



Interviewer - As a New Englander, how did your family life eventually lead you to the Assumptionists?

Fr. Roland - I was born in Nashua, NH where my Dad was a shoemaker, with three sons and one daughter. My family spent many happy summers vacationing at Hampton Beach, NH. One summer I had a serious bicycle accident when I was nine years old. As a result, I permanently injured my left hand. It was during those summers that I met and got to know an Assumptionist who was also on vacation. This was my initial contact which eventually led me to Assumption Prep and the College. While there it became clear to me that I wanted to become a priest and a missionary, so I eventually applied to Maryknoll but was rejected because of health reasons. In hindsight, I can now see that it was God leading me to the Assumptionists.

- Where did your studies and formation in the community take you?

- I entered the community in 1947 and did my novitiate in Canada, graduated from Assumption College in 1950 and went back to Canada and earned an STL from Laval University. In December, 1953 I was ordained and soon thereafter was sent to Mexico to teach English in a boys school. There I helped out in a rural parish on the outskirts of the city and saw the diversity and extremes of the country, as well as the city.

- Where did other assignments and ministries take you?

- After that initial experience in Mexico, I went back to Canada where I opened a minor

seminary in Bury and taught French along with many other courses. Following that assignment, I was sent to Worcester in 1960 as Dean of Men at the College and taught Old Testament before returning for a brief time to Bury. Then I was assigned to Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico City in 1965. From 1969 - 1977 I was superior and director of The John XXIII Center in Cassadaga, NY, a place of significant growth in my spiritual life. My next assignment was to the Provincial House in NYC where I was superior and fundraiser for five years. Following that experience, I was in Milton, MA for a brief time and then went to St. Anne - St. Patrick's in Sturbridge for two years before returning to Mexicao as pastor where I re-modeled the church. From 1990 - 1996, I was provincial at our house in Brighton, MA. After a three month sabbatical for senior priests in New Mexico, I returned refreshed to Old English Road in Worcester as superior and chaplain at the College. At that time I also did parish ministry at St. Peter's in Worcester. From January to August, 2006, I was in Sturbridge with one of our novices before returning to Brighton to work with the brothers for one year and where I now remain.

- Would you share some of your reflections and memories gleaned from your rich experiences as an Assumptionist priest?

- Looking back, I can see how the experiences of these many years have kept me young in mind, heart and spirit. I read a great deal which enriched me personally and ministerially. Clearly God was guiding me all along the way. As I have said, the years at Cassadaga and my sabbatical time in New Mexico were experiences of great spiritual growth. God has particularly gifted me with peace and joy. In recent years, I have discovered and grown to appreciate Carmelite spirituality through the writings of Sts. Therese of Liseaux, Theresa of Avila and John of the Cross. One of the greatest gifts I have received is the freedom resulting in accepting the inevitability of one's own death. It is part of an absolute trust in God.

- What is your vision and hope for the future of the congregation and the Church?

- In the spirit of Fr. d'Alzon, I pray for the continued openness of the community to a variety of ministries and the 'being with' and among the laity. Fr. d'Alzon's life and spirit is ever fresh and new and certainly applicable today, challenging us to growth in the Church. Lastly, I would just say that my heart is full of love for the priesthood. Everything is gift!