

**New England Jesuit
Oral History Program**



**Fr. James W. O'Neil, S.J.
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THE IMPORTANCE OF ORAL HISTORY

Oral histories are the taped recordings of interviews with interesting and often important persons. They are not folklore, gossip, hearsay, or rumor. They are the voice of the person interviewed. These oral records are, in many instances, transcribed into printed documentary form. Though only so much can be done, of course, in an hour or sometimes two, they are an important historical record whose value increases with the inevitable march of time.

For whatever reason, New England Jesuits, among others around the world, have not made any significant number of oral histories of their members. Given the range of their achievements and their impact on the Church and society, this seems to many to be an important opportunity missed. They have all worked as best they could for the greater glory of God. Some have done extraordinary things. Some have done important things. All have made valuable contributions to spirituality, education, art, science, discovery, and many other fields. But living memories quickly fade. Valuable and inspiring stories slip away.

This need not be. Their stories can be retold, their achievements can be remembered, their adventures saved. Their inspiration can provide future generations with attractive models. That is what Jesuit oral history is all about.

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Interview with Fr. James W. O'Neil, S.J.
by Fr. Richard W. Rousseau, S.J.
February 11, 2009

EARLY YEARS

RICHARD ROUSSEAU: Why don't we begin at the very beginning, by asking you when and where you were born?

JAMES O'NEIL: I was born on April 12, 1921, at St. Margaret's Hospital in Dorchester. When I was a child, we moved to Weymouth, Massachusetts. My mother and father were very devout Catholics. I had three sisters. We all went to the Sacred Heart School.

RR: Tell us something about your father, where he worked, what he was like. Also, give us some feel for your family life.

JO: My father was my hero. For me, he was a grandfather I never had and also like an older brother. He was always very close to me, very helpful. At the time of the Depression, he went into the civil service and worked for the post office as a clerk. In those days he worked at Government Center in Boston. So it meant he had commute every day, back and forth.

RR: And what kind of person was your mother?

JO: My mother was a lovely person. She was a housewife, and she watched over us very carefully. I remember when we were in school, she would always tutor us and make sure we did our homework. My mother and father were very close to one another.

RR: Where did they come from?

JO: My father grew up in the area of Fields Corner, Dorchester, St. Peter's Parish. My mother came from Jamaica Plain, St. Thomas Aquinas Parish. When she was young, her father died, so she had to go to work at an early age. She worked for a shoe company that was very popular in Jamaica Plain, and she did a lot of fancy stitching, I understand. I think my parents met at some kind of a dance; they were both very fond of dancing.

RR: What was your father's name?

JO: James.

RR: And your mother's?

JO: Margaret. He always called her Peggy. My oldest sister was also Margaret, but she was never called Peggy; she was always called Margie.

RR: Did your mother keep working after she was married?

JO: No, that was just when she was young.

RR: How many brothers and sisters did you have?

JO: I had three sisters, no brothers. The three sisters were younger than I.

RR: Well, that made it a little better balance, I guess, but sisters are always telling you what to do, right? What were their names?

JO: Margaret was the oldest, then Marie Theresa, and Rita was the youngest.

SCHOOLING

RR: You all went to the same school?

JO: Yes, we all went to the Sacred Heart Grammar School, and then we all went to the public high school, Weymouth High.

RR: Tell me a little bit about both of those schools, how you liked them.

JO: The Sisters of St. Joseph were the teachers at Sacred Heart School, and they prepared me perfectly to go on to high school. Their teaching of English, mathematics, and other subjects prepared me very well, so that I found it rather easy in high school.

RR: Were the Sisters of St. Joseph from Boston?

JO: Yes. Marvelous teachers!

RR: They were quite a group, weren't they? I can remember them, because I gave a retreat once at one of their schools. Tell me, did anything special happen in grammar school that you might want to mention?

JO: No, there was nothing really special about grammar school.

RR: How about high school then?

JO: I was very happy with high school. I was put in an all-boys class, even in a public school. The idea was that we were all going to be mathematicians and engineers. I think that was why we boys were put together.

RR: Did they think you were going to be a mathematician?

JO: I think so, because I liked it. It was my favorite subject. We had a wonderful group, and we stayed together for the four years.

RR: I didn't know they did that in public schools.

JO: I think that might have been extraordinary. I don't think there were any other classes like that in the school.

RR: So your high school years were good ones?

JO: I enjoyed them very much. We had two vocations to the priesthood out of that class. They joined the Holy Cross Fathers and entered the seminary right after high school. Thomas Lockary became a professor of mathematics at Stonehill College. He was outstanding there

as a teacher and as a prefect of the dormitories. He was much beloved.

RR: So would you say you got your beginning interest in mathematics in high school?

JO: No, I'm sure I had it even before then, perhaps in grammar school.

RR: Anything else about high school that you might think interesting to tell us about?

JO: Nothing other than the fact that I loved all four years.

HIS PARISH

RR: Tell us a little bit about your parish and your involvement in it. What kind of community was it? What church did you go to?

JO: The Sacred Heart Church.

RR: Was that close to your home?

JO: Yes. We lived up on the hill overlooking it. It was just about a five-minute walk to reach it.

RR: They didn't have a Catholic school there?

JO: Yes, they did, but just a grammar school. As I mentioned, I went to the Sacred Heart School, which was the parish school. My father and mother insisted on sending us to the Catholic school. My father went down to enroll me there, but since I was born in April and they accepted only pupils born before the end of March, the principal said, "I'm sorry, Mr. O'Neil, but he's just missed out on getting in." He said, "Well, he's already had one year of schooling: he went to kindergarten in Dorchester." She said, "Well, in that case, he can come." I got in that way.

RR: You would have lost a year otherwise.

JO: Yes.

TEACHERS COLLEGE

RR: Tell us, then, what did you do after high school?

JO: I went down to Bridgewater State Teachers College. I

think it's called just Bridgewater State College now.

RR: So you had to travel there every day?

JO: Yes, that's right. We went by car. They had dormitories, but they were just for women. The men were more or less on their own. Either they were day students, commuting every day, or they would rent rooms at different homes in the area.

RR: Did you find that a good college to go to?

JO: Yes, I liked it. Dr. Clement Maxwell was a teacher of English there. He was the brother of Fr. Joseph R.N. Maxwell, S.J.

RR: Oh, really? I didn't know he had a brother.

JO: He was a marvelous teacher and a marvelous person. I enjoyed the four years there.

RR: Were you a mathematics major?

JO: Yes, exactly. At that time, they placed their main emphasis on education courses. Since you could have other courses as well, I took mathematics all four years I was there.

RR: And you feel you got a good start?

JO: Yes, that's right.

RR: Is there anything special that happened in those days that you can think of?

JO: Well, in our senior year we went out for a practicum in teaching. That was quite interesting. I went to one of the public schools in Weymouth for a quarter.

RR: What did you do there?

JO: I was in a school with seventh and the eighth grades, and I was trying my best to teach them.

RR: I suppose, in a way, it made you come down to reality.

JO: Yes, it did.

WORKING ON BOMBERS

RR: But, if you went to a public high school and college, how did you come in contact with the Jesuits?

JO: There was an interval there. I graduated from

Bridgewater in June 1942, and then I went into the service.

RR: Tell us something about that.

JO: I went in on August 31, 1942, and I was assigned to what they called the Army Air Corps at that time. I had my basic training in Biloxi, Mississippi. After that I was assigned to the airplane mechanics school in Wichita Falls, Texas. We were there from late September 1942 to January 1943, when we graduated. They sent us to the Willow Run plant in Ypsilanti, Michigan, where they were building B-24 bombers. We were trained there for about six weeks in how to maintain those planes.

RR: What were they trying to teach you during those six weeks?

JO: The specialties of the B-24: the electrical system, the hydraulic system, and all the other parts that needed maintenance. When we left there in March 1943, we went to Salt Lake City, where they had what they called a disbursement center. From there they would send you off to all the different units, scattered throughout the country.

RR: So where did you end up?

JO: I was assigned originally to Davis Monthan Field in Tucson, Arizona, and that's when something funny happened. I was an airplane mechanic by training, but when we got to the unit there, they had all kinds of mechanics, but no clerks. So they took some of us and they said, "Okay. We're desperate, we need some clerks. Would you come in and work in the office for us?" So that's where I eventually ended up. I never went back to being an airplane mechanic; I stayed in the office.

RR: Did you like that?

JO: Yes. I eventually became what they called a classification clerk. That had to do with taking care of the

records of the men, to make sure that they were up to date.

RR: How long were you there?

JO: Just a couple of weeks. After that they sent us up to Pocatello, Idaho. It was a training group, so they would first send in the pilots, the bombardiers and navigators, and then the enlisted men, the mechanics, the gunners, and so on. The first phase lasted a month, during which they all had to learn how to fly together as a unit on one plane. Then after that they were trained to fly with a small group of planes, and then a squadron, about twelve planes. When they had finished that, then they would send them out. Some of them went to the Eighth Air Force, some went down to Italy, and some were sent out to the Pacific, but the group I was with was strictly a training group. We never went overseas or anything.

RR: Training in what sense?

JO: How to be members of a crew. Then how to form a squadron and how to form a group.

RR: Did you ever get a ride?

JO: I asked one time, and we got all packed up, with parachutes and everything, but the chief engineer in charge said, "No, we can't take anybody." So that was the only chance I ever had, and I lost out on that. Later, we left Pocatello and went down to a place in California that was about a hundred miles northeast of Los Angeles. It's known today as Edwards Air Force Base. That's the place where they have the dry lake that goes on forever and ever. It's where the shuttles sometimes land when they return from space.

RR: Were you in the corps until the end of the war?

JO: Yes, I was released in January 1946.

CONTACT WITH THE JESUITS

RR: That was quite an experience in itself, wasn't it? So where did you go from there?

JO: I went to study at Boston College. When I talked with Fr. John Foley, I told him I'd like to start college all over again, since four years had passed. He said, "No, you shouldn't do that. I'll call up Fr. George O'Donnell. He's the director of the graduate school and professor of mathematics. I'll send you down to him." So I went down to talk with him, and he said, "I tell you what. You take a course with me during the summer, and if you do OK in that, then I'll accept you into the graduate school." So that's how I got in.

RR: Right into the graduate school?

JO: Yes. So I was able to go there and get a master's degree in math, and I think it was while I was at BC that I got my vocation.

RR: How long were you there?

JO: A little over a year.

RR: And that's where you got your vocation?

JO: I would say so. There were people like Fr. O'Donnell, who was kind to me. And Fr. Dick Shea was especially kind to me. On Saturday mornings he would give me an hour tutoring in Henle's *Latin Grammar*, so he was getting me ready that way.

RR: So by the end of a year or so, you had to make a decision, right?

JO: Right. At first I applied, but I wasn't accepted. Then after a while, they decided that they would accept me. I think they were happy to get mathematics teachers—perhaps that's what made it possible.

I didn't get to go to Shadowbrook until December 2, 1947. The reason was that I had been working on my thesis, and that carried me beyond the normal time of entrance. I also had to take the oral exam, so it was

about Thanksgiving time before I finished everything. Brother Kilmartin said, “Well, no point in going up there at Thanksgiving time. Let’s wait a little.” So I went up on December 2, the day before the feast of St. Francis Xavier.

STUDIES AND ORDINATION

RR: Did you have to do two full years of novitiate?

JO: No, I spent the latter part of my novitiate in the juniorate, and from there I went to philosophy. The three years of philosophy I found difficult because of the Latin.

RR: Oh, you hadn’t had any Latin, of course.

JO: Well, I had some in the novitiate and then one year of it in the juniorate, but I had difficulty with the Latin. Nevertheless, I enjoyed the three years there at Weston. We had a terrific group of people, and I had many friends there. During theology, also, I again had some difficulty because of the Latin, but the years went right by. I was ordained in 1957. The years of philosophy and theology were interesting, but there was nothing extraordinary. I was just part of the group.

RR: What about your math studies during that whole time? Were you able to do any?

JO: Not really. Just some occasional courses, nothing systematic.

RR: Did you find that difficult?

JO: I suppose it was disappointing in a sense, but on the other hand, I had plenty of other things on my mind.

RR: Right. You knew where you were going, and that’s what was important. Tell us a bit about your ordination.

JO: That was a wonderful occasion. Cardinal Cushing came out to Weston for all of the ceremonies—he came Thursday for the minor orders, Friday for the major orders,

and then Saturday for the ordination to the priesthood. He was very kind to us at this time. He came out even when we were in philosophy, when we received tonsure.

He made us all laugh, because he'd come to somebody who was balding and he'd say, "I don't think I'm going to be able to cut off any hair here! You already have a natural tonsure!" [Laughter] He was always very kind to us, both then and later.

RR: So that whole time went pretty well—at least you felt satisfied?

JO: Right. I made a lot of friends. I especially remember James D. Sullivan; he was a very kind spiritual director at that time. He had been the director of the Business School at Boston College, but his health was failing, so he moved out to Weston. I especially remember his kindness to me.

TEACHING AT CRANWELL

RR: Did you come to Boston College High immediately after ordination?

JO: No, I went to do tertianship at Pomfret, and then I went directly to Cranwell. I got there in the fall of '59. I was one of the prefects in the dormitory that was called Bellarmine at that time. But later Frank Mackin changed it to Hallowell Hall, in honor of Fr. Louis Hallowell, who was a whiz at chess and would teach the little kids in the summer camp how to play chess.

RR: How long had Cranwell been going when you got there?

JO: It opened in 1939.

RR: Oh, that far back!

JO: Fr. Charlie Burke was the first principal, and he stayed there for twenty-six years and just kept the place going. Hubie [Hubert] Cunniff was in tertianship that

first year; then he came later and was the dean of men.

RR: Also for a long time.

JO: Yes, for twenty-five years. Charlie and Hubie both left together. Hubie was really a father to all those boys; he was always thought of as a father away from home. Years later they showed their affection for him by dedicating the main dining room at Campion Center to him.

RR: My brother went to school at Cranwell and knew him.

JO: He was a marvelous man. I was a prefect there at Cranwell, and I got to go to games a lot with the kids. We'd go off on the bus to all kinds of games—baseball, football, basketball, whatever.

RR: How long were you there?

JO: Thirteen years.

RR: Did you find that you were getting the support you needed for the kind of math you were trying to teach at the time?

JO: Exactly. We asked if we could change the text, and Charlie Burke was quite willing to do that. So we were able to progress nicely.

RR: Did anything interesting happen while you were there?

JO: Well, they put up a brand new chapel according to all the latest liturgical norms. Fr. Frank Mackin was the person who worked on that. In some ways it turned out to be a bit of a problem, because certain people had promised funds to help him to put it up, but then they weren't able to fulfill the promises that they made. That put the school in financial straits, and as a consequence of that eventually the school closed.

RR: That's right. It wasn't too long after they built the chapel that the school closed. To be fair, however, there were a number of other similar schools that closed roughly around that time. It was a moment of change everywhere. Did you feel that at all in your own teaching?

JO: Oh, definitely. I remember being struck by an article in the *New York Times* magazine, in which they urged people not to send their children to private schools or boarding schools.

RR: Why?

JO: They felt they should be part of the hoi polloi—I guess that’s a good way to put it.

RR: And they seem to have had some effect.

JO: They did. Some places survived only by combining forces.

RR: That’s right. There were a few bigger schools that survived. They’re still there.

JO: Lenox Prep, which was just down the street from us, had to close. There was another school down on West Street, a little bit farther down, and they closed also.

BOSTON CITY HOSPITAL CHAPLAIN

RR: Were you there until the very end?

JO: No, I left in 1971 and went to Boston City Hospital as an assistant chaplain. Dave Boulton helped me to get work there. Neil Decker was the chief Catholic chaplain.

RR: How did you like being a chaplain?

JO: It was very trying, very hard.

RR: Why?

JO: Well, it was the situation there. It was a principal medical center in Boston, but at that time it was also a place where all the accidents were sent.

RR: Oh, yes. I was there for just a month or two. You never knew what was coming in the door, and some of the cases were pretty tough to deal with. I remember one man coming in, for example, who was surrounded by six policemen with their guns out—and then they sent me into the room!

JO: You’re lucky you didn’t become a hostage!

RR: How long were you there?
JO: Three years.
RR: You did get a good taste of that.

RECRUITED FOR BC HIGH

JO: That's right, and then in fall 1973 Fr. Jim O'Brien came over to our community for some kind of celebration. He was the principal at BC High at the time. When he saw me, he said, "Have you thought of going back to teaching?" And I said, "No, I haven't." He said, "Well, I want you to think about it." He was losing some of his math teachers: Fr. Ed Donahue passed away, and Joe Dooley and some of the others were getting along in years.

I saw Jim again in the spring, when he brought the boys over to the Immaculate for their graduation Mass. He said, "Well, have you been thinking about it?" I told him, "Yes, I have." And he said, "Well, we're waiting for you." So then, when I went through the process of visiting different schools, I told them that I was basically responding to a request from Jim O'Brien to go to BC High and that the provincial decided it would go that way, even though I'd been down to visit the other schools.

RR: Why did you have to go to different schools?
JO: That just became the process. It was "discernment," they said.
RR: They asked you questions about your background and that kind of thing?
JO: Yes, they wanted to know why you wanted to work there at their school and what abilities you had.
RR: I see. It was more complicated than before.
JO: That's right. But each time I would just say, "Well, actually I'm thinking of joining BC High," and they would say, "OK." And the provincial finally agreed to that.

TEACHING MATH AT BC HIGH

RR: What year would that have been?

JO: It was in 1974 when I arrived at BC High.

RR: And basically you've been here ever since, right?

JO: That's right.

RR: Which is a wonderful story in itself. Tell us how it began and how things developed for you.

JO: Well, I came here in that summer and was assigned to teach freshmen algebra and sophomore geometry. The next year Fr. Thomas Gibbons became the principal, taking Jim O'Brien's place. He decided that we would have five sections instead of four, but I still had geometry and algebra. I enjoyed the teaching very much, and I also had some honors sections. They were marvelous. The boys who came to BC High were so brilliant, and they still are.

RR: How many would there be in one of those honor classes—a dozen or so?

JO: No, no. Closer to thirty.

RR: You were dealing with students who really seemed to be worth all the effort?

JO: I think that what they most appreciated many times was that teachers would be available after school for tutoring.

RR: Did you do much of that?

JO: Yes. That was one of the things that many of the boys mentioned as a big help to them.

DEVELOPMENTS IN MATHEMATICS

RR: Let me ask you a question about the math side of this: were you in a situation where there were developments going on in math itself or in the way it was being taught?

JO: I would say yes. We were getting all the latest textbooks, and we also had our departmental meetings.

All the members of the department were outstanding. The BC High math department was well known everywhere. John Whitney Sullivan, Willy Doyle, Jim Greenler—they were all there. Some of the older fathers were just departing. Later we were fortunate enough to have Fr. Ed Kelly come up from Bishop Connolly High School. He had been in Baghdad and then at Bishop Connolly before coming to us. He was right on top of everything in teaching mathematics, right up to the last detail.

PAUL KENNEY: I remember that you came to Shadowbrook when I was in the juniorate to teach us math.

JO: That was an initiative of Fr. Pat Sullivan, who had heard about the changes in the new math. Since many of the juniors had graduated from high school without learning any of the new math, he wanted them to have a taste of it. So he invited me to come to give a summer course, and I was happy to do that.

The scheduling was such that I went there every other year. The idea was to bring people up to date on the new math. But then the novitiate and the juniorate moved down to Boston.

PK: Can you say briefly how the new math differed from the old math? Was it more experimental, more inductive?

JO: A great difficulty with the new math was that it was being forced down from above. The educational college faculties wanted little children to be taught the new math right from the beginning, but it turned out it couldn't be done.

PK: Why?

JO: The children weren't able to do it, and the teachers in the primary schools wanted to stay with the tried and true methods.

- PK: So the new math failed?
- JO: Well, I'll put it this way: it changed things. If you take an algebra text or a geometry text today, you'd find the influence of the new math in it.
- PK: In the old math they'd say, "Two and two are four." In the new math, they'd say, "Let's look at two and the two." They talk more about the reasoning behind it.
- JO: That's right.
- PK: Whereas a kid would say: just tell me what the answer is!
- JO: Kindergardeners and primary school kids are not reasoning people.
- PK: Did the new math influence the way you tutor now? That is, rather than just saying, "This is the way it is, memorize it," is it more usual now to explain?
- JO: Of course. I think you're right there. The explanation is important to help the student understand the problem, so that they can apply it themselves. What you notice is that the boys, after they've tried it two or three ways, then they really understand it. So I would say, yes, the new math had that advantage of putting the stress on reasoning rather than on memory.
- PK: Can you contrast the students that you had when you began teaching with the students you have now, who are from a very different culture, a culture in which media, calculators, iPods are present? What are some of the positives and negatives in each group?
- JO: I think the students today, at least the ones we have at BC High, are extremely brilliant. We no longer worry about a student flunking out: the standards are very high, and those who are accepted fulfill those standards. I think it is very difficult to flunk at BC High School, because the kids are so bright.
- PK: I don't mean just in terms of their intelligence, but also in the way their imaginations have been formed

by the media. Do you find that the ground shifted out from under you?

JO: No, I haven't noticed that.

PK: Do they come with a better foundation in math?

JO: I would say so, yes. I think it is partly due to the selectivity, but there was a time there when some of the less well prepared students couldn't write or read or reckon.

TEACHING AT BC HIGH

RR: How has the Jesuit community changed over the years?

JO: When I arrived, there were seventy Jesuits who were associated with BC High, and they were of all different ages. I think many of them were exhausted or bordering on exhaustion: they were very tired.

RR: As they were getting fewer and the loads on individuals began to grow, is that right?

JO: Yes, so they found teaching very tiring.

RR: How about yourself? Did you feel the same thing?

JO: Yes, I felt the same way—overworked. Whenever we had a vacation, everybody would say, "It came just in the nick of time!" Everybody felt so tired. I would say the Math Department, which has been outstanding, was the very best. Even though they were tired, they still managed to go on.

RR: Did you begin to see a change in the role of lay professors there? Did their numbers and importance begin to grow significantly?

JO: Yes, I would say it did.

RR: Is that fairly recent?

JO: Not really. As our Jesuit numbers decreased, the number of lay teachers increased. When Fr. Ray Callahan was the president [1974-1988], there were still quite a few more Jesuits than lay teachers. When Joe Fahey came in as president [1989-1999], he began to look for

more replacements for the Jesuits. As a consequence, there are now only eight Jesuits associated with the high school.

RR: Active?

JO: Yes, that's it. Four are actually teaching, and the others do various things. Joe Bennett and I are in the tutorial program. Ron Perry is the spiritual father, and Bro. Connie Murphy is there every single day and night, taking care of things in the school cafeteria.

RR: So you're all working hard.

JO: Yes.

FROM TEACHING TO TUTORING

JO: As far as teaching was concerned, the change came for me in 1992. It was suggested to me that I should leave teaching in the classroom and become a tutor. Ron Swain was the principal at the time, and he said, "I understand you are very good at one-on-one teaching, so it would be nice if you could join Fr. Joe Bennett in his tutorial program." So that's what I did.

RR: And how did that work out for you?

JO: For me it was just right, thanks to Joe Bennett. He's the one who made it possible for me.

RR: How does the tutorial program function?

JO: Well, the members of the National Honor Society are working with us. One of the requirements for membership in the Society is that they perform this community service of helping to tutor students. They have to devote two periods to it in every seven-day cycle. And they're marvelous: they take care of everything.

RR: What subjects would you be tutoring? Obviously something in math?

JO: I tutor in algebra and geometry. The Honor Society students take care of calculus. They also do all the other subjects, so it's a wonderful program.

DIVINE PROVIDENCE

RR: Let me ask you a general question. As you look back over the years and all the things that you taught and did, were there times when you felt that what was happening to you in a variety of ways was a sign of God's providence in your life? Did you sense that God has been leading you through all of these paths in a way that was productive for you and other people?

JO: Yes, certainly. [Laughter]

RR: Well, tell me a bit about that.

JO: You know how at times you can get feeling down, and the Holy Spirit is able to pick you up and keep you going. Well, I would say that I've been very fortunate and I wouldn't have wanted it any other way.

RR: You've been basically happy, doing positive things in a positive way?

JO: Yes. I can see students who are successful, and, when alumni come in from time to time, it's nice to have somebody come up and say hello and tell you, "Oh, I remember that. It was a great class."

PK: Let me ask you one more question. You are a priest and a mathematics teacher. Do those two aspects come together in your spirituality? Is there something about the clarity, the beauty, the order of mathematics that appeals to you in your relationship with God?

JO: Yes, I would think so. To answer it briefly, I would say yes.

RR: Well, thank you very much.

JO: You're welcome.

RR: By the way, would you have a favorite prayer?

JO: It is this one:

Consecration to the Sacred Heart

I, Jim O'Neil, give myself and consecrate to the Sacred Heart of our Lord Jesus Christ my person and my life, my actions, pains, and sufferings, so that I may be unwilling to make use of any part of my being save to honor, love, and glorify the Sacred Heart.

This is my unchanging purpose, namely, to be all His, and to do all things for the love of Him, at the same time renouncing with all my heart whatever is displeasing to Him.

I therefore take Thee, O Sacred Heart, to be the only object of my love, the guardian of my life, my assurance of salvation, the remedy of my weakness and inconstancy, the atonement for all the faults of my life, and my sure refuge at the hour of death.

Be then, O Heart of goodness, my justification before God, Thy Father, and turn away from me the strokes of His righteous anger. O Heart of love, I put all my confidence in Thee, for I fear everything from my own wickedness and frailty, but I hope for all things from Thy goodness and bounty.

Do Thou consume in me all that can displease Thee or resist Thy holy will. Let Thy pure love imprint Thee so deeply upon my heart that I shall nevermore be able to forget Thee or to be separated from Thee. May I obtain from all Thy loving kindness the grace of having my name written in Thee, for in Thee I desire to place all my happiness and all my glory, living and dying in true fidelity to Thee. Amen.

Fr. James W. O'Neil, S.J.

Born: April 12, 1921, Boston, Massachusetts
Entered: December 2, 1947, Lenox, Massachusetts,
St. Stanislaus Novitiate / Shadowbrook
Ordained: June 15, 1957, Weston, Massachusetts,
Weston College
Final Vows: June 2, 1989, Boston College High School,
Boston, Massachusetts

1934 Weymouth, Massachusetts: Weymouth High School
Student

1938 Bridgewater, Massachusetts: Bridgewater State
Teachers College - Student

1942 United States Army Air Corps: June 1942-January
1946

1946 Chestnut Hills, Massachusetts: Boston College -
Student

1947 Lenox, Massachusetts: St. Stanislaus Novitiate /
Shadowbrook - Novitiate, juniorate

1950 Weston, Massachusetts: Weston College - Studied
philosophy

1953 Lenox, Massachusetts: Cranwell School - Taught
English and math

1954 Weston, Massachusetts: Weston College - Studied
theology

- 1958 Pomfret, Connecticut: St. Robert Hall - Tertianship
- 1959 Lenox, Massachusetts: Cranwell School - Taught English and math
- 1971 Boston, Massachusetts: Boston City Hospital - Chaplain
- 1974 Boston, Massachusetts: Boston College High School
Taught math
- 1988 Cambridge, Massachusetts: Weston School of Theology - Sabbatical
- 1989 Menlo Park, California: Vatican Renewal Center (1 semester) - Sabbatical
- 1989 Boston, Massachusetts: Boston College High School
1989-1991 Taught math
1992- Tutored math

Degrees

- 1942 Bachelor of Science in Education, Mathematics,
Bridgewater State Teachers College
- 1948 Master of Arts, Mathematics, Boston College
- 1953 Licentiate in Philosophy, Weston College
- 1958 Licentiate in Sacred Theology, Weston College