

RENDON, BIBIAN J.

Oral History
Archives

BIBIAN J. RENDON

Wanda McDonough Oral History Interview
September 5, 1992

Tape No. 2

Archives

Diocese of Salt Lake City

Archives-Diocese of Salt Lake City
ORAL/TAPED HISTORY INTERVIEW
Wanda McDonough Oral History Collection

Interviewee: Brian Rendon
Name

Interviewer: Wanda McDonough
Name

Interview: 9-25-92 Diocesan Pastoral Center
Date Place

I willingly contribute my testimony recorded on 9-25-92
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historical research.

Brian J. Rendon
Interviewee
Wanda McDonough
Interviewer

Taped Interview by Wanda McDonough of Bibian J. Rendon
on September 5, 1992 at Diocesan Pastoral Center

WM: Bibian, will you give us your name, age, where you were born and your parents' ancestry?

BR: My name is Bibian J. Rendon, 69, born in Alcalde, New Mexico. Two days after I was born, my parents and family moved to Salida, Colorado where my father was employed in a gold mine. My Father's great, great, great grandparents were born in western France. They later moved to northern Spain and later on to a village (Villareal) near Madrid. My mother's great, great, great grandparents were born in southern France and moved to Villareal before my father's folks did. According to the best records we have found, my ancestors were among the first settlers of New Mexico where everyone spoke Castilian.

WM: But the name Rendon doesn't sound French.

BR: That's because the name has been Anglicized. Originally, the French spelling was Renedeau, and closer yet, Renaudel. In Spain, the name in the early days was Rendo. In the early years, the people of northern Spain (who lived in mountain country) developed a method of communication called Rendones. These were large drums placed on high mountain tops to be code pounded whenever the people living there needed to communicate. We need to remember that these people had no telephones.

WM: If you were born in New Mexico, when and how did you come to Utah?

BR: I was raised in Salida, Colorado and attended school there from the first grade on to high school graduation. Salida was a tiny town of some 5,000 people with very few employment opportunities. I had worked my way through school by selling and delivering newspapers and taking care of home lawns and heating systems. During my junior and senior years, I was the agent of one of our local newspapers. So after graduation I moved to Salt Lake City where I worked as a baker's helper, carpenter helper and assistant timekeeper before being drafted into the army.

After basic training, I was given a two-week furlough to visit my family and then shipped overseas to become a member of the 32nd (Red Arrow) Infantry Division under the command of the Sixth Army General Kruger. My first assignment was as First Scout at Aitape, New Guinea. This was jungle fighting at its worst. Even the natives weren't quite civilized and we had to be very careful of them as well as

of the Japanese. However, we befriended the natives and were able to utilize them in our campaign.

After about a month there, we shipped out to Hollandia, Dutch New Guinea for a two week rest from combat. We had lost many men in New Guinea as a result of combat and jungle diseases. However, our time in Hollandia was not "rest time." We spend many hours, both day and night, unloading ammunition, etc. from ships.

From Hollandia, we shipped out and became part of the landing troops on Leyte, Philippines. After the Leyte campaign, we shipped out to Luzon, Philippines. Here, in Luzon, I was injured and received the Purple Heart along with a Bronze Star for gallantry in combat. Our unit also received a Congressional Medal, the Presidential Unit Citation. We had lost about eighty percent of our men in combat.

After the Luzon campaign was completed, we were given a two week rest in Baguio, the summer capital of the Philippines. The third week as we were preparing to invade and make a landing in Japan, we heard over the radio that an atomic bomb had been dropped by our forces on Japan and the Japanese had surrendered. Nevertheless, we did ship out for Japan and were among the first to occupy Japan. As we travelled through Hiroshima and Nagasaki on troop trains, I remember seeing so many disfigured people. The children, especially, were pitiful. Some had only half faces, partial arms and legs. Destruction was everywhere. Only some steel girders were visible for miles. Entire cities were leveled. I also remember walking through a fine dust that seemed to be everywhere. People were huddled together in make-shift shacks.

WM: Did it affect you?

BR: I really don't know. I've had some problems and our children have had some genetic problems not traceable to heredity but I have not filed a claim.

Emotionally, yes. I find it very difficult to sleep in a completely darkened room. I'm sure that this traces back to the Japanese nighttime bayonet attacks. As far as the effects of war, I don't believe that a combat soldier who has been a part of the killing procedure ever gets over it. We were trained to kill through the use of films, personnel, etc. We were forced to participate in gas mask lockouts as a preparation for the real thing. After the war, we were not deprogrammed; consequently, hundreds and hundreds of soldiers ended up on psycho wards of Veterans Hospitals. I may have been one of the lucky ones who was able to adjust

after a bout of malaria attacks that went on for one year after my discharge.

WM: In all this, were you a private, a corporal?

BR: In the Leyte campaign, I was wounded. As a result of a Japanese artillery shell (155) which landed about twenty feet away from me and killed three of our men, I suffered a punctured ear drum and permanent damage to my right radial nerve. Like a tough, young kid (I was only twenty years old) I did not leave my outfit; however, after several days I could hardly hear and my left arm where the shrapnel hit ached so much I could hardly lift my rifle. About this time, Regimental Headquarters called Captain Lowry, my company commander and asked him if I would like to transfer into Regimental Headquarters and take over the morning report section. They had noticed the file showing my experience in typing and payroll work.

I jumped at this opportunity to leave the front lines after nearly two years there and three campaigns. Here, in my new position, some five miles behind the front lines, I was promoted to Tech Sergeant (T-4) Daily. I prepared the regimental morning report accounting for all men in the regiment and in action: KIA's (Killed in Action), MIA's (Missing in Action) and those assigned elsewhere. Almost daily, boxes of clothing, pens, lighters, money, lotions, etc. were brought to my office from all of the company headquarters in the regiment. It was my job to locate the families of these men and mail these personal effects to them. Why these items were called "effects" I never did find out.

I also processed any money found on bodies and there was a considerable amount of this. However, much of the paper money that came in had a terrible odor due to its being in the clothing of a dead soldier whose body had been in the hot sun sometimes for two or more days. Earlier, I had asked Lt. Jamison, who was in charge of our unit what to do about this money. He had advised me to destroy it because division headquarters would not accept it. I just could not destroy it knowing that someone in the States could be in need. I had been saving the money for several weeks.

Finally, I had an idea and went to Lt. Jamison. I told him how I felt about destroying the money and asked if I could simply wash the money with soap in a brook that ran past our headquarters, then dry it in the hot sun and sprinkle it with shaving lotion. In this manner, I felt that division headquarters would accept it. Lt. Jamison told me to go ahead and if I found any money without ownership to break it up into even amounts and send it to the families we knew

about. I did this and was able to salvage large amounts that otherwise would have been lost.

WM: Was this bills--greenbacks?

BR: Most of the money was paper, both American and Philippine.

WM: Then you just sent them "as is" backhome? You didn't write a check or money order?

BR: I took the money to division headquarters. From there, a check or money order was sent to the families.

WM: This is all in the Philippines we are talking about?

BR: Yes, there were many needy families as indicated by photographs the men were carrying.

WM: If you couldn't get to these men who had been killed and their bodies had been lying in the "No-man's" zone four or five days, how were they identified? By their dogtags?

BR: Many were identified by their dogtags or personal items found on the bodies or by their living friends. However, some bodies were horribly mutilated and all means of identification had been removed by the Japanese. In these instances, our intelligence used more sophisticated and complex methods of identification. Some of the soldiers had their scalps completely cut through with Japanese swords. Others were found hanging from jungle trees with their severed penises lodged between their teeth. Still others were found hanging from trees with bamboo slivers driven into their fingernails. These bamboo slivers had been first soaked in kerosene then inserted and lit. These poor men had suffered horrible tortures. Sometimes they were left with their hearts barely beating, just waiting to die. It would have been much more merciful if these men had just been killed instantly but the Japanese believed in torture. We never did torture any Japanese soldiers. It would not have been allowed by our officers.

WM: Were you in the Medics?

BR: No, I was in a front line infantry company.

WM: To go back to the very beginning, were you drafted or had you volunteered?

BR: I was drafted, from Colorado.

WM: Let's return to Japan: you walked right through the atomic dust and after that how long were you there?

BR: We were among the first troops to occupy Japan after the war. On our way to our occupation assignment, Northern Honshu, we went through Hiroshima and Nagasaki. These large cities had been devastated by atomic bombs and were in shambles. About 95% of all the buildings had been reduced to debris and there was very little clean up going on. The Japanese inhabitants were still in shock.

I still remember the fine dust everywhere and nobody seemed to know where it came from. There were some pleasant occurrences, however. Once we were settled we were treated to some real good meals of salmon, etc. This was great, for we had not had anything but "C" or "K" rations for a long, long time. Those who drank were issued entire cases of sake, the Japanese beer which was quite strong. Of course, any liquor was to be consumed within the strictest regulations and only off the job for those of us who were in regimental headquarters. Of course, no liquor is allowed at the front lines. Our officers hired Japanese women to clean our offices and Japanese men to take care of the outside work. The Japanese men did not like this. They believed that the women should work out in the cold. We had landed there in November.

By this time, I had accumulated enough "points" to come home. (We were given so many points for time in the service and in combat.) Although I was in Japan only a short time--I shipped out for home about December 22--I did visit some of the surrounding areas in my spare time. You were almost taking your life in your hands if you went among the civilians and many of our soldiers who ventured out at night to visit the Geisha houses ended up dead on some beach. Daytime, short visits were OK to see the sights, but you always had to make sure someone in your group was carrying a .45 pistol.

WM: Did your branch learn to speak Japanese?

BR: No, there wasn't enough time and Japanese civilians (about 90% of them) hated us. However, we did have qualified interpreters in G-2 and elsewhere. I might interject here that the hatred existed on both sides. I remember that when we were in combat in New Guinea our intelligence unit was offering a free furlough to Australia to anyone who would bring in a live Japanese soldier. In about 98% of the time whenever a Japanese soldier was taken prisoner at the front, he was sent back, along with two guards to division headquarters (G-2) for interrogation. Invariably, the report was always the same when the guards returned to the front. The prisoner had tried to "escape" and had been shot.

WM: Did you engage in a lot of hand-to-hand combat before entering the Office?

BR: Yes, many times. The Japanese had a habit of attacking after dark because they knew that we did not like to fight at night unless attacked. The Japanese would sneak in after dark and use either sabers or swords on our forward positions. In this manner they were difficult to locate. We were the only ones using rifles or guns. In basic training, we had learned that whenever you are being attacked by someone who has a bayonet on the end of a rifle or has a bayonet or saber or sword in an attacking position, you were to stand firm and parry the weapon and at the same time either shoot, or tumble the person over with your hands or use your bayonet or knife. However, parrying was quite dangerous, especially at night when your vision was extremely limited.

When the war ended we were on Luzon and having completed our campaign there, were all set to make a landing on Japan. Just after the bombing of Japan, we still made the landing but with little opposition.

WM: Leaving the subject of Japan, I know you work with disabled people now and you had some trouble up at Bingham. Let's talk about Bingham: when did you work up there? why did you go there and what did you do?

BR: Because I only had a high school education at that time, my employment opportunities were limited. I came to Utah with a friend and we were both hired by Kennecott Copper. At that time Kennecott Copper paid very good wages and this seemed a good place to start. I worked as a switchtender and yardmaster for about three years. Then I bid into the electric shovel department. I was working as an oiler at the time of my accident.

WM: Do you remember who was the head of operations at Kennecott at that time?

BR: Barlow was mine superintendent.

WM: Do you remember a Mr. Pett out there?

BR: I believe Mr. Pett became head of Utah operations.

WM: You were injured up there--tell us about that.

BR: That occurred in February 1955. Did you see the article on this in The Intermountain Catholic? It was about 9 a.m. and I had just taken over the operation of the 29 shovel on the 6190 mine level. The shovel runner had left the shovel and

was in one of the ore train motors on his break. I had been operating the shovel about twenty minutes--the bank was very hard and it was difficult to scoop up any ore. As I swung the shovel back from unloading a dipper full into an ore car, I heard a loud bang, a crushing sound, and it felt like the whole mountain was caving in on me. A large boulder about the size of two large rooms had dislodged itself and had crushed in the entire side of the shovel where I had been sitting in the operator's cab. The inside of the metal cab was pushed in against me and I was trapped. The metal seat that I was in folded upwards and pinched my body. Both of my legs were immediately severed. It took some twenty minutes before some workers could cut me away, with a torch, and lower me to the ground for transportation to our emergency hospital and then to St. Mark's Hospital.

This had been a Sunday, my day off, but I had traded days off with a fellow oiler because he had some Church (LDS) work to do. In addition, this accident shouldn't have happened except for the fact that the level foreman in charge of this shovel had been out on a drunk on Saturday and had neglected to check the top part of this 60 foot bank before beginning operations. If he had checked the top part, he would have discovered a giant crack in the bank that was only visible from the top and not from the bottom where the shovel was.

WM: Were you taken to the old St. Mark's?

BR: Yes, and I was conscious all the way to the hospital.

WM: Did you live in Bingham while you were working there?

BR: Yes, we lived in a company-owned house. Our rent was only \$15.00 per month.

WM: Did you go to church there? Do you remember the parish?

BR: Yes, Father Pellegrino was one of our priests. I don't remember the name of the parish.

WM: Bingham was a very integrated town then.

BR: Yes, it was. There were groups of different nationalities located in various parts of Bingham. There was a "Greek Town" in Copperfield (across the tunnel); there was also a "Japanese Town" in Copperfield. There were also many Slovaks who lived in the Highland Boy area. There were many others such as Puerto Ricans, American Indians, Germans, Swedes, Italians, Hispanics, etc.

About 1960 an article appeared in Reader's Digest on this

very subject. It reported that there were then 132 different dialects spoken in Bingham Canyon. It was quite revealing to note that on Christmas Eve many Catholics were unable to find seats inside their Church due to the attendance of many LDS people.

Although Bingham was a mixture of many peoples of different cultures, it was also one of the friendliest towns that my wife and I have ever lived in. Whenever a miner was seriously injured on "the hill," we all contributed to a fund to help that person while unemployed. If you did not have any money on you when the collectors came around, you could ask that so much be taken out of your check.

WM: They could do that, take it out of your check?

BR: Yes; however, I never did see anyone refuse to help. I was injured in February and that same year, a week before Christmas, two fellow workers came to our home with a large canvas bag and told my wife and me that the workers wanted to help. There was \$500.00 in that bag.

WM: I lived in a mining camp and there was that same spirit. How many faiths, besides the LDS and Catholics, had churches?

BR: I don't believe there were any other churches. Main Street is where they would have been situated and I don't remember any there.

WM: Main Street? There was only one street in Bingham?

BR: There were others but they were not called streets: Carfork, Markham Gulch, Highland Boy, Copperfield (across the tunnel), etc. Many of the homes were company-owned. The company owned and maintained them, papered and painted them each year.

WM: It wasn't a company town, you didn't have to buy at the company store?

BR: The largest store in town, the Bingham Merc, seemed to draw many of the workers because it extended credit and also obtained pay checks for the workers. However, there were three smaller grocery stores in Bingham. We used to do most of our shopping in Salt Lake City because the choices and prices were much better.

WM: "Merc" has a connotation of the ZCMI. Was it connected with that chain? Tooele Merc was connected to the ZCMI chain.

BR: I don't know but I do know that Rex, the manager, was LDS.

The Bingham Merc did have high prices but the quality was good.

WM: Bingham was not a true company town then. Someone who lived out in Kennelworth said that they had to live in the company houses and they had to buy from the company store; in Hiawatha, too. These were coal mining camps.

BR: Yes, but these towns were far removed from larger towns or cities.

WM: Yes, a long way out from Helper.

BR: Bingham was not too far from Salt Lake, Midvale, Murray.

WM: Go back to the Church up there. Were there sisters teaching the children? Where did the children get their religious education?

BR: I believe that some sisters used to go to Bingham on certain days to teach.

WM:s After you were injured and got out of St. Mark's Hospital, did you go back to Bingham? What did you do for a living after that?

BR: I was on Workmen's Comp for awhile; however, \$80.00 a month did not contribute very much to the support of four. At the time of my injury, we had one five-year-old and on March 20, 1955 my wife had our second child. We moved to Salt Lake City in order to be near the hospital for I was in physical therapy sessions and periodically undergoing revisions to my stump. So, my wife had to go to work first at Penny's, then at the Auerbach store selling fur coats. This helped greatly. My mother moved to Salt Lake to help, too. My brother and sister also moved to Salt Lake to help. We always remember this. In September 1956, I received a scholarship from the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation to attend the University of Utah School of Business. I graduated in 1961 with a degree in Business Management.

I had a difficult time finding employment because at that time many employers discriminated against people with disabilities. Many times, when I entered a business office, using crutches, the first thing I heard was, "What happened to you?" Many employers were more interested in what I had beneath my shoulders than above them. I did, finally, manage to obtain a series of short term jobs until I was hired by the I.R.S.

WM: In Salt Lake or Ogden? What did you do at the I.R.S.?

- BR: I was a tax examiner. Examined Federal tax returns, assessed penalties and interest, and performed audit procedures. From there I went with the Department of Labor.
- WM: How did you become connected with the Pastoral Center?
- BR: I had been recuperating from a serious heart attack and had thought about finding a service-type position. I had given many years service to the Disabled American Veterans and felt qualified to work with people with disabilities.
- WM: Why did you start here? Was the job advertised?
- BR: Yes, the job was advertised in The Intermountain Catholic.
- WM: Just a matter of interest: what parish do you live in?
- BR: St. Vincent de Paul. As a matter of Church interest, I have been invited by the Office of Cardinal Angelini to attend a world conference, called by the Pope, on health and disability issues at the Vatican in November.
- WM: Will the Pastoral Center pay any of your way or does that come out of your budget?
- BR: Fifteen percent will come out of my budget. The other 85% of my trip to Europe will be paid by me.
- WM: Will you be able to take your wife and family?
- BR: Just my wife.
- WM: What is your wife's maiden name?
- BR:s Gloria Josephine Perraglio Gallegos. We're quite excited about our forthcoming trip to Italy and Spain. This will give us some opportunity to trace both of our heritages, mine from western France and Norther Spain, and Gloria's from Naples.
- WM: Are you Basque?
- BR: Not from the information available. Our son, Mark, who has spent most of the last years living and conducting business throughout Europe, Russia and China made a study of our ancestry. According to records available, my great, great, great grandparents immigrated from western France to northern Spain. From here they moved to a village just outside Madrid called Villareal. My mother's ancestors had also moved from the southern part of France to the village near Madrid. My mother's father was a Villareal and the village had been named Villareal to honor this particular

family. Villareal means a town of royalty and has to do with wealth. Many years later my father and mother met and wed in the United States. The name "Rendon" evolved from Rendeneau and Reneau. Today, both Rendo and Rendon are found in Spain.

WM: We tried to trace my husband's ancestors in Ireland. The church burned down and we don't have any records.

BR: You may need to go back and find another church that might have records. Too, there may be people in Ireland who would have pertinent information. My wife's grandfather immigrated from Naples in the early days, alone and as a consequence he spent his entire life alone in the United States because his family lost complete contact with him. His brother, who immigrated to the U.S. a few years after, worked all his life only forty-nine miles away from the older brother, yet never saw him anymore after they both left Italy.

In the early days communication was very difficult. Take the gold mines, for instance: the underground workers had to learn the language of the other miners in order to perform their work. At that time, in Colorado, there were Irish, German, Greek, Italian, Yugoslavians, Hispanics, Indians, Asians, and various other peoples who worked in the mines. My father spoke seven languages.

WM: They could speak it, but not read or write it?

BR: Yes; remember, these people were not educated. My father was only one of about fifty miners who had graduated from high school. High school graduation at that time was the equivalent of a college education in terms of techniques acquired. My father was able to read and write several languages.

WM: How many languages do you speak?

BR: I speak, read and write English and Spanish fluently. I have also studied Russian and Greek. In addition, I have some familiarity with Italian.

WM: Have you ever had to use your Russian?

BR: Not much. At the time that I studied Russian, one was considered other than American if you used any language other than English. The study of Russian was not difficult since so many Russian words, such as biblioteka, matematika, geographia, are the same as Spanish. My son Mark, who lives in London, speaks Russian very well.

WM: But what you learn in school--I studied German in school--is formal. The German that I speak or use is what I learn from my sister-in-law, just talking to her.

BR: You may have studied the strictly formal German; however, I studied the Russian street language. Actually, from my experience both in Spain and Italy, the language used within the mother country is the formal one. But even that language is continuously changing. I belong to a translators association and the professor from BYU who oversees the group told me that her Spanish dictionary had to be reprinted every four years because of the changes occurring in the language in Spain.

WM: Tell us about some of the people with whom you've worked in the Pastoral Center.

BR: Initially, I came here in order to help fill a need or needs. During my three plus years, I've worked closely with all of the personnel in the Pastoral Center and have found them to be intelligent, kind, understanding, hard-working members of our Catholic community. I've always appreciated the cooperation I have received from everyone starting with Bishop Weigand, Father Bussen, Sister Masters and the rest. My commission members have always been there to help. Together, we have set up a program to provide signers at Masses, hearing devices for the diocese and aroused our community to the needs of our people with disabilities. In addition, I'm proud to say that I accompanied a member of our commission when he filed a complaint with the State Industrial Commission, Anti-discrimination Division, regarding a job turndown by a local employer because our commission member had a disability. This case resulted in our member being hired and in addition receiving a good sum of money in damages. I'm also proud of our Sister Mirian Joanne who helped put together a program to aid the elderly and was recently honored by the governor of Utah. We do have many elderly who are being neglected.

WM: That's right.

BR: You know, I tell my wife, "It's nice to get old and be in reasonably good health. But it's not nice to get old and have poor health." We are all getting older but our energies do not increase with age. Our elderly need special care and somebody has to take the responsibility for those who are unable to care for themselves. This is the Christian way.

WM: And we pay an awful lot for medical insurance.

BR: I might interject here that we do have an executive director

of our National Catholic Office for People with Disabilities. She is Mary Jane Owen. She has worked diligently for the betterment of people with disabilities and has been invited by the Office of Cardinal Angelini to present a paper in Rome, at the first world conference on disability issues which has been called by Pope John Paul.

WM: You're the Diocesan Director. Have you been around to the small parishes down in southern Utah?

BR:s The outlying parishes that I have visited are Richfield, Payson and Layton. I plan to visit St. George soon.

WM: Ogden has a large Catholic community. Are you going to work up there?

BR: I plan to visit Ogden this year. I would like to add a few things here. Many people with disabilities do not like to draw attention to the disabilities. Therefore, many that could be helped are not, simply because they have not made their disability known. This is especially true of people with hearing difficulties. These people would rather put up with the tortures of not hearing or misinterpreting because for many, many years, our society has looked down upon people with disabilities.

We (the Office of Persons with Disabilities) kind of soft-pedaled our programs in order to gain the confidence of these people. Further, we must always have the complete cooperation of the parish pastor in order for our programs to succeed. Additionally, if a person has no experience in taking care of persons with disabilities, he/she usually does not understand the problems these persons are faced with.

For example, my grandmother was blind from the age of 76 to 96. During this entire time, she was living at home with us. We did not believe in placing our elders in nursing homes. So she lived with us six months; then she lived for six months with each of my three uncles. Sometimes, my mother would care for her a full year for she was the only daughter. If my grandmother awoke at 3 a.m. and wanted to go for a walk, we took her. It did no good to tell her it was the very early morning. To her it was always dark. If she decided to smoke at 2 a.m. she did; and we learned to worry about her burning the house down. She never did but we lived with it.

Another thing, we're mainstreaming our Catholics. We want them to participate in all aspects of Catholic life and be allowed to make their own decisions and choices just like everyone else. However, we need many more parish members to

help us within their locale. We sincerely believe that as more and more people become involved in lending a helping hand, more and more fallen-away Catholics will return to their parish life and become community contributors.

WM: I imagine. At Our Lady of Guadalupe, there are two people who come in wheelchairs. The priest comes right off the altar and gives them Communion. Do you find many parishes that don't have access to wheelchairs?

BR: Yes, there are some. Here in the Pastoral Center, a person using a wheelchair cannot access the third floor to attend Mass or for any other reason. Some parishes are not accessible either to the church building or the restrooms, etc. within. Just the other day, Father Lane was saying, at our directorate meeting, that the Cathedral will not be completely accessible. We must remember, though, that our diocesan people are trying but must work within limited means. It's far better to help than to offer negative criticism.

WM: What about the Cathedral rectory which advertises the Good Samaritan program?

BR: Again, I believe that the effort is being made but it does take time and money. We need to remember that the Cathedral restoration took up almost all available funds.

Here in the Pastoral Center, we critically need a stair lift but that would cost some \$40,000 to install. Our office is continually looking for funding for this project. So far I have only been able to find \$300 and that was contributed by my son Mark and his wife Julie.

WM: Now, isn't there a law that requires access to public buildings?

BR: Public buildings, yes.

WM: And churches are not considered public buildings?

BR: Well, there is a technicality in the Americans with Disabilities Act which passed in Congress in 1990 and went into effect in 1992. If a building is located on church property and is operated by the church for either religious or other legal purposes, the law does not apply; however, if the church leases property to someone else for non-religious purposes, then we could find a case of joint liability. Good case law is needed in order to definitely define boundaries. However, I have visited all parishes in the Salt Lake Valley and have found that most are providing adequate parking for the handicapped. A few do need to

start planning for this.

WM: St. Patrick's is not accessible is it?

BR: Not completely, but this parish consists of many parishioners with low incomes.

WM: Looks like you have your work cut out for you, for sure.

BR: Well, the needs of the people with disabilities will always be with us as long as we have people in those situations. Too, it seems like most of the smaller parishes will always be in need due to the small number of Catholics, especially in the outlying areas. These parishes are having a hard time supporting themselves. Maybe, as the Catholic numbers increase there will be more money available to keep up with necessities. The Americans with Disabilities Act was passed because the moral law was not working. Those with no serious health problems will have to accept more responsibility in the future. Just think, for many, many years those who were blind could not even eat in a restaurant like the rest of us. Who but a family member would read the menu to them?" Now, as the result of the Americans with Disabilities Act, the restaurants will have to provide a menu in Braille or assign a waitress/waiter to read the menu to that blind person. Further, the blind person is also allowed to take their trained animal into the restaurant. The law provides penalties for violations.

WM: A menu in Braille? Could they afford that?

BR: Most, if not all, can. After all, this is a deductible expense. As a result of this law, we now find electric button openers on large, heavy outer doors, better spacing of tables, etc., in restaurants, accessible parking lots and restrooms, etc. This is a good move for everyone. The merchant profits with increased trade, people with disabilities receive equal treatment and become more visible to the general public instead of being hidden away.

WM: Do you do much work with the mentally retarded?

BR: No, I haven't.

WM: Do you plan to?

BR:s I would think, in the future. You need to remember than I am only a part-time person with a tiny budget and no office help. We would like to expand as money becomes available.

I have been called to give the opening prayers at large conferences of people with mongoloidism and people who are

blind, and I've been well received. This, of course, was on my own time. I have found, though, that many people who are elderly and have hearing difficulties are presumed to be mentally retarded. These people cannot afford expensive hearing aids and go through life missing many of the essentials.

WM: Especially, if you're paying for heart medicine at the same time. I've heard that you are researching large-print missals for those who have sight difficulties.

BR: Yes, these are very much needed in all churches. We would also like to set up some kind of transportation for the elderly and people with serious disabilities to attend church.

WM: Do you have plans toward that? That would be very expensive.

BR: This is in the future. I have thought about a small van or bus.

WM: But if you start to bring them to church, you're going to have to take them to their doctor appointments.

BR: Well, these are just ideas at this time. We'll iron these problems out whenever we can obtain additional funds. I have spoken with elders in other smaller churches and have learned that they provide transportation for the elderly regardless of their faith. They just pick up these people, take them to their own church services and return them to their homes afterwards. This is one in California.

WM: California is a law unto itself. It sounds wonderful. Does your wife help you in your work?

BR: Yes, she helps me in many ways and is very understanding. She retired as a management trainer from the University of Utah and has had extensive experience in training and management. At the present time, she is heavily involved in volunteer service with the Assistance League. This large group of women works thousands of hours each year collecting used materials and selling them. The monies are used to help children who live in poorer neighborhoods of Salt Lake, etc. In 1992, they donated some \$40,000 in new clothing to the children who were needy.

She also suffers from onset asthma, so I try to be understanding and do not place any demands upon her time. She also worries about our son Mark who travels extensively throughout Europe and the Middle East conducting his business.

WM: Is she going to visit him?

BR: Yes, when we go to Italy for the conference, we are going to London to spend some time with Mark, his wife, Julie, and our Grandson, Alexander. Actually, Gloria is sometimes busier now that she is retired than when she was working.

WM: Well, I am too!

