

DIXIE BROWN

and

BETTY JACOBS

An Interview by Father Dennis Kelsch, OSFS

Wanda McDonough Oral History Project

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ORAL/TAPED HISTORY INTERVIEW

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Interview: APRIL 6, 1992 MOAB, UT.
Date Place

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Dennis Kesch
Signature

4/8/92
Date

DK: This is April 6, 1992. We're in Moab, Utah. We're with Dixie Brown and Betty Jacobs.* I'm Father Dennis Kelsch. And we're going to start this tape with the knowledge that Dixie and Betty have about St. Pius Parish before the church was actually built and dedicated in June of 1956. So whatever went on that they can remember previous to that date.

DB: I remember being told that before we had a resident priest in Moab, so many movies were being made here, mostly produced by John Ford, and he was a very devout Catholic. John Wayne was the star in most of them, and his wife was Catholic. And the priest would come from Dragerton to say Mass in the school gym. And at later dates, after Father Kaiser came, we didn't have a church, and he lived in a little house that belonged to Rosalie Robertson. And he said Mass in the mortuary or the Seventh Day Adventist Church building or the school gym, whichever would be available.

BJ: When I first remember hearing about the church, there were only about four or five Catholics here in Moab. And they had Mass in the living room of Rosalie Robertson's grandmother's, Grandma Garcia. And they used to go to Grandma Garcia's house. And then when more Catholics came to town of course they outgrew the living room. So then they moved to the mortuary. And they joked about when father first started hearing confessions, they would go downstairs where they kept all the caskets. People never made such good confessions in all their lives as they would when they were with those caskets.

Then I guess maybe they moved to the gym. But I remember when we moved here back by June 1st of 1956, the church was just--well, it wasn't even complete. It was complete enough to have Mass, but it took a lot of work before you could really call it complete.

DK: About what year, if you recall, would they have started to say Mass in Grandma Garcia's house? Is that possible to know?

DB: I don't know.

DK: Probably early fifties, is that a reasonable guess?

DB: Oh, yes.

DK: What are some names? Can you remember any of the names previous to Father Thomas J. Kaiser? Now, you mentioned a Father Collins, did you? Or who was the--what was the name?

*Johnny Brown (JB), Dixie's husband, is also present.

DB: Father Patrick Cullen.

DK: And he came from Dragerton?

DB: Dragerton.

DK: Which is now East Carbon? Or Dragerton used to be up in that area?

DB: Yes.

BJ: And then the first priest, of course, that stayed here any time was Father Kaiser.

DB: The first resident priest.

BJ: Resident, yes. The church was just a little church, and he had one room which was the rectory.

DK: Now, the church was built in--like it would have been the spring of '56?

BJ: No, no. Before that.

BJ: It was almost complete in '56.

DK: Because ground was broken in '55, I think, if I remember.

DB: And I remember being told that Nick Buller was head of the Building Committee.

BJ: Uh huh.

DK: Nick. And then his wife that just died awhile ago, what was her name?

DB and BJ: Mary Anne.

DK: Mary Anne. She was very active, right?

BJ: Mary Anne and I used to do all the altar linens. Of course they were done by hand then, and we'd wash them and get on that ironing board and iron. And they had to be starched because there was no fabric--nylon or rayon or anything like that. So we had to iron all those by hand. And we had to be so careful when we brought them back that we didn't get wrinkles in them. Another thing I remember so well: the tabernacle was getting kind of ragged-like. And father asked us to reline the tabernacle. So we had to have our hands--had to have consecrated hands before we could even touch the chalice. It's so different now, you know. That's what

impresses me so much. We had to consecrate our hands. So he was gone when we got ready to do it, so we had to go and move the chalice. We couldn't touch it with our hands.

DK: You had to put gloves or something on?

BJ: No, we touched it with our hands.

BJ: But our hands had to be consecrated. We had to do that to touch it. And that little table that held the wine and the--

DK: Little round table?

BJ: Little round table, yes. And I did that. We just made it. She just wanted this little round table. And we made that some 30, 32 years ago. And the other day I realized it was in the church. Do you remember Mary Lescher and Bill Lescher?

DB: Oh, yes.

BJ: She was the one. And she also-- When the church was first built, all the statues were painted natural _____. But for some reason, I don't know, she went over them and painted them with this kind of gray, brown, whatever it was. Because I remember well when she did that. I was really disappointed because I loved the colors in the statues. But now they're all one color.

DK: The table that Betty's talking about, we still use right now in church for the Offertory gifts and that. It's in regular use. Some names of families then. Who would have been some names of people in the early--when the church was first built or even before? Rosalie Robertson obviously.

BJ: Jack and Mary Keeho[sp?]-

BJ: --were there.

DK: Tomziks[sp?], okay.

DK: And Mayberrys.

DB: Donohues.

BJ: Theresa--what was her name?

DB: Bob and Theresa Maytes. And John and _____ Donohue.

DK: And John still is alive and his wife is deceased.

DB: Yes, John is still here.

DK: The Keehos are still alive and here.

BJ: So many, many families have come and gone.

DB: They've come and gone. Of course with a tourist town like this.

BJ: And so many have passed away.

DK: Now, what would have been going on in Moab in 1955? Was that uranium time yet?

DK: It was.

BJ: Uranium. That's what brought us here.

DB: Oh, this was town was busy.

DK: That's what brought a lot of families in.

BJ: What Dixie says about the movie stars, I recall--and I don't even know which movie star it was--but I was sitting right by him in church. And when they passed the collection, he reached in and pulled out a wad of bills and put it in the collection plate.

DB: Ricardo Montalban.

BJ: Oh, was it? Oh, what are we going to do with all that money? We need money so bad for the church. I don't know. Maybe it was all ones. But anyway, it was a lot of money.

DB: I remember when John Wayne's wife and son, Pat, would be in Mass. And Jackie's boys were altar servers. And they thought their mother wouldn't know John Wayne's family was in Mass, and they'd stand up on the altar and would point to them all through Mass so their mother would be sure and see them there.

BJ: Well, you talk about the altar boys. My son Larry was the very first altar boy--the only altar boy for a long time and the first one. And he was ten years old.

DB: And both my children married from this church.

DK: Talk about the time the new church was built--it was opened in June of '56--about a collapsible altar that Dixie remembers.

DB: The altar folded up because we had no hallway. We

continually had money-raising projects because we were so poor. At first we didn't have any kneelers. Each parishioner had to bring a cushion to kneel on.

DB: And we had fold-up chairs. But after we had kneelers, we had bingo every Friday night. And we had to fold up the altar and put it outside. And we would hide all the statues in the confessional. And I don't remember where we stored the kneelers and chairs. We did something with them. And then before eight o'clock Mass Sunday mornings, we had to-- Some of us, we took turns going over and cleaning the church from the night before, and putting up the altar, and putting out the kneelers and the chairs. And then in I believe it was '62, we enlarged the church, doubled it in size. And built a permanent altar.

DK: And that would be the present sanctuary and the woodwork that's there now?

DB: No. No, the woodwork was done in-- The wall paneling was done in '76.

DK: 'Seventy-six. John did all that?

DB: Mmmm hmmm.

DK: That's Dixie's husband, John, who's here. He did all the woodwork.

DB: Now, he built the altars in--it had to be about '65.

DK: Okay. So John built the altar that's there?

DB: Mmmm hmmm. He built those. And the _____ in the sacristy in the back. He built all of those. And put in the first stained- glass brass windows and the work.

DK: The woodwork behind the altar?

DB: The woodwork behind the altar. He did all of that.

DK: There's wheat and grapes designed in the wood on two tall pillars of wood behind the altar, and John did all of that work himself. Okay. What kind of fund-raisers would you have had like at that time? What were some of the things you did?

DB: Raffles, raffles, raffles.

BJ: Anything Father Kaiser could think of. We had bingo every Friday night. And once a year in the fall we had a fall festival.

DB: I remember that.

BJ: We had a carnival in an old roller rink building that was just--looked like it might collapse on us. But we had a carnival in there once a year. And we had card parties. We'd even just have a hotdog supper.

DB: Anything.

BJ: Anything that would bring in five or six dollars we did.

DK: Now, would the sisters have been coming here at that time, in the summer was it?

BJ: No. At that time-- At the time I took instructions, Mary Anne Buller was our only catechism teacher. She taught all of our kids.

DK: How many kids, roughly, would there have been?

DK: Somewhere in the sixties?

BJ: Somewhere in that area.

BJ: And then the summer of '57, the summer I went into the church, a sister started coming from Dragerton for two weeks. And they wore the heavy, long brown habits, and we had no air-conditioning. The heat was probably 115 in the shade.

BJ: And after that, sisters came from Philadelphia. But for the first few years we had sisters that came from Dragerton.

DK: And that would have just been in the summertime?

BJ: Mmmm hmmm.

DK: There were none here during the year? Where would they have stayed when they came here?

BJ: Father Kaiser would have to move out of his one-room rectory.

BJ: Stay with people of the parish.

DK: Father Kaiser was the initiator and the founder of the mission church at La Sal. Do you want to talk about that at all? Maybe how--if you know of anything--how it got going and all?

DB: I really never knew much about that. Just that he did build

the little church out there with volunteer help. And I think there were maybe four or five families was all there was. And I remember Father Kaiser used to have the ones that had free time in the parish, come over and spend afternoon after afternoon writing begging letters.

BJ: Yes! Oh, I remember. By the hundreds. Yes. To all the movie stars and celebrities that had been here who were Catholic. And they usually returned money, too.

DB: And not only that, he got some directory or something. Because we used to write them all over the country. I mean they would be printed. We wouldn't write them. But we'd address them and stamp them; lick the stamps.

BJ: For years and years. And we asked for a dollar, one dollar. Send us a dollar.

DB: John Ford sent big donations every year. And John Wayne sent several.

DB: And Ricardo Montalban.

BJ: For several years we sent out begging letters.

DB: Mmmm hmmm. And that was pretty much the way we supported things and built that building; we kept begging on.

BJ: I remember when Father Kaiser would have some kind of meeting in Salt Lake. Six or eight of them would pile into his car, and we'd go to Salt Lake, and spend the day, and come back at night. One night there.

DB: Or to Dragerton to a district meetings, too.

BJ: In Dragerton, right. We had our study clubs or something. I never will forget.

DB: But six or seven of us was practically all the ladies of the parish.

BJ: Yes, that's true. That was about the number of our Altar Society.

DB: I remember at a meeting in Dragerton, everybody was giving reports on their accomplishments. And when we read our reports, they contradicted us. Said we didn't have that many women. It was impossible. We explained to them that every woman did many jobs. They were spread around.

BJ: Speaking of jobs, remember we were talking the other day

about when I started washing the church? We were having a big cleaning program going on.

BJ: And behind the altar where the candles were, it kind of smoked, you know. So I thought, I'm going to clean that. So I started cleaning that, and the more I cleaned, the worse it got. And the more I cleaned-- I kept going higher and higher, and the higher-- And it was horrible. They finally had to paint all the way behind the altar.

DB: The same day that Herbert had gone out and cut down trees for Atlas, and stopped by the church to talk to you. And Father Kaiser had them out and chopped up to make the garlands for a _____ cottage.

DK: John wasn't pleased with that. Now, who was Herman?

DB: Herbert. Her husband.

DK: Oh, that's Betty's husband. That's Herbert Jacobs.

DB: Was it the _____, that organization?

BJ: Oh, yes, yes.

DB: And they held their convention here every spring. And we served their banquet, our Altar Society, six or eight of us. And oh, it was a job.

BJ: Two or three hundred. I don't know exactly how many it was.

DB: We always got Father Kaiser in the dishwater.

DK: Now he, Father Kaiser, then, left, you said, Christmas of '59?

BJ: Mmmm hmmm.

DK: Who followed him?

DB: Father John Rasbach.

DK: And what are some of the more notorious things about him?

JB: This I'll say for him: He could stretch a dollar farther than any human I ever saw.

DB: John has always been loyal to Father Rasbach, no matter what anybody else said, or what Father did, he always had loyalty to him.

JB: Father Rasbach, he could do that.

BJ: Yes, he could.

DK: He could deal with the money. He was good with the money.

DB: I'll say he was. He used to like John. I remember when he lay in that huge truck. It was almost a big diesel that they backed up and loaded out at Purgatory.

DK: What was Purgatory?

DB: That front basement. I named it Purgatory. The first time I went down in it, I said, now I know what Purgatory must be like, and it's been Purgatory ever since.

JB: He had old empty cans.

DB: Just everything you could imagine, wasn't there?

DK: See, he was one of the early recyclers. See, he knew it was all going to happen, back in the fifties.

DK: And how long would he have been here? What would he have done of note? Did he begin the addition?

DB: Yes. He's the one that was responsible for enlarging the church and the hall and the rectory, Father.

DK: Wow! So he must have been here a while then.

DB: Let's see now. He was here for when President Kennedy died. Father Goddard was here the year Gail was a senior, '65 and '66. Father Rasbach left the spring of '65.

DK: So he would have been here a little over five years.

DB: Mmmm hmmm.

DK: 'Fifty-nine and '60 to '65. He did a lot in those five years.

DK: If he added onto the church and built the hall and built the rectory. There's a lot there. And that was all done just through fund-raising money that came through the parish here?

DB: Mmmm hmmm.

BJ: Also a lot of donation by a contractor. And I remember when he raised the rafters on the rectory, Judy's father brought

his crew over and helped you that Saturday, remember that? The Slavins?

JB: No.

DB: The contractors came over. Bert brought all of his crew over to help you raise the rafters that Saturday. And just things like that got it done.

DK: What we're alluding to here, in case you didn't pick it up in the tape, John, here, did you own a construction company?

DB: Mmmm hmmm. He had his own company.

DK: And probably without John's work and time and all that he gave, the addition, the hall, and the rectory wouldn't have gotten built in such a short time--and built well, I must add. I mean they really are well done. So that's what we're talking about here, about John and the construction company. Now, this other company--they weren't Catholics, were they, that came over?

BJ: Yes. It was Judy Carmichael's father.

DK: Okay. Judy's father.

BJ: He wasn't Catholic, but Judy's mother was.

BJ: But I guess that church has been added to and changed maybe five or six different times. Rearranged and added on. Seems like each priest that came in had an idea of how he could better it that way, and then they would-- Well, sometimes major changes, and sometimes just minor changes.

DB: Now, which one did the marble? Father Rasbach did the marble on the Communion rail, didn't he?

DK: And that was an improvement over the other one that was there? Was there one there before that?

DB: Well, that was a matter of opinion.

JB: Something he wanted to do.

DB: They wanted to buy this marble cheap somewhere way off in Colorado.

JB: It was Father Charles Freegard had it.

DB: No, he built the wooden one. Father Freegard built the marble post with the wooden gates. Right.

DK: Mmmm hmmm. So then Father Rasbach also built a Communion rail of some kind.

DB: Uh huh. And he built that himself.

JB: Over in Colorado is a place called Marble City, and they quarry marble. He went over there and got it. He did a lot of things.

DK: Now, didn't he build the leaning chimney on the house?

DB: And those beautiful cabinets in the hall kitchen Father Freegard built himself.

DK: The heavy ones, the real heavy ones?

DB: Yes.

DK: We're talking now about when the bishop would come down to visit, when they had just the one-room rectory, part of the church.

DB: Father Kaiser would move out and stay with one of the families of the parish, and leave his one room for the bishop. And before the bishop came, the ladies had to spend at least a week on their knees scrubbing.

BJ: I remember the bishop used to come and have dinner at different houses.

BJ: And my mother was visiting us at that time, and she was non-Catholic. And when I told her the bishop was coming for dinner, it scared her to death. She said, "I'm going home! I'm going home!" Back to Louisiana. She was scared.

DK: Now, who would that have been?

DB: That was Bishop Hunt.

BJ: He was a wonderful person.

DK: I bet that was a big event, for the bishop to come to Moab.

DB: Oh, yes.

DB: And we always had a Saturday night reception out on the lawn when the bishop came. And at that time, Steen had a full-time gardener who had worked for Johnny for years. And he would gather flowers out at Steen's gardens and bring them to that place. Remember how we'd just fill it with flowers?

BJ: Oh, yes.

DK: Charlie Steen is the man who discovered uranium here in Moab.

BJ: Back in 1953.

DB: I don't remember which Sunday in May it was that we set the altar up outside on the lawn, and we just had flowers everywhere. And there was this poor old man. Remember Pete, the old fellow around Moab that was retarded and crippled?

BJ: Yes, yes.

DB: And he came by and saw all the flowers and the people out there, and he stopped and stood watching. Just enchanted with it. And Father Kaiser went over and invited him to come over and sit with us.

DK: So that must have been pretty often, having Mass out on the lawn.

DB: Every once in a while, in the spring especially.

DK: Would that be in front of the present church, like between the sidewalk and where the road starts?

DB: It was about where the rectory is now, Father, as well as I remember.

DK: The apartments certainly wouldn't have been there by that time, across the corner. So that was all open.

DB: No, they weren't.

DK: Were there many trees around there? They must have been pretty much in the open sun.

BJ: No, there were more trees.

DB: Father Rasbach cut down a lot of trees.

DK: Maybe that's how the Communion rail got built.

DB: He let the lawn die, and he cut down trees.

DK: He wasn't an environmentalist, I take it.

JB: _____ get them peculiar-looking rocks, you know. You'd have to have a winch to haul them.

DB: Oh, remember when he put those rocks all around the path.

DK: What did he do?

DB: Put rocks all the way around the parking lot at the church. And they fixed parking spaces and put rocks.

DK: Now, did he do all that himself like?

DB: Yeah.

DB: As well as I remember, he did, Father. He worked all the time, just at hard labor.

DK: So Father Rasbach; then to Father David C. Goddard. 'Sixty-five, you said, '66 would be Goddard. And Betty told a story--we didn't put it on the tape; it wasn't running at the time. But Father Goddard's mother came from California, was it?

DB: No, she came from Salt Lake.

DK: She asked him what he had done wrong to deserve this God forsaken assignment down here in Moab. So then he would have left in '66? And who would have followed him? Did he do anything that was special?

DB: Oh, yes. He bricked the church.

DB: We bricked it while Father Goddard was here, didn't we?

DK: And what would have been the exterior, John, before the brick?

JB: Just wood.

DK: So Goddard put the brick around--was that everything? He did then the rectory, the whole bit?

DB: And the altars. That's when you built the altars. And we put the carpet in the church.

DB: Honey, Mary Lescher donated the money to build that, to pay you to build, to get that expensive wood of whatever that is, and build the altars. And it was you and Father Goddard did all that together.

JB: Maybe so.

DK: So when you say altars, there must have been side altars then, too. Not just the one in the center?

BJ: Yes, just the one in the center and back out where the tabernacle sits.

DK: Oh, where the tabernacle is. So the tabernacle behind the altar, that was there from the beginning. Of course I'm sure the altar faced the wall and all that in the old liturgy. But then they turned it around, and they built that altar with the tabernacle that's there now.

BJ: Now, my son-in-law was working in uranium, and he did real, real well for a few years in there. And he and my daughter bought the tabernacle in the name of my husband because he was dead by then. And they bought it in his memory.

DK: His name is on there, yes?

BJ: Uh huh.

DK: And so when they built the altars is when they got the new tabernacle.

BJ: It hasn't been too many years ago.

DB: When Father Freegard was here.

BJ: We had the round tabernacle.

DB: Yes. Mmmm hmmm. But Father Goddard bricked the church and put the carpeting in. And we got the new pews, too.

JB: Yeah.

DB: To match the altar you had built.

DK: So previous to this it would have just been pews, but older pews? Or chairs? Okay. So previous to that you had chairs. Then Father Rasbach brought the pews.

DB: Then these old, old, old, old heavy pews. Dark.

DB: And Father Goddard, that's when we got the pews and the altars.

DK: Now, would he have done that through private donations, through like a fund drive, or do you remember?

DB: We had a fund drive.

BJ: He got those in some old church.

DB: Father Rasbach?

BJ: Yes. They were replacing the pews.

DB: Father Goddard, bricking the church, he asked every family to donate \$100. And as well as I remember, that pretty well took care of it. You don't remember? And Mary Lescher donated the money for the altars. What is that word, honey?

JB: Oak.

DB: Oak. It was extremely expensive. Had to be special ordered.

DK: What happened to Mary Lescher now? What's her story?

BJ: See, they were from Texas. And she was the anesthetist at the hospital, and they stayed here just a couple of years. And for some reason, well, they moved back to Texas.

DB: And the pews, I believe we paid off from Sunday collections. I'm not sure.

DK: You were probably were doing pretty well at the time because of the uranium thing and all that?

DB: People were well off here. Everybody was working.

DK: Now, to make a quantum leap backwards for a minute, did Charlie Steen donate the land that that church is on? Is that true?

BJ: Yes.

DB: All of the church land.

BJ: He set aside that whole parcel of land. Any church that wanted to be built there, could be built with just any land that they wanted.

DK: So those three: the Catholic church, St. Pius, the Community Baptist, and the First Baptist were all donated lands by Charlie.

BJ: That's right. And I think he even donated land to the school, didn't he?

DK: Helen M. Knight School?

BJ: Yes. I'm pretty sure he gave that.

DB: Yes, he did that. And the other schools, where the W_____ School is now, also. And specified that-- And the land around that has those little houses the teachers can live

in. And he specified that it was to never ever be used for anything but a school for children.

DK: So then Goddard left in '66. He did the brick.

DB: No, it was after that.

DK: He did do a lot if he was here just a year or two.

DB: He wasn't here-- When did Father Goddard leave?

DK: I should have brought the directory, but I didn't.

DB: ...during his time here we paneled the church.

DK: This is Father Gennaro F. Verdi's time here.

DB: And changed the confessionals.

DK: Now the classrooms, like, on the hall, were they add

DK: They were added on. So the hall was bigger until they got built on the end?

DB: They weren't built on the end, Father. The hall was that big, and they just put the partitions in. And that was when Father Verdi was here.

DK: Now, do you remember at the time, were they going to, like, Monticello or anything like that? Just La Sal?

DB: No, they went to Monticello on Sunday

DB: La Sal and Monticello, all through the years. Until the deacon came to Monticello, didn't they?

BJ: Mmmm hmmm.

DK: We're going to go in now to a little bit of Dixie Brown's background. Dixie is a convert, and she's going to talk a little bit about her family background. Maybe name places if you can, you know.

DB: I was raised in Oklahoma, and there were no Catholic churches anywhere in the area. And my mother had grown up Catholic in Kentucky.

DK: Put a date maybe to when you were born?

DB: I was born in 1928. So Catholics in the Southern Bible Belt then were few and far between. But I listened to my mother

talk about the Church and her life in Catholic school, until as far back as I can remember my dream was to become a Catholic. I had always wanted to be a Catholic. It was just to me the most special thing there was. And then after I had children, I felt that the best thing I could do for them and their welfare was to bring them up in the Catholic Church. So in 1957 I was baptized into the Church.

DK: Tell about Father Kaiser coming to your door.

DB: I had a friend who was Catholic, and during our conversation she realized how I felt about the Church, and she asked the priest to come to see me. And it was one beautiful April day there was a knock on the door, and I opened it, and there stood Father Kaiser. And to me that was the best Christmas present, Easter present, birthday present, anything I ever had in my life. I just--I'll never ever forget that day. I just felt totally at peace. It just was what I had always dreamed of.

DK: So you were baptized then.

DB: I was baptized the following spring. Father Kaiser is very thorough in instructions. You have to go about a year. And it was the next spring. I was baptized and received my first Holy Communion and was confirmed on the same day. It was in May of '57. I guess it was '56 when Father Kaiser came to see me the first time. Because I went to instructions a year.

DK: Did you get the kids baptized?

DB: Then the kids were all baptized. And then my husband, who had been growing up in the Southern states, had heard some pretty gory stories about the Catholic faith. But his first impressions--vivid impressions--were when he would come to pick the kids and me up at church, he noticed--he remarked--that everybody came out happy. Everybody came out happy and smiling. Where in most of your other churches, people come out looking kind of scared or unhappy or whatever. And that was just--And then, as he came to know the different priests, then in 1966, Father Goddard baptized him.

DK: Betty, do you want to share your background?

BJ: Yeah. Mine's not as exciting as Dixie's. But I was born in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, in 1919. And my dad was Catholic, but my mother was a Methodist. So my dad always saw that we went to church when we were young, my brother and I. And we didn't have a car, and the church was, oh, probably, maybe two or three miles from where we lived. And we'd get up

every Sunday morning, and we'd walk to church. And of course I was brought up in the Catholic Church, my brother and I. When I met my husband, before we were married--he was an Episcopalian--and I wanted him to be Catholic. Of course I didn't say he had to. But anyway, he saw how I felt about it. And just prior to our marriage in 1939, he became a Catholic. I always wanted to go to Catholic school, but we never had the money. I guess maybe it cost a dollar a month or something like that to go to the Catholic school, but we didn't have it. So when--speaking of Father Kaiser--when we moved out here, I still didn't know that much about my religion. Because my dad was good about bringing us, but as far as teaching us, I guess he just didn't know or didn't teach us.

But anyway, when Father Kaiser came here, we formed a study club, of which Dixie and I were two of the charter members. And once a week, every Wednesday we would go to one--there was about six or eight of us--and we'd go from one house to the other. And we would have our hour or two of study club. And I learned more at that time with Father Kaiser than I guess I had ever known all my life. So that's the reason I'm so close to him, why I'll never forget him. Because I felt like I really, even though I was baptized a Catholic, I felt like I really became a Catholic under his tutoring. So it meant a lot to me.

DB: Father Goddard is such an extremely brilliant man. And I went with Johnny for his instructions. He and Marge Thompson did theirs together, and Eddie and I went all the time. But there were so many things that Father Kaiser taught me about loving the Church. But Father Goddard just didn't have the same talent that Father Kaiser did. I was so glad that that was the one I happened to take my instruction from.

DK: Talk to me a little bit about Rosalie Robertson. I mean she had such a colorful background here; she's been in so many things in all those years. And unfortunately we're probably about six months too late in going after a tape with her because she's not here at all. Although her mind, I think, is still good, and she could talk about stuff. But she can't hear you.

DB: Well, the first people I remember in the church that made me feel so welcome were Rosalie and Betty and Mary Anne.

DK: Mary Anne--?

DB: Buller. And Blanche.

DK: Blanche--?

DB: Donohue.

DK: Okay. John Donohue.

DB: And Mary Keeho, of course. Mary was my sponsor. But Rosalie is--she's as much a part of the church as the altar, you know.

DK: So she was always involved in stuff presumably?

DB: Oh, yes. Always.

DK: Things going on. Did she ever teach CCD or any of those kinds of things?

DB: She didn't from the time we started organizing CCD, Father, because she was really too old and hard of hearing by then.

BJ: I remember her mother, Grandma Garcia. And she lived with Rosalie; it was just Rosalie and Grandma Garcia. And they were both so involved. And like you said before, the first time that there was Mass said was in their living room. And it was maybe for months, I don't know, they'd have maybe three or four people attending. But whenever a priest could come down, he would always have Mass in Grandma Garcia's living room. She was a fantastic person. Both of them, Rosalie and Grandma Garcia.

DB: Oh, yes. My kids all love Rosalie. And she still knows each one and the sons-in-law when she sees them, or any of them. She still has a good mind.

DK: Oh, yes. She does. If she could only hear, she would be fine.

BJ: Oh, she would remember dates, she would remember everything.

DK: Now, her husband would have died when?

DB: Quite a ways back.

BJ: You know she was a teacher. She used to teach Spanish in Monticello schools. Now whether she ever taught in this district or not, I don't know. But she taught over at Monticello.

BJ: In fact I think she used to live in Monticello during the week. And then she'd come home on weekends. She had a room down there where she parked.

DB: Did you know that Rosalie and Beatrice, the Garcia Family,

lived up in Castle Valley and that was the county seat?

BJ: No, I did not know that.

DB: I just thought of that. When we used to have the parish picnics at the Hoffman Ranch?

BJ: Yes, well, I remember that.

DB: At one time they had owned that land there.

BJ: Garcias?

DB: Uh huh.

DB: Beatrice and Rosalie had grown up there. ____.

DK: Were they born there?

DB: I don't know.

DK: The Beatrice we're talking about is Rosalie's sister Beatrice?

BJ: Yes.

DB: I don't know if they were born there or not. But there was a little town there that was the county seat of Grand County before there was ever a town started here.

BJ: We used to have church picnics there.

DB: They lived there as little girls.

BJ: Father would go and set up an altar, and we'd have Mass outside. Then we would have our picnic in the afternoon, Sunday afternoon.

BJ: So beautiful up there!

DK: Oh, I imagine it would be a nice cool relief, too, from down here.

BJ: Oh, yes, it was nice.

DK: It's up in the mountains. It's a ways up. We want to just mention Election Day dinners and how they got started, and when they started, and all that.

DB: As well as I remember, Father, the first one was 1965. And actually, we stole the idea from the Episcopalians. Johnny

had been in the Episcopal Church, and we had become real close friends with the priest. And when they had their open house, they had a smorgasbord. Then the next Altar Society meeting after that, we were trying to think of something that would be a good fund-raiser, and some of us mentioned that. Then we decided what would be a good day, and someone mentioned Election Day because people were all excited and doing things then, and they would come out. So that was the way it started.

DK: And that would have been served in the church?

DB: No, that was the hall. We had the hall then.

DK: Oh, you had the hall.

DB: That was with Father Goddard.

BJ: It was his first year here.

DB: And it caught on so well.

BJ: There would be a line completely around the church, and some people standing in line for an hour or two. Because they knew they got a good meal for a very reasonable amount.

DB: Five dollars. Or was it three?

BJ: Or maybe one.

DK: Okay. We're continuing with talking about the Election Day dinner.

BJ: It would all be decorated with flags and straw hats and red-white-and-blue banners and everything. And one of the local merchants would bring a TV down, a color TV. And then after the votes were counted--this was all local, of course--and then we'd sit there and watch the results. And people would just hang around, and it was just a good time. _____ visiting. We always looked forward to the Election Dinner. We made good at it, too.

DB: Oh, yes.

BJ: That was one of our-- As a matter of fact just even to this day, that's our chief money-raising project, Election Day dinners. It's been going on for 26 years.

DB: And it's probably how we paid for the pews, now that I think about it.

- BJ: Probably so. Probably so. We could always count on Election Day dinners to make money.
- DB: And there are still some of the same people come every year that came to the first one.
- BJ: And the candidates would come down during the counting of the votes.
- DB: Drop their charm around.
- BJ: Right. All the candidates would always be there. After the polls closed and before they had the count, they would come there. Of course it was too late to change their votes.
- DB: But they'd always come back into the kitchen and kiss all the women.
- BJ: And I guess it'll go on, no telling, for the rest of time, I guess, for Election Day dinners.
- DK: And they're really run the same way. I mean people take the birds home.
- DB: I think the town would really miss it. Like the Judge has always said it's the social event of the year.
- BJ: Yeah, the church buys turkeys and hams.
- DB: And for years we had turkey, ham, and roast beef.
- DB: Until it got so expensive we just couldn't do it.
- BJ: But it doesn't cost too much because the people bring salads and desserts and vegetables, like that. The only thing that costs the church is just the meat.
- DB: Donate the coffee.
- BJ: Yeah, things like that. And what impresses me so is the young people help serve the meal. The kids, ten, 12, on up, teenagers. And they get in there, and they put their little aprons on, and they serve coffee, and they clear the tables. And I think it's a wonderful thing to get those children involved in church activities.
- DB: The men wash dishes.
- BJ: Yeah. Right, right. And then you mentioned the men, they always look forward to their pancake breakfasts. It's not a regular thing. But about once a month the men get together

and serve a pancake breakfast, and it's good for the church. We don't make any money off of it. I hope we clear expenses. But it gets the church together and gets the men involved. It's good.

DK: Maybe we could pick up on where we left off with the priests. I think we talked about Lawrence M. Spellen coming in the late sixties. Did we decide that?

DK: In the late sixties. And he, apparently, didn't do anything structurally or anything like that to the church.

DB: No. I can figure out exactly the year he was here. Katie graduated in '71, and she was in school in Salt Lake _____ until she and Eddie married in '73. Father Spellen came here the last part of-- Oh, we forgot Father John B. Hart.

DK: Where does he fit in?

DB: He came after Father Goddard.

DB: Then Father Spellen. Father Hart gave the address at Katie's baccalaureate in '71. Father Spellen came the end of '71.

DK: I can't imagine him not being noted for something or other, Larry Spellen. What did he get into--I mean, notable trouble in town or anything? He's a character.

BJ: He had lots of fights with Patrick.

DB: Father Spellen.

BJ: I'd forgotten all about those people.

DB: Oh, they were cross-ways all the time.

DK: But he didn't do anything, I mean, that caused a scene or infamy or anything like that?

DB: No, no. He didn't. Not that I can recall.

DK: This was when Father Hart--?

DB: When Father Hart left, the bishop sent Father Matthew O. Wixted until he had a permanent priest available. He was here for probably two or three months, and then Father Spellen came. And Father Spellen wasn't here very long. About a year, wouldn't you say?

DB: And then Father Verdi came.

DK: So he was here quite a long time.

DB: Father Verdi, I believe, was here six years. That sticks in my head somehow. And following Father Verdi was Father Robert B. Head.

DK: Father Verdi--what would he have been into? Or what was his forte?

DB: Well, he did the paneling and modernized the confessionals.

DK: Were any of these guys really active--?

DB: I know what Father Spellen did outstanding.

DB: The Mormon kids got a credit for seminary. The state built a seminary building on the school grounds, and they had seminary class during school hours. Well, Father Spelling was an accredited teacher. So he made his demands that the Catholic children could use the seminary building, no less, and have their religion class and get a credit for it also.

DK: Boy, the American Civil Liberties Union would go crazy today, wouldn't they, with that?

DB: Now, that was the year Gerry graduated, was a senior. She graduated in '71, Katie in '69. Yes. That would have been the year of '70 and '71 Father Spellen did this. And he taught the Catholic religion, and the students got a credit for it.

DK: In the building--?

DB: In the seminary building.

DK: In the seminary building.

DB: Oh, he loved things like that.

DK: Well, I think he did a similar thing some other place where he was. I think he had a--he either had the church buy a building near where there was a school, and he had the same kind of freedom for the Catholic kids to take a period to come over to the building for instruction and all that.

DB: Yes, I had forgotten all about that.

DK: That is an accomplishment. That is. I was going to say, did any of them get very involved in the community? Like any, you know, major involvement in anything that went on in town as such? Or just pretty much stayed with the church?

- DB: Father Spellman had a big hand in organizing the Ministerial Association.
- DB: I had forgotten that also. He was one of the main pastors to start that. That was the first year we had that.
- DK: Good. That's good to know.
- DB: I believe he was more to get involved in the functions around town than any of them.
- DK: He's a very outgoing guy. I mean he always was that way.
- DB: Now, Father Goddard, he gave the baccalaureate sermon the year Gail graduated, and Father Hart did the year Katie graduated. But the seniors voted for that. They were very well--very respected and well liked around town. All of our priests, I think, have been. People didn't quite know what to think of Father Freegard. And Father Benedict(?) was kind of distant with people, I think, and stuck more to just Catholics. Father Head was a real mixer, wasn't he, with people?
- BJ: We had the parade where all the churches entered floats, I remember he was on the float one time.
- DB: Mormon Day, wasn't it? We had our float in it, and he rode on it.
- DK: You mean Pioneer Day?
- DB: Pioneer Day.
- DK: Let's get this straight.
- DB: Was it that one?
- BJ: That was right. Because I'd never seen a priest on a float before.
- DB: If I remember right, that's when he did it.
- BJ: I imagine so because that's when we had the big parade.
- DB: Well, we always put ours together. Father Escalante was the first white man in Utah.
- DB: It wasn't Brigham Young.
- DB: Father Hart she absolutely adored. I think that's why she is so involved in her church to this day was the background

of Father Hart. She adored Father Hart. And then Father Verdi. She was really close to Father Verdi.

DK: So he apparently did more to kind of work with the younger kids than--

DB: He was real good with the teenage bracket, and the little kids, too.

BJ: Which priest was here when we finally got our nuns, our sisters? Do you remember that? How long has it been? And then we had two for several years.

DB: It might be Father Head, didn't it, Betty? Because it wasn't _____ that came after Father Head. It was Father Jeremy Roark[sp?]. And they weren't here when Father Verdi was here, were they, at all?

BJ: I don't remember.

DB: Do you remember, honey? It was when Father Head was here, wasn't it?

JB: I think so.

JB: There weren't any here when Father Verdi was here.

DB: No, there wasn't.

BJ: It seems to me maybe about seven or eight years ago--I can't remember the date.

DK: He was here in the early eighties, I think.

BJ: Eighties.

DK: Uh huh.

DB: It was nine years ago. The way I remember things is to tie them in with something that happened along with it, you know. We sold our home and moved down here April of '83. And the nuns had been here a year.

DK: Do you remember who they were, perchance? I know it's a lot.

BJ: Was it Anne Therese?

DB: Both of them-- Sister Anne Therese was the second one, Betty. I can't remember-- I didn't meet the first two, actually. But I heard Gail and Gerry and Katie all talk about them a lot. And then Sister Anne Therese was the first

one I knew. They lived next door to Gail and Terry.

BJ: Yeah--the trailer

DB: And Sister Anne Therese, since we moved down here, came to see us.

BJ: And the other one was named Sister Anne, too. Her first name was Anne. But I can't remember what her name was also.

DB: I never met her.

BJ: Oh, she was fantastic! She was so wonderful.

DB: I know she was. I remember them talking about her.

BJ: She started a study group, too.

DB: Yes.

BJ: She used to go to different houses. But it didn't take off for some reason. I don't know whether she wasn't here long enough. But for some reason it just didn't take hold. Well, she had that operation, remember that? She had to leave, and she went back north or back east somewhere to have that operation. She had cancer. So maybe she just didn't have time to get it going.

DK: So when they first came, they were in that trailer, but it was over here?

DB: It was right across the street. Yes.

DK: So that's where they had been all this while until it got moved back to where Sister is now. Do you agree now?

DB: And I was kind of out of it of things for so long there. But I remember there was something, but I can't remember who was there or what.

DK: Dick Harzmann?

DB: Horstmann. He wasn't Catholic. He's dead now.

DK: Was he like hired to do that?

DB: He was hired to do it. It was after Johnny was ill and couldn't do it. He built those chairs and that drop door between the hall and the kitchen. He did that. I never did forgive Dick for that. He knew better. But he did that, I know. And when those windows had to be replaced around the

crucifix, Jimmy did it, didn't he, honey, Jimmy Nassum[sp]??

JB: I think that this guy that put the glass in did it.

BJ: Did you build the big crucifix behind the altar, the present one? Did you do that?

DB: No. That was ordered.

JB: Father Rasbach ordered that. I helped him hang it. Well, the first time the window was made in a diamond shape.

DK: Johnny's talking about the large crucifix presently behind on the back wall. There apparently was at one time a diamond-shaped window behind the crucifix. And Father Verdi decided that he thought it would be better if it were a round window. And so John set to work at making the frame, and they got a person to put the glass into the window. It's a sign of Eternal Presence or something, the circle, I guess, over the diamond.

BJ: I guess so. Somewhere along the way it leaked rain a couple of times, a storm or something. And it leaked back there.

DK: Well, didn't they also have to put different glass in because of the bright light shining in people's eyes in the evening at sunset.

DB: In the evening, yes. It glared.

DK: So they kind of put that more milk glass, and that cut it down a bit.

JB: The other was much prettier glass.

DK: Do you remember who would've been the one that changed all the altar stuff around after Vatican II? Like, who got the altar off the back wall and turned around? It probably would have been in the latter sixties.

DB: You should remember. You did it.

DK: Mid to latter 1960s.

DB: Who was the priest?

JB: Father Goddard.

DK: Goddard--that would've been about right, '65, '66.

DB: Yeah, it would've been Father Goddard.

DK: Now, the altar that was against the back wall, is the present altar from that? Or did they just get rid of the other altar, or what?

JB: I think we just got rid of the other one.

DB: To match the front altar.

DK: We're talking now about some more recent stuff. The handicapped parking places and making the backdoor accessible to handicapped would have been done--that was done by Lisa Gillowans[sp?]. It was done by her and her mother, Janet, in the name of Mr. Gillowan. I forget--Roy, I think? Leroy, I think, was his first name. He was a power line worker of Utah Power & Light, and was killed on the job not too long before his retirement, if I got the story right. And they donated money for three cement paths and then a cement sidewalk going into the side church door, the back door, for handicapped accessibility.

And then in the winter of--I can't even remember myself when did we do that? In the spring--in '91--we made the hall accessible through the church. You could go from the church right into the hall without having to go outside. Part of what Lisa and Janet donated was also a ramp into the hall. You could get to the hall or the church. And we made in '91 it accessible directly from the church into the hall. We put in cabinets for videos and for library stuff, books.

We in '92, the spring of '92, this year, we redid the bathrooms, one of which was the original bathroom that was built with the church with the shower in it and all. We redid both of them into handicapped accessible bathrooms. Part of the '91 project was to renovate the kitchen. A lot of money had been saved over the years by the Altar Society and the bingo games, and there was a plan to do the kitchen. So we kind of updated the plan, and put some new cupboards in, took old cupboards out of the old priest's kitchen, rectory kitchen, put them in the kitchen. Put new lights in. Put a doorway into the hall directly from the kitchen rather than from the side. Painted the whole thing. Put in a new sink. Moved the washer and dryer out of the kitchen, the priest's washer and dryer, into the back utility room of the rectory. And then we put in a new janitor's closet into the hall itself with a mop, sink, and all that kind of stuff. And I think the final little thing we did was we put a drinking fountain into the side of the janitor's closet for the kids. And I think that's the most recent things that we've done in the church. I can't think of anything else.

