Laughs) Well maybe you had better ask.

LeDoux: That's okay.

Mr. Voelker: Because that had developed over the years, changed.

Lederman: Ah, had-- In fact, that information of a Newman Club, was to preserve the faith, Catholic faith, a religious order on a irreligious, non-religious campus.

Mrs. Voelker: Ah-huh. The idea was that all of us should be sending all of our children to Catholic school. You notice that both of us, you know, went to Catholic, as, Catholic college. That was the ideal. But as education became more and more expensive and all sorts of things – more people going to get an education, the public sector had to pick up more of the numbers and therefore the Newman Centers had to grow, you know. And it wasn't enough to just have a club.

Lederman: Ya, and I think even the church in America, the Catholic Church operated out of kind of a minority, almost oppressed type of concern that they had to be aware of themselves. And that public education is basically Protestant or non – let's see, or contrary to at least, or not quite right for the Catholic People. To where as now, it really seems as valid as it should.

Mr. Voelker: My first year I was asked by someone, who knows me, was a Catholic: "How do you like teaching at that pagan institution?" (Laughs).

Mrs. Voelker: And one of the old nuns at St. Ben's once she hears that Fran was going to teach at St. Cloud State that they would make a heretic out of him. She had a real fear of that public institution among the church. And likewise the church was persecuted in some way by some of the public. So we have come a long way then.

LeDoux: What then is the relationship between other colleges and the Newman Center colleges and how many public universities have Newman Centers?

Lederman: Just about all of them.

LeDoux: About all of them?

Lederman: Yes. The smaller ones, the community colleges don't. That's usually handled by the local parish. All the bigger colleges and universities do have Newman Centers. And there are

various types of Centers. There will be the full center like this, in terms of building and property and the best use of organized space. Um, to where just a Newman House, offering of classes, to some places right on campus. They don't have their offices on the university, and all the various religious organizations is worked out on campus, offices on campus. Counselling and classes, they operate are on campus; worship services, they rent out space. We will occasionally use Atwood, on occasion.

LeDoux: Most of the Catholic churches we have class library on, have an organized women group of some sort, ____ and _____. Is there an organized women's group at this church other than _____?

Lederman: We don't have.

Mrs. Voelker: I think not in the spirit of what we were at the beginning. Many of us were professional women, you know. We were just -- when you are moving out of that in a larger area, you just leave the parish alone.

Lederman: We don't have these others which, I think, that primarily existed as small groups, like Mission Club, mission group parishes. We don't have any of that here. For one thing, I think, most of out, the a—the non-student in our population are very active with the university. And then there is no need to develop an additional kind of thing. Church groups aren't as open. Another thing the parish has been small enough so that in itself was a welcome struggle to get going, and now it is growing way too much to be comfortable. Yet, it is still pretty good.

Mrs. Voelker: Oh, better than some of the larger parishes where you get lost.

Mr. Voelker: I think some of the overall programs take care of that too. Like the social action type programs will, ah, maybe lead to other places where they will have additional groups to take care of it.

Lederman: Then we don't have any men's groups or women's groups then. We do have an active parish counseling, the directive parish council and they are responsible for the directive of the parish.

Mrs. Voelker: And they are elective. And I think that is an important point. Because it isn't always that way in a parish.

LeDoux: Okay, this is a question I'm not sure how applicable it is to Newman but I was wondering, ah, considering the non-university population, is there any dominate ethnic group concerning the non-student population of the church? Would it be German or is it so much that it ah--

Lederman: I think it would be too numerous to listen to. And it is quite represented in two cross various areas the job, professional field. I think we would tend more to get of current professional people than who join this parish by way of exception. Not university students or faculty. But as the person who works in the factory, the doctors, the nurse and other professional people. But more so, I think, we have people who joined here, have a college degree.

Nielsen: Did just about everybody here, did they have to do with here, St. Cloud the university or is there quite a few from off campus?

Lederman: There are quite a few just off campus, yes. According to our decree, diocesan decree, they are supposed to be affiliated with the university before they can be members of it but--

Nielsen: But if they have some conflict with it?

Lederman: But it is working pretty good. There is a little conflict now and then, but we work together. In fact, the whole area does have the possibility for exchange. The rest of the parishes are territorial. But, ah, people from one parish can go to another. I think it is very unfortunate that all the churches not be independent churches, but cooperating churches. But there is – are allowances made to allow people to go across border.

Mrs. Voelker: That was a threat at the beginning to the pastors, because people would talk about the marvelous services that Newman had. That was a threat. But I think that it has been worked out, services and that.

Lederman: It is still more threatening, like there are a couple of parishes in town that parish needs leadership or just that it is not comfortable. And then we get a large influx of requests from those parishes. And those parish people and pastor speak about it. We try to work it out. We don't try to be too easy one way or another.

LeDoux: I was going to touch on this later and, but as long as it came up with the dominance, I guess, of student and faculty people from the university, ah, some people would tend to see it as the services the university presented possibly more liberally than any found in any serious conservative country Catholic church. Were there any people especially in the beginning that through the years have gone to other parishes, because that they thought that, ah, that way certain

music present that we don't want to have in church; the way the service is presented—I don't know if I can say it?

Lederman: You could say that, you could probably answer that better than I could. There is still--

LeDoux: Is there fraction changes like neighborhood people who came here first and then gone back to their parishes?

Mrs. Voelker: I think you are always going to find somebody who doesn't think it is something that it was going to be. You will find some people unhappy with the change of pastors, no matter who it is. And some people, I know didn't join Newman at the beginning because they wanted their children to be in a parochial grade school. And the way to do that was to have an open parish, you know. So there were different reasons. But I, I don't--

Mr. Voelker: But there was some faculty--

Mrs. Voelker: --who choose not to come.

Mr. Voelker: --who choose not to come. Or left when we started using vernacular. They wanted to go where there was still Latin. There were churches that ah... so that I think, you know--

Lederman: We still have students that will come over here at the beginning of the year and take a look at it and it's too free, too informal so they won't sit there. There are students in Benton Hall that go over to St. Mary's regularly every Sunday morning rather than come here. That's not very many. I think the general migration is-has been here. Because we are much more alive, progressive, if you want to use that term. I think it touches people's lives. That's the feedback

that I get anyway. This parish touches people's faith, lives, their total lives, much much more so than many of the other parishes.

Mr. Voelker: I think non-student members really come here with the intention of giving something. Ah, it's different because this is primarily a student parish and so ah, initially we decided to join this because our jobs and Newman fit together and this was an extension, either extension of our teaching or teaching an extension of our ministry. Whatever you want to call it. It's all one. This is our community and ah, that's why we came. And I think a lot of people came, I know initially we talked with many people. "What should we do? Where do we belong?" These sort of things, And ah, and gradually some people tried it out and found out that, well, even though the place didn't have pews, there were chairs to sit in, and well, you know, it became comfortable and became, ah initially the first group was small, very small group and I think that non-university people members also have a commitment to the university. Either through past association or ah--

Mrs. Voelker: Some of them have taken a course at the college and have become involved ah, with the university.

LeDoux: I was wondering how the center here has grown, both in the attendance and people been coming in from outside area? Has it grown since it was a calling to—since it was an established parish in the 70s, early 70s?

Mrs. Voelker: Well see it started in 1964, really, as a parish. We did everything except have weddings, could they have funerals here? Yes, I believe.

Mr. Voelker: We could be buried. Nothing wrong with marriage.

Lederman: Baptism and marriage.

Mrs. Voelker: But as the population grew, as St. Cloud State University grew, it grew. Um, then more and more people who were not either students or faculty. You had to have a personnel committee to decide.

Lederman: A membership committee.

Mrs. Voelker: A membership committee. And that had never been, you know, never had a need for in those early years. I don't know what the numbers are. You would probably know.

Lederman: I think in '64, when it was established, there were 20 parish – ah, 20 families, 20 university families were entering in our parish. That figure now is 254, I think is, I believe, the final count this year. Now that is not just family, that is family and or single members. Non-students, I think we had this year -- 1300 student members registered. We didn't start student registration until about 50 years ago. Otherwise, we had religious preference cards, until that kind of went off. When I first came here in '71, the university would have all the students signing the preference cards. Maybe there would be 3,000 of these preference cards. And I think you might remember, familiar with some of those changes – things. And, ah, people didn't fill them out at all. Now the only people who fill out preference cards are transfer students.

Lederman: The ratio is about 1 to 4 out of those 250 members. About 1 to 25% are university people, the rest are non-university people.

LeDoux: Did you notice any other changes in the years you've been here, ah, in the religious life of the college university, added to, say, bringing to the church differences in ideas, um, any other changes in campus?

Lederman: I think so, even though, we notice the attendances of weekend services are now less than they are in the, say, in the late 60s or early 70s. Ah, I think that Catholic people are, no longer feel as compelled to go to mass every Sunday, especially the student population. In that sense there is a more positive attitude being built by those that do come; that here worship experience is important enough and are there because of that. So our services aren't well attended as they were. I think we hit our high point in the, toward end of the 60s, early 70s, in terms of number of people who attended. The daily masses, last couple of years, the pressure of daily masses had increased. I think, about 3 years ago we had an average of about 3 or 4 people at daily mass. This year we averaged 34. This continued interest. I think there is greater freedom of people to move around and explore various denominations or religious experiences, in sense that freedom to go. I don't think for the catholic people either; they are not quite that institution oriented. Maybe, could even state that they aren't as institutionally oriented.

Nielsen: Is that mainly with the students? Has there been a great change with their attitudes, like here in the 60's, the unrest? Has it caused very much of a problem here?

Mrs. Voelker: Well yes. I think one of the reasons for this unrest was this whole business of being so restricted by the institutions, you see. And still feeling it was a sin not to go to mass on Sunday, you see. That's why there is this new ____ now. Where you see people really participating, instead of sitting there grouching though the whole thing, waiting until it was over. But at least they didn't commit a sin, you see, by not going.

Lederman: The Newman Center here, and other places too, took a very active role in the social movements in the late 60s and 70s, the anti-war movement.

Mrs. Voelker: And we still do. Whenever anything comes up, you know, there are petitions we can sign, if we want to. It's made available for you, if you want to participate in some of these things. And when the Vietnamese came to town, you know, request for homes for the Vietnamese; I think our Advent alternatives are something that should be mentioned. Um, Fran and I, you know, have a little handle in that Advent alternatives. This was, this goes back several years, and we had been in Chicago in a marvelous parish for Christmas time and we saw what they were doing and there was so much excitement there about helping your fellow in need. So we came back and talked about it; couldn't we do something; that we could do something for the people in the parish or anyone who needed help rather than give presents in our own family for Christmas, you know. And then, the thing, it is really big now. You know, when you go out and give a lady a table because she is not going to have anything to eat off of, if she doesn't have table, you know. So I think that's the kind of thing our Newman Center does.

Lederman: That's extended to an all year alternative. Some people continually make donations to the alternative fund.

Nielsen: Do you get much encouragement from the Catholic Church as a whole to do what you call it, do things like this?

Mrs. Voelker: I don't know. Really I don't know what's going on out there except for the small parish that we go to on Sundays at the lake, you know, when we stay there. Most of the time we scoot back here to get back to our own church on Sunday evenings at 8:00.

Lederman: I sense in some ways when we meet together, on Campus Ministry people meet together, that you see the church went through a lot of changes in the 60s following the counsel and the Newman Center were kind of way out in the leadership. Everybody else was trying to

pull back. Which is in some ways, I suppose, inspired or instigated them to go further out. Now the rest of the Church has caught up and when we get together, in terms of looking at our future, we kind of wonder, you know. We feel we should be talking more progressive leadership but we are not sure what it is to be, you know. There has been hesitancy of going further. And I think that that not only Newman's feeling, you know, I think that's the whole world at large. Or in various religious communities, too, because you have now a much greater growth of some of the more conservative fundamentals types of religious communities, rather than progressives. They are kind of dying off. People's needs are kind of settling them. So that the people on Campus Ministry are a little but unsure of where to.

LeDoux: Very interesting. It may be kind of redundant asking this but we did a study of rural country churches last summer and although we've mentioned you have not served a parish, for example, in a country church, I was wondering, I was going to question now, what if any differences can be pointed out. Not just Newman, but urban churches in general in the country? From any exposure you've had at all to a small village church or are the similarities greater than the differences? I know it seems a little redundant, we've pointed out so many changes just in general.

Lederman: I would say the similarities would be greater than the differences. The people's worship needs, spiritual needs, their religious community, those are quite similar. But style is always different. I think in the rural communities, you would find that the church is more directive in people's lives than it would be in an urban community, especially then a college or university is not as directive. In other words, in one sense the local pastor would not seem an authority figure as much here, as if I was in a small rural town I would be asked to be much more authority figure. Here if I tried to tell a friend what to do--

Mr. Voelker: We would tell you. (Laughs)

Mrs. Voelker: He would have a halo in a small town, you know, they would really look up to him. But here he is somebody to go running with, you know, and rapport, of course.

Lederman: In general, I appreciate this much more. It is better. It's supportive, where we share a common Christianity. I have a distinct role, certainly. But not that authority role. And I'd think you'd find differences too. Theirs would be a more conservative approach in the rural places, ah, in terms of style of liturgy, in terms of values, religious values, spiritual values, moral values. That type of this.

Mrs. Voelker: All definitely. There is the one thing that we notice for going to a small parish where we go at the cabin. Things are pretty black and white. Whereas here we can see that there are various shades in between a lot of things. And the people look to the pastor as somebody who said it and therefore, it's a good way to keep the kids in line, you know, right and wrong.

Mr. Voelker: I think I see a difference in the pastor's perception in how far he can move the people. You know any leader, you can move too far, you set total rejection. And I think they are treading very careful especially where the changes have come about in the church, ah, in the last few years. They have come pretty fast. With the English and all this they are still hanging on to the rosary. Very often we walk in ah ten minutes early and we come in in the middle of a rosary and the church is full.

Mrs. Voelker: Only the old, most well-known men are allowed to help distribute the communion. Our young people are, well they are, some of them still come and sit in the front pew and mom and dad stay in the back, you know, the old way, sitting the youngsters up front.

Lederman: I think in some ways the rural communities, their religious values would be more stabilized than they are here.

Mrs. Voelker: But they would not be the same religious values as they would have here.

Mr. Voelker: But they share a common tradition which you don't have here.

Mrs. Voelker: Right. The churches are decorated very much the same all around, the banners and so on, the trappings of the new church we have seen evidence of.

LeDoux: We've come down to almost the question of style. I know there are some comments several members have made. That an organ in church is necessary. And that it wasn't the same to them, that it was almost sacrilegious for a guitar and other. It was –it was totally out of line with what they have known, that they felt that the church was slipping away. Yet it was just a question of style. And how do you feel?

Nielsen: I would think that if I'm correct, that here there is more a question of church doctrine, where in the rule setting, what is said from the church goes without question.

Mrs. Voelker: Is that both the territory and the university?

Nielsen: Yes.

Mrs. Voelker: Adhere without question. No, so you don't often--

Nielsen: So there is quite a bit of discussion which goes on? On things that come up?

Lederman: In fact, we see one of our missions of our church here is to relate to the university, as a university. And engage the university in dialogue about values. Engage the university and even support the university in its searching questions. And ask the university, as the university;

usually it takes the place of people, about doing the same for the church. It's an important dialogue that takes place between the church and university that they are working together.

Nielsen: Um, are there any, ah, can ask, are there any specific discussions that are going on right now?

Mrs. Voelker: Out there? Abortion is number one, I'm sure.

Lederman: You mean here?

Nielsen: Ya, here at Newman Center.

Lederman: One that we just went through was, ah, we had a series on family life styles and that was very well received. In the last discussion, was what to do about say, divorce and remarriage, about single vocations, and single people, set of values and life styles, ah, pre-marriage living together; that one area we picked up a lot.

LeDoux: There were some other questions that I have. I wonder if we look, could we look right in, for example, divorce, priest marriage-marriage of priests, different things that people wonder; is this coming in the church? Is this under discussion at all or not?

Lederman: Not too much. The divorce is because it touches more lives than marriage of priests. Women's ordination. Oh that whole women issue. I think that is quite active with women working toward equality, their voting, working. And trying to be language conscious in our worship, so we don't always talk, you know, use 'he' or the male, masculine gender. And in terms of our own staff, like we have 2 men and 2 women. They are very conscious about that. And engaging with the university with some of those issues too.

LeDoux: Ah, when you said you had another point, Father, there was one other question that I wanted to ask you. Either you or the other pastor been involved quite actively, for example, in municipal community hall, sitting on committees or boards in St. Cloud. Just talking in general about specific committees, what policies?

Lederman: Yes, we have been. I think Bill is more active than I have been in some ways. And I think he was involved in the Human Rights Commission, Mental Health Board, um, Samaritans Board, these types of thing, organizations of that. I've been involved in various boards too. I was in the founding committee of the YMCE, the ____ when the library was, not the board as such, but on the supporting, original group. I'm on the board of Birthright now. I'm on the pre-Senate for the diocese; is about it.

LeDoux: I was wondering about what limits, how far, first part of question, do you think priests or any religious leader should venture into political life of the community and second part of the question, does the church suggest or place any limits as to what it sees on the priests' role in the political life of the community. I guess this question came up in the late 60s? A lot of you--

Lederman: That is a big question. I don't really see that there needs to be any limits. The church needs to be active both politically and it needs to be given time. Hopefully the church will not adopt any time, any person, nor need to adopt any political philosophy. So that in a sense the church should always need, maintain a distinctiveness, so that it could call the political committee into question its values too. So that these are very, not limited as to involvement, yet at the same time separate, so they ____ _____. I wouldn't get to be president, put it that way or where we would get the Holy Roman Empire. I would think, in terms of political office then, I think I could see at times, where as I as a priest would have a leadership role in the church, could

also have a political office. But my general idea there is, I would stay out of political leadership. That priests or distinct church leaders should stay out of political leadership, in that sense. But I'll become as active as I can as in terms of the 20th times and the 80 election like the 1968 election, no when? '72 it was. I was very active. I was so convinced, you know, that what was happening in that election. I took a very active role in that.

Mrs. Voelker: Where were you then? Here?

Lederman: Yes.

Mrs. Voelker: Okay. You see there is a difference being here and in taking an active role here.

Lederman: I would have done the same thing at St. Mary's.

Mrs. Voelker: Ya, but--

Lederman: But I won't be accepted.

Mrs. Voelker: Right. Yes, if you were out in some of those very small rural parishes and had that halo on your head. It would have been a little different. Because all the people would unquestionably do what you said, you see. And if you choose the wrong side you could--

This interview is partially completed by verbatim. It is all done in summary form.