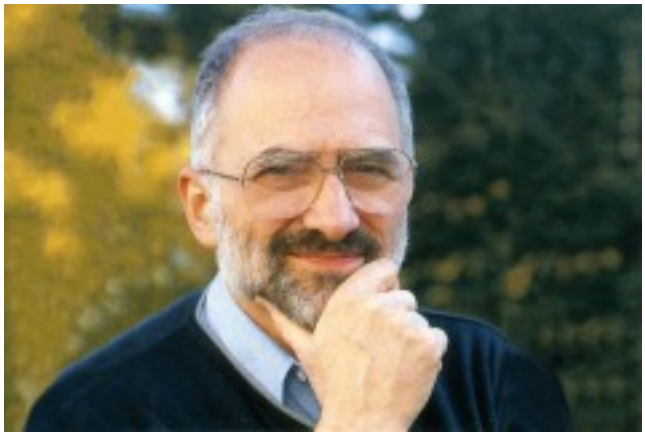


Interviewer – Fr. Richard, would you share with us a bit about your background: family, childhood and early education?

Fr. Richard – May sister and I were born in Worcester, MA. Our parents, while born here, were of French Canadian descent. My father was a machinist by trade. Growing up in Worcester, our parish was St. Joseph's which has since closed. My vocation grew out of my family's witness of the faith and their support, which did not 'count the cost.'

– **Where did your Assumption roots begin?**

– My roots in Assumption began in high school when I attended Assumption Prep and then were deepened later at the college. At the same time I knew that I wanted to become a teacher. During those college years, it was Fr. Denys Gonthier, A.A. who had the greatest influence on me and nourished my love for education. In fact, years later, I spoke to him the night before he died.

– **Where did you begin your formation in Assumption and continue your education?**

– I did my novitiate in Saugerties, NY at the time of the beginning of the Second Vatican Council. Then from '63-'65 I was in Belgium studying philosophy, completing my last two years of college. During that time I was also able to do some traveling. In '66 I was in St. Peter's Square for the end of the council while doing theology at the Gregorian. For me, that was a very exciting experience of church, while making several friends among the seminarians from around

the world. Fr. Wilfrid Dufault, A.A. was our Superior General at the time and who frequently invited notable speakers to the house.

– When did you return to the U.S.?

– Well, my next assignment was in ’67 when I moved to Boston to do my M. Div. at Weston Jesuit in Cambridge. While there I studied art history during the summer at Boston University on a fellowship. Following my M.A. there, I earned a Ph.D. at New York University, after doing my dissertation in Florence from ’73-’75.

– What were your subsequent assignments?

– Having been ordained in ’71, in the midst of my studies, I was later assigned to Assumption College in ’76, to teach and do formation work briefly while serving as superior of Austin House. That was a wonderful experience that has left me with many happy memories. Then in’84 I moved to Milton as provincial for five years. During that time we saw the great expansion of the congregation in Africa. In ’90 I was made Vice President of Academic Affairs at the college. Needless to say, that was quite challenging. In ’96 I was back to teaching and did campus ministry with a focus on worship.

– Then you experienced a major change in your life, didn’t you?

– Oh yes, without a doubt! From ’99 –’11 I was back in Rome as Superior General of the congregation. In reflecting back on those years, I was greatly blessed and enjoyed serving the congregation and the Church during that time.

– What are some of the most significant memories of those years?

– I would have to say that there are several. First of all, we have grown in our appreciation and recognition of the place and role of the laity in the Assumption family. Secondly, we had the

graced opportunity to celebrate the life of our founder Fr. d'Alzon and the impact he has had on the congregation and the Church, especially I would say through his sufferings. Observing the bicentennial of his birth in 2010 was most significant for our Assumption family. His charism is the gift of a man who traveled a difficult but Christ centered journey.

– What hobbies or other interests do you have?

– One interest I have always had is in the field or architecture and of special note for me will always be the chapel in our General House in Rome. I also enjoy running, swimming and skiing__during my younger days.

– What is your vision or hope for the future of the congregation and/or the church?

– I very much appreciate Pope Benedict XVI's vision of a church that is a fervent minority. I see us as a congregation, while maintaining our presence in the west, continuing to grow internationally within and between provinces. This is not easy but is becoming more essential. Here in this province, we are being greatly blessed by a novitiate with 8 young men. While it is a grace and blessing for our province, it is also a sign of hope for our future.