

RICHARD LAPIETRA
Marist College
Poughkeepsie, NY
For the Marist College Archives and Special Collections
Index – Richard LaPietra

Project Name: Marist Heritage Project

Transcript: Yes

Summary: Yes

Photograph(s): Yes

CD#: 015

Name of Interviewee: Richard LaPietra

Main Topics: Richard LaPietra talks about his life with Marist College, both as a Marist Brother, and then continuing to work for the college after he left the Brothers. Besides teaching at Marist Richard served on many committees, and held the position of Academic Dean for several years, and he talks about all the different experiences he's had. He discusses the development of the college over the years which he has seen from the standpoint of a student, teacher, and administrator. He concludes the interview by discussing his hopes for Marist's bright future.

Others present?: No

Interviewed by: Gus Nolan

Interview Date: 13 December 2001

Location of Interview: Marist College Library Archives Room

Recorder model and type: Marantz PMD 690

Length of interview: 55 minutes and 3 seconds

Number of disks: 1

Recording medium/format: Microdrive

Brand of disks: IBM 1GB Microdrive

Archival copy made: Burned to a gold alloy CD (MAM) and is held in the Marist College Archives and Special Collections. Saved as a .wav file at the highest resolution possible. CD copy is available for researchers.

Quality of original recording: Good

Restrictions on interview access or use: None

Transcribed or summarized by: Nancy Decker

Brief summary of interview context and recording contents: The interview was held in the James Cannavino Library on the Marist College campus.

TAPE INDEX:

Time (00:00.00 ~ in hrs./mins./seconds)	Summary
00:00.02 – 00:09.11	Richard LaPietra begins his interview by discussing the origin of his name and early childhood. He discusses his brother and sister and what they've done with their lives, his mother and father and what they did with their lives, the schools he attended, the neighborhood he grew up in, and how he became interested in the Marist Brothers.
00:09.12 – 00:15.30	Richard reminisces about his days at Marion College becoming a Marist Brother. He briefly describes the daily routine of life, what kinds of recreation they had available to them and what a key was. He then summarizes what his graduating class did after college. The majority of them remained in education, whether they stayed a Brother or not.
00:15.31 – 00:23.08	Richard's first teaching assignment was in the Bronx, and while he was there he attended college and took all the necessary courses to receive a bachelor's degree in chemistry, which he'd loved since high school. He was then sent with three other Brothers to Catholic University to get his Ph.D in Chemistry, which he did in four years. While he was there he proctored the dormitories, and he related some interesting anecdotes about that. After graduating he taught for one year at Catholic University before returning to Marist College to teach.
00:23.09 – 00:29.24	When Richard arrived at Marist he was a full-time faculty science teacher, teaching various chemistry classes, as well as a dorm proctor due to his previous experience. He also served the college by helping to create governance for the faculty, because at the time there was none. Richard, and a small group of people, created a plan to form what eventually would become the Faculty Affairs Committee and the Academic Affairs Committee.
00:29.25 – 00:37.52	Richard was chosen to be Academic Dean in 1969 and he served in that role for six years before he returned to teaching. He talks about the relationship between the Academic Dean and the President of the college, Linus Foy, and how that played out, some of the issues he dealt with, and

some of the accomplishments for the college that occurred while he was in that position.

- 00:37.53 – 00:41.04 Richard briefly switches topics and talks a bit more about his personal life, when he was married, his personal interests with a particular emphasis on cooking. He loved working at Marist and never considered leaving to go to another college. He also briefly recounts his part in creating the Marist song that exists today.
- 00:41.05 – 00:46.04 Richard reflects on some of the changes that he's seen at Marist. Specifically the introduction of women into the college, which he feels was positive on many levels, and the physical development of the campus, of which he feels the McAnn Center and the Library had the largest impact. He also talks about the drawback of Marist losing the closeness and camaraderie that they used to have because they've become so big, but on the other hand that growth leads to academic excellence and a great reputation, so he feels it's a necessary sacrifice.
- 00:46.05 – 00:55.05 Richard briefly compares the presidencies of Marist's three college presidents. Brother Paul Ambrose he believes was a true founder. Linus Foy had the foresight to make academics the priority at Marist and to let talented people make things happen. Dennis Murray was able to see Marist as a diamond in the rough and knew how to show it to the world. Richard believes that Marist is part of a handful of unique colleges because of the family spirit of the college and the kind of students that it attracts. He does not worry about that spirit changing because at this point he feels that it is physically impossible to change the atmosphere at Marist.