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Philanthropy Initiative
Oral History Project

Interview with:
Brother James (Jim) Boynton, Society of Jesus
University of Detroit Jesuit High School
Detroit, Michigan

Interview conducted by:
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AMANDA MONIZ:	This is Amanda Moniz conducting a Philanthropy Initiative oral history interview with Brother James Boynton at the University of Detroit Jesuit High School. It's September 18th, 2018. Could you please state your name and birthplace?
JAMES JOHN BOYNTON:	James John Boynton. I was born in Saint Ignace, Michigan.
MONIZ:	Great, thank you. And where you did you grow up?
BOYNTON:	I grew up in Saint Ignace, Michigan.
MONIZ:	Okay. Can you tell me about what growing up there was like?
BOYNTON:	Oh, I loved it. So in my hometown, Saint Ignace, I am on my mom's side, eight generations and on my dad's side, five, in that little town, so I—I think the population was somewhere between 2,000 or 3,000, so I really grew up in a town where I knew I belonged and I knew I was home. You know, my cousin was the bus driver and the barber, you know, everyone is really, so I—you know, that's just one example. I don't think I ever went to a doctor or a dentist or something that I didn't totally [know] him or her and she knew me and maybe I mowed her lawn. You go to the grocery store, you know everyone. I have a lot of friends who are multigenerational friends. So, I'm friends with them; my parents were friends with their parents; my grandparents were friends with their grandparents; my great grandparents were friends with their great grandparents; and some instances I got—I know—that my great great grandparents were friends with theirs, so…
MONIZ:	What had brought your ancestors to Saint Ignace?
BOYNTON:	He was the man who basically designed, along with a ship engineer Frank Carey [phonetic], but he designed the icebreaker boat; the boats that can go through the ice and break their way. He basically discovered that, if you wouldn't reverse, the propeller would pull the water out from under the ice, remove the support, and the hull can break the boat. So, his idea was "Let's have a reinforced hull and we'll put a propeller on both sides, front and back." So that's why—my dad's side... And then they were captains. He [Louis R. Boynton] was captain and his son was a captain. They opened up the Boynton Pharmacy. Boynton Pharmacy closed in 1948. My grandfather was postmaster, pharmacist and an

	optometrist. My father was postmaster and, sadly, there's no Boynton's of my family left in Saint Ignace. And then my mom's side, there's a wonderful history there. The Goodrow side were Anishinaabe. They were and—so that goes all the way back. The first written [one] we had was Amable Goodrow. He was a fisherman. So, the Goodrows are still there—there's a lot of Goodrows in town. They worked also— the Goodrows also worked on the Great Lakes boats, but my dad's side was up in the pilot house, my mom's side was down the engine room. Another family name on my mom's side is Cheeseman and if you know the history of the Northern Great Lakes at all, Beaver Island was a Mormon kingdom and when that Mormon kingdom fell apart, the Cheesemans were Mormons and they came to St. Ignace and lived their life there. They also worked on the Great Lakes boats, also worked in the lumberyards and also worked in the lumber camps, and also were fisherman. So, my mother was a—she was a Mackinac County public health nurse.
MONIZ:	Public?
BOYNTON:	Health nurse.
MONIZ:	Health nurse, okay. And yes, so do you have siblings?
BOYNTON:	I have an older brother who was a—he was a captain in the armor line, he's now retired, he lives in Franklin, Michigan, he was an engineer. As we speak, he and his wife are—I think they call it the great loop, they're going around the Great Lakes down to Mississippi, down through Florida and—so he just retired last year. And then I have two sisters and they both live in Grand Rapids [Michigan].
MONIZ:	And where did you go to school growing up?
BOYNTON:	St. Ignace, I went grade school and high school in St. Ignace, graduated in '85. Then I did two years at Lake Superior State and Sault St. Marie. In 1987, I joined the Jesuits and then as a Jesuit, I finished my undergrad at Loyola in New Orleans. Loyola University of New Orleans in BA in Western Civ and then I did a masters in church history at Boston College.
MONIZ:	So—and when you were growing up and going to school, was that a public school?

BOYNTON:	Public school, correct, yeah.
MONIZ:	Okay. And did your family belong to the Catholic church?
BOYNTON:	Yeah. –St. Ignatius - the parish right there.
MONIZ:	Okay. Got it. I'm curious if your family was involved in volunteerism or charitable work while you were growing up?
BOYNTON:	My dad was very active in local politics, he was county commissioner, he was city council and he would do all—he would go around to old people's house and cut their hair, he did a lot of old peoples' income tax, he would just go around and visit and bring me with him and then I started visiting old people on my own. Mom was public health nurse, so her whole life was service, going to people's houses. I would occasionally go with her. So yeah, I mean Christmas dinner, Thanksgiving dinner at our house was all the old people that had no place to go, but not just at Christmas or Thanksgiving, we would go around and visit and look after people. There were old people I used to love to go and just listen to their stories.
MONIZ:	What kind of stories did they tell?
BOYNTON:	Well, there's an—my two favorite guys that I'd usually go see, lived next door to my grandparents. And there was Lawrence Bushy [phonetic], he was born in 1903 and he grew up in St. Ignace, friends with my grandfather and he would tell me all about hunting, working, he was a cookee, which is the cook's assistant in the lumber camps, he worked in lumber camps. I used to love those stories. And I would go to his house once a week, Sundays, spend all afternoon with him. He also worked on the Great Lakes boats; he also worked on the dock. Before the Mackinac Bridge was built, there were the car ferries that went back and forth. He was dock master. Right across the street from him was Eddie Tebow and those two were great friends. I would visit them together or separately. Eddie was born in July 13th, 1899, worked on the Great Lakes boats, was in World War 1 *and* World War 2. I used to just love to hear his stories, he would sit there and talk and smoke his pipe, and just tell me his stories of either the—whether it be the war or I always liked stories of the Great

	Lakes shipping and I always like the stories of the woods, and he would tell me those.
MONIZ:	So, you said when you were growing up, you knew everybody in the community. Was it or a community that pretty cohesive or were there divisions of any sort between people of different backgrounds?
BOYNTON:	Oh, I'm sure there were divisions; I mean it was—they are humans, right? So, it was a small town, there were—I think when I grew up it was still much more—the old families were still there. That is less so now. I still go home all the time and I—I see a lot of—you know, you see a lot—you see a young person and you look at them and say, "Oh, that's—I know your dad because you look just like your dad." There was a lot of new families that came in town. The coastguard station is there so they have something to do with it. When I was there, though, I would say we were pretty cohesive, we got along. I don't remember any huge factions. There were Native Americans and there's—I think now the town is— you know, 70 percent Native American, tribal. I do remember one time, though, there was some kids who were Indian and kind of poor and I said something to my mother about them and she said, "Well, you know, he's your cousin." I said, "What?" And she goes, "Yeah"—and I remember realizing that we're all connected. Now, there were some kids who were really Native American in much more of a cultural sense than I would have been, but my grandfather was and so I'm a quarter Chippewa and I always loved that, I thought it was great. But I wouldn't say that I grew up in a huge culturally Native American family. Where some kids did. They were—when I was growing up, there was some really poor kids, too, in the county. Some kids that didn't have running water or electricity. I remember going to their home with mom who was in public health and—but there wasn't like a huge divide between the rich and the poor, but we knew who was who.
MONIZ:	So, then you went to Lake Superior State, you said. What was your experience there like?
BOYNTON:	Well, I was moving to Sault Ste. Marie which wasn't—I knew people there already and my family had friends there. My

	roommate in college was a guy named Shaun Rabey [phonetic] and Shaun and I would at least [have] been third generation friends, 'cause I know his grandfather was friends with my grandfather, so it wasn't a huge adjustment. There were a number of kids from my class that went up there. There were some kids from my class, I remember, that went up there and—they'd last maybe a semester and then dropped out. I remember being a little saddened by that, but I was only there for two years.
MONIZ:	And then you transferred.
BOYNTON:	And then I joined the Jesuits.
MONIZ:	And so, what led you to join the Jesuit?
BOYNTON:	That's—I mean—I guess the nice answer would be Jesus, but I always loved the history of the Jesuits. Father Marquette is buried in my hometown. The early history of Saint Ignace is all Jesuits. Saint Ignace is Saint Ignatius in French. I had a great uncle, my grandfather's brother, Bill Goodrow was a Jesuit missionary to India, he went to India—he joined the Jesuits in '39 and went to India in '46 and spent the rest of his life there. He was kind of a hero of mine and—I—working as a—I was a tour guide at the fort. We used to occasionally interpret the Jesuits. I started volunteering at Saint Anne's in Mackinac when I was a kid in high school and helped with that museum. And the Jesuit history was just everywhere, and I loved history and I loved international stuff and I wanted to see the world and maybe teach history and maybe be a missionary, I don't know. And I probably—I realized Lake Superior State didn't offer teaching certificates. I could have gotten a degree in history and I liked my studies there, but I thought I should transfer to Michigan State to get a teaching certificate, but then I thought, "Well, I want to be a Jesuit anyway, so let's just do this now." So, I joined the Jesuits after my sophomore year.
MONIZ:	What about the history did you love?
BOYNTON:	I think being adventurous for the Lord; being on an adventure; being part of something bigger than yourself; being part of this worldwide Jesuit family; but I always saw the Jesuits as guys

	who were somewhat on an adventure and—but for a higher cause. I liked that.
MONIZ:	And what did you do when you volunteered at Saint Anne's as a teenager?
BOYNTON:	Well, I first—when I first entered it, I changed the candles; I changed visual lights; I mowed the lawn; I did general maintenance stuff; and then I set up a museum. I know I was just a kid, but I had worked at a museum in Saint Ignace. I set up the first museum in the basement of Saint Anne's church. And eventually, I redid the whole thing, but I did that... I would help people with genealogy, they would come. Once the priest there realized I knew the history well, senior citizen tourists would come, and I would—I'd give talks to them on the history of the parish. We had a whole slideshow and sold raffle tickets and— I just—I liked the community and I loved the history of it.
MONIZ:	When you were a teenager volunteering at Saint Anne's, were you living at Saint Ignace and taking the ferry over?
BOYNTON:	Yeah, my brother was a captain on the boat, so I got to go for free. Although I oftentimes stayed over there at the rectory- there was a little room, the priest was there, his mom and dad lived there. And then when I went to college, I got a job as a tour guide at the fort. So I worked at the fort during the day and then I worked at Saint Anne's at night and then I stayed at the rectory full time as a college kid.
MONIZ:	What was the island like during those years when you were a teenager?
BOYNTON:	Well, I've always loved—I loved the whole straits of Mackinac, I loved the Northern Great Lakes, Saint Ignace. . . . I just loved the history, but I loved the community that was there. There were some older families that my family had been friends with, the Dowd family and I just—I loved the community and being part of it. It was an adventure for me; I mean, it was just across the water. In the winter I could jump on a snowmobile from our house and 10 minutes later be on the island and be over there for something.
MONIZ:	And so, most of the people who lived on the island, then, were from the region, had long roots in the region?

BOYNTON:	Most of the—at that time, we're talking 35-40 years ago. Most of the people that lived in the island would have been old island families. That's less now; a lot of them have sold their house and have moved off. But there was still a lot of old families. Also, there were—at that time, there were a lot of kids from the island that would come to Saint Ignace for high school and so we had some of those kids in our class. There is a high school on the island, but at that time some kids came to Saint Ignace for high school.
MONIZ:	Okay. So, then you became a Jesuit and were you—not sure what the right terminology is, were you placed there?
BOYNTON:	No, I was a novice. You go through your whole Jesuit training, two years of novitiate which is kind of a spiritual training, it takes the 30-day silent retreat of Saint Ignatius, you learn the history of the order, you do all this kind of stuff. And then you take vows, after two years, of poverty, chastity and obedience. Most guys go on to be Jesuit priests. I chose the route of being a Jesuit brother and I just felt that fit me more. I liked the idea of being a brother to Jesus and being a brother to others, as opposed to being a father to others. I just saw that totally as me. So then after, as a brother, they—I mean, the big challenge for me when I first joined was when we moved to Detroit. I mean Detroit to me was always the big bad city. And I remember my parents driving me down here and just being nervous. We didn't have stop lights and there are stop lights down here and you don't know anyone driving next to you. It's all strangers. It's just weird. So, the biggest adjustment I've ever made in my life was coming from a small town and moving to Detroit. And you just don't know how to survive in a city. You make your own community. A big part of my life starting when I was kid was I'm a fiddler, I played the fiddle. And through music, you can make a lot of friends, so I've made friends here in—at every place I've been, through music. Lot of friends on the island are through music with square dances for years. So, after I took my vows, I went to Loyola, New Orleans, where my fiddle helped me make friends there. And then after I graduated—and I lived with the Jesuits, obviously I'm Jesuit. I asked if I could—after I graduated 'cause I was graduating early. I graduated at Christmas in 1990. Because I had that

	two-year delay as a novitiate, I just wanted to graduate and get out of there. And I asked if I could go to India to work with my uncle. I did do that, I went January 1st,'90 and I stayed there until the following fall when I started teaching at Ignatius, Cleveland. So, I had that time in India with my uncle which was awesome.
MONIZ:	What was your experience there like?
BOYNTON:	You ever been to India? Oh, India, you just either love it or hate it, it just blows your mind with every sense. You walk down the street and you smell the most wonderful spices at the market and the most wonderful food, but then you'll smell the most horrible, rotting animals in the street and raw sewage and great colors and awful colors and 120 degrees sometimes—I mean, it just—it's the land of—for me, just wild. I'm going to go back to the term adventure again. And my uncle who was there had given his life and knew the place well. I had a pen pal there, I got to know him. But it was also a spiritual adventure. I ran into different religions, obviously Hindu and Muslim, but also Indian Christians and Indian Catholics. I would just find all the different ways to God and—while riding on an elephant or living in a village. I always—since I've taught, I always recommend kids do a semester abroad; I don't care where they go. But just to get a—it was my first time out of the States really in a big way. And nothing is better to prepare a person to teach world history than to see the world. And so that's what I did.
MONIZ:	So, then you came back and you were teaching?
BOYNTON:	I came back. I started teaching freshman and sophomore history at Saint Ignatius High School in Cleveland, Ohio. I would go home for a visit when I could, but my summers were primarily—I spent one summer there back in Nepal teaching. And then a couple of times I took kids for six weeks to the Dominican Republic; students on an immersion trip. And then when I was done teaching in Ignatius, I went to Boston College to do—they wanted me to do theology studies, which I said I would, because every Jesuit does theology studies, but the priests do what's called an MD—a Masters of Divinity which is a pastoral degree. And I asked if I could do a Masters

	of Theology—Masters of Theological Studies in church history, so I could count theology and history and so I did the Masters in Church History, with the primary focus being French colonization in North America and the Jesuit activity there.
MONIZ:	And then did you want—when did you wind up back on Mackinac Island?
BOYNTON:	Well, when I was writing that thesis, right here, *Fishers of Men.* The pastor of Saint Anne's was Father Jim Williams and he was an associate pastor in Saint Ignace when I was a kid, so I knew him my whole life. And he's—I was talking to Mr. Jimmy and he said we're going to publish the thesis and said I want you to come and redo your museum, because the museum that you did when you were a kid as—you know, looks like a kid put it together, because it was. So, I came there in the summer of 1996. Primarily to put together that

	museum, have that book published, and work at Saint Anne's. And when I came back, I'd work. The last time I'd worked there was 1987 fulltime and now I'm there in 1996 and I noticed there was a big difference. We always had Jamaicans. But now, there were Filipinos and there were Mexicans and there were Eastern Europeans. Basically, what happened was in that timeframe, the majority of the working population stopped being American college kids and became foreign workers, for a number of reasons. One, they can work longer, April to November, they're not bound by the high school or the college—the college schedule and Americans just—I mean, I washed dishes when I was a kid, not a lot of American kids do that anymore. For minimal wage at least, although they paid better. But anyway, I noticed that there was a big difference in the population, so I was talking to the priests and said we got to do something, he said, "Yeah, yeah, yeah." We started having a meal on Thursday nights, open to everyone. And when we first started doing it, we just—the parish bought the food and we cooked, and kids came in. Pretty soon we realized that we couldn't afford to do that, so I'll get the restaurants to do with the food so. I knew a lot of the restaurant owners and went to ask them to donate one meal. And they started doing that and they've been doing it for the last 20 some years. They would donate one meal a summer for 200 people who would come, and those meals really became the—a social focal point for a lot of workers. I got to know people that way. I always felt as a Brother in the church, that my realm was in the basement of that church and, you know, the priests can do upstairs. Sure, I'll change the visual lights and I'll even mop the floor, but my ministry is going to be out of the basement. So, we did those meals. We started services with Jamaicans on Wednesday nights. The Jamaicans would have a service upstairs, not a Catholic, an ecumenical service. Glen Bulgin who is the head waiter at the Grand Hotel kind of took charge there, but we worked with him, got it going. We had a lot of Jamaicans come to the Thursday night meals, so I got to knew them. With the Filipinos, we got them coming and having their own Filipino night. We might do a mass; we might do a service. I knew a Jesuit that knew some—that knew a lot of Tagalog, so he would come and do a mass in Tagalog, but then we'd have a big meal. Or they would do karaoke. And they still do this. Bobby who works

	at Carriage Tours spearheads this. And it was fun to be around that. And then a lot of Mexicans. We started an ESL program, English as a second language. I would go up to the Grand Hotel, others would go up to the Grand Hotel, and teach them during their lunch periods. We'd get different volunteers; we'd hitch up a student with a volunteer on a schedule they could meet. And so, we started teaching English. Eventually—so I was doing this all the while I was teaching. My teaching career, for the second time, came to an end in 2002. And the last phase of Jesuit training is called Tertianship. It's usually international. If you don't go outside the country—if you do it in this country—you're going to have a lot of international people with you. Through a lot of strange turns of event, I ended up doing my Tertianship in Mexico. When I was in Mexico for the full year, while I learned Spanish—I wouldn't say perfectly, but I would say fluently, conversive. So, I became much more effective working with the Mexican population because I can now speak to them fine. And once I could speak to them, started doing a lot more social— socializing, going up to the Mexican housing, visiting them and doing the English classes, having them come to the church and cooking a big meal for just the Mexicans or not even just Mexicans, but for the Spanish speaking population because we'd get Colombians, we get Central Americans, occasionally, and Peruvian, or Puerto Rican. But we would just let it be known that we're going to have a Spanish speaking night. That was the highlight. I loved that, because you really have the whole world comes to Mackinac and then I would come back. Then I was working as the vocation director, the recruiter for the Jesuits for a while, which also gave me my summers free. I'd go out there for Mexican Independence Day in September and we do piñatas and have parties and I get up there as often as I could. And for the summer tourists, we had the museum. We opened that museum which was a pretty good museum. A lot of cool history in there. And when I was here—we always had the Sunday masses, but then we wanted to do something else for the— just the regular summer population, so we started—John Finley [phonetic] had the Small Point Bed and Breakfast. When I was there in the early '80s, I used to fiddle for John and he would call square dances, that's what we would do in Market Street. But when we redid the church in the '90s—'95-'96, we had

	that big side deck up there and we decided to start having these square dances up there. So, we had square dances up there every Tuesday from '96 until last year and this last summer I doubt—I went up there and we did square dance, but we couldn't do it every—because I'm not there anymore. That was fun, getting everyone together and teaching them how to square dance if they didn't know how. We would have a core group of people that lived or worked on the island, they knew how to do it and then they'd teach the tourists. We would have a great square dance every Tuesday.
MONIZ:	And I'm curious if you could talk more about where the international summer workers—talk more about their experience—wait, how were they recruited first of all?
BOYNTON:	Well, some of the hotels go to Mexico City or go to the Philippines or go through companies. Jamaicans have been coming since early 1900s—late 1800s, yeah. A lot of them—lot of the international workers who work in Mackinac in the summer and then work in cruise ships in the winter or go out to Vail [Colorado]and work in the ski hills. I remember when my eyes were opened to the reality of their situation; it was when I was back during '96, I went upstairs in the church late at night once to lock the church and there was a young Jamaican lady, late at night in the back of the church and she was crying More than anything, I guess I'm a minister and so I went up to her and asked, "Are you alright?" And she—this would've been June. In May, she had given birth to her baby. A month later, left the baby with her mother, came to work on the island to support the baby and the family. And I just realized the pain that she had being separated from her baby, from her child. So, I took her down to the basement, this was before cell phones and Skype and WhatsApp and all that. And we called home on the church phone and I said do you—I said just get the baby, have it laugh or cry or just make any noise so the mother can hear and that was—what kind of—when I realized we need to do more for these people who were away from home. And my idea was that we would help them make communities amongst themselves, so that they would be able to support themselves. You know, hitch them up; get them together; let them have a meal together, let them—so that it'll help them, enable them to make their own community within the community. And I think we were pretty successful.

	And, you know, I was gone this past summer; I got a new assignment for the first time. I couldn't make it to the island, I'm now at U of D High, full time. But things are carrying on. You know, if every ministry is dependent upon Jim Boynton, then it's not viable. So, the things—the meals continued. They stood together - - there were not many square dances. But some people have taken up the slack and things continue.
MONIZ:	So, did the people—did the workers from Jamaica, from Mexico and the Philippines, was it the same people coming each year or…
BOYNTON:	Yes and no. We had a core group of people that come year after year. Some have been coming for 20 years or plus and some come just for one summer and you never see them again. Some come for one summer and you make a connection and now we're Facebook friends. And I've been down to Mexico a number of times. One time I ran into one of them, he was a taxi driver, he sees me, what are you doing in Mexico. I said — I saw him, I said what are you doing in Mexico, he says what am I doing, I live here, what are you doing in here? He gave me the taxi for the day, gave me a tour. Some of the Eastern European kids, when I was in Europe, I've hitched up with them, I just got together and going out for a beer or something with them to just keep the connections going. Lot of—most of the Eastern Europeans are students, they're on a different visa—they're on a student visa. And so, they're usually just going to be one summer. But it's good and it's bad, you know, I think these companies saw them and you're going to America and see America. They're on an island all summer long, so what a lot of them do is they save up their money and then when they leave, they tour, they go to Chicago or New York or California or you know, travel around and see the US. Another thing that we started — I think it continued this summer, I would get a group of the Filipinos or Jamaicans or Mexicans and get them all to have the same day off. And then I'd talk to the boat company and get free tickets and take them to some place—take them to Tahquamenon Falls. They're working, working, working; they never see anything pretty that—you know, all these tourists come, they never get to see the beauty of Northern Michigan. Take them to Tahquamenon Falls, bring them up there, have a picnic lunch, rent a boat, go swimming, spend a day up there,

	come back and then have a cook out, a picnic at my parents in Saint Ignace in the backyard and then come back to the island. I don't think you—and this is from my own experience. I don't think you know anything in depth about a culture that you're visiting or that you're - - unless you've been in to some private homes and so I always tried to get some workers, Filipinos, Mexicans, Jamaicans, into homes of people that I knew, my parent's' home especially, but other friends just so they understand this culture.

MONIZ:	Do you know what their working experience is like?
BOYNTON:	Oh, of course, yeah.
MONIZ:	Can you talk at all about that?
BOYNTON:	If you turn the microphone off. No, I mean I—I'll put it this way. A lot of the working conditions changed after 9/11, they were treated much better. But I was here for many years before 9/11 and a lot of the people who were undocumented were probably working in more difficult conditions. And now, they're all documented, but what are they doing? They're working in the laundry. You can go in the laundry room in any hotel it's going to be hot as hell in there. I have donated fans to the laundry room from the church. You know, they're washing dishes, I've washed dishes, you know what's that like, you're standing over steaming oven for eight hours a day, it's very hot. Working, sweeping the streets with horse manure, well, you know what's that like. So, they're—especially the Mexicans are going to be doing a lot of the jobs that they don't interact with the people, because they can't talk to them. So, the hidden jobs. All that said, they're making better money than they would if they were in Mexico and that's why they want to come here. And, you know, they come up here and, in their opinion, this is much better than what they would have, and some have been coming for 20 years. And some employees do better jobs than others in acculturating. The police department sometimes does better jobs than others. I mean, I would always try to do translating for the doctors and for the police department when I could. So many times, there's cultural misunderstandings. I mean, you take a kid from even Mexico City, but you take a kid from rural

	Mexico, if he happens to be there, they can drink alcohol from the time they're five. They can drink on the street, they can—I know there—I guess it's illegal in Mexico to be drunk—drink and drive, but I have never seen anyone pulled over for that. So then you get a guy—here's a real life example, you get a 19—18-19 year old Mexican kid, he gets his beer which is pretty easy to get, he's drinking on Main Street, the cop comes up to him and says what that kid understands as blah, blah, blah, blah, because he doesn't speak English and the cop's saying let me see your ID or you can't drink on this street or whatever. The kid doesn't understand so then, naturally, the cop starts yelling at him, so now he hears blah, blah, blah, blah, you know, him yelling and then the guy cop points to the beer, so the Mexican then pours the beer out on the street and the cops yells again, the Mexican throws the bottle on the street which is what he would do in Mexico. The bottle breaks, now the guy is in handcuffs. Okay. So, all the total misunderstanding on both ends. So, when I was there, I would try to translate both ends and I would try to meet the Mexicans and tell him what they can and cannot do. And I would tell the police if you need a translator, come and get me, call me, I'm right here. And I would explain, and there's no mal intent on either side, and I saw improvements over time. And hotels would let us to come in and teach --would even encourage it. So, things are often interesting.
MONIZ:	What's the relationship like between year-round residents and summer workers?
BOYNTON:	Well, it's interesting. If you live on Mackinac Island and you're there, year- round—and I'm not an islander, right? But I—you know, I've been part of it. And you live there year-round and then you have these summer workers that come and go, and come and go, and come and go, and come and go. Well, oftentimes you're not going to invest a whole lot into them. Now, if you have a seasonal employee—a seasonal employee that comes year after year, and has been there for 25-30 years, you're going to get invested in them. You know, some of the street - - been there for years and the locals know them and like them and— you know, you'll see them giving them bottles of water and have a relationship with them. But there's also misunderstandings. You know, if they don't speak English, there's very little communication. \ Jamaicans will often speak English; Filipinos will often speak English. But amongst themselves, speak either

	Jamaican Patois or will speak Tagalog. So, you're creating—you know, factions, I don't know. I've only seen it be real ugly a couple of times when locals felt that they were getting taken advantage of. Before cell phones, there were some of the phone lines that were tapped into with lots of long distant calls to Jamaica that were appearing on people's phone bills. But you know, when that happened, I—not just me, but a number—I talked Glen, Brother Glen. And I just got the word out, this has got to stop, and it stopped. The year- round community of families and kids, I take kids from here, here being U of D High, taken them up there just whatever year for—to give a retreat and that happened, oh my gosh, I don't even know how many years ago now. Mark Eligar [phonetic] was a kid on Mackinac Island, nice kid, long time family. And he had gotten a strange stomach cancer and was dying and then died, and all these kids were so upset. And I was talking to the pastor, I said what can we do, what can we do. I said oh we're going to do a retreat for the kids, and we did, most called it Kairos Retreat. Anyone that goes to a Jesuit high school would know Kairos Retreat. It's a three-day student led retreat with student talks and students sharing groups. So, I took kids from here, U of D High, brought them up there and our students helped them and then eventually, we got kids from Mackinac to be leaders in these retreats and we do these every year. And, I mean, it's a way to—for me to be connected—to get connected with the kids from U of D High up there, but to help those kids contextualize things in a faith environment.
MONIZ:	How have you seen the island change over your lifetime?
BOYNTON:	Oh, it's changed a lot. First of all, structurally, there's a lot more buildings downtown; Market Street there's a lot more buildings. I would say while there's a lot more buildings, there's fewer owners. Now, one owner will own a number of restaurants or a number of businesses and the small business owner is, is getting less and less. Fewer families that way, who are businessowning families, that's less. The long-time island families, a lot have moved off. I don't blame them. You know, you can get a good price for your home and it's hard to be an older person on Mackinac Island. That would be a big thing. There's, there's, there's fewer older people now, there's fewer grandparents on the island and that's difficult

	on a community. When Grandma and Grandpa aren't around, that's difficult.
MONIZ:	Mm-hm.
BOYNTON:	The population of the school goes up and down. It's probably less now than it used to be. And if you look at the names of those kids, they're not names that you would immediately recognize as island names.
MONIZ:	When I was there this summer, I heard that there's a housing crunch on the Island.
BOYNTON:	Oh, it's huge. And, and Father Jim Williams has worked with affordable housing to try to get it there. It's, it's expensive to live on the island, and so the affordable housing, it's, it's up in the village, you'll see it, and now you can live there. We're talking about getting some more and I've been somewhat involved, not as much as Jim Williams. But yeah, there's—where do you live? You can't buy a home on the island. And, I mean, maybe you can. A lot of people can't buy a home on the island. They just can't afford it and then live there. And then, ideally, you'd like those to be families to have kids to send to the school and ideally, they'd come back.
MONIZ:	How do you see the outreach to the summer workers fitting into Sainte Anne's charitable and missionary work, more generally?
BOYNTON:	Well, we had a summer program and a winter program. In the summer, it was the square dances, and the ESL and the different ethnic groups and the dinners; all that kind of stuff.
MONIZ:	Mm-hm.
BOYNTON:	Genealogy, the museum, the gift store, welcoming people. The bathrooms is a big deal, having those bathrooms open for everyone, I know. And in the winter, you've got teen night. You've got game night. You've got religious education for the kids when that happens. You've got the retreat going on, and you've got Meals on Snowmobiles, which is out of the church basement, so the meals are cooked there. And then—and then hopefully, you have the Sunday services and, and services throughout the week as well as weddings and funerals and that kind of stuff.

MONIZ:	I'm curious if you could talk about how you see the meals for summer workers and the other programs for summer workers fitting into the long history of the church, since, since you're interested in its history and so all - - —
BOYNTON:	Well, Mackinac has always been two—or three—separate communities. The big one—the earliest split is going to be between the native, indigenous, population and the French population, Jesuits were there for that. But then, it's always going to be between the summer population and the winter population. You can do other divisions between the military and the civilian, but the summer and the winter, all the way back when it was in the days of the fur trade, the people would be out in the woods trapping the furs and then, they would gather at Mackinac to trade and exchange those furs. And then those furs would head off to Montreal or Quebec, and then off to Europe in most cases. So, in the summer, the fur traders would come back from all over the place and it was—Mackinac was the gathering place. In the wintertime, you had the—you had the indigenous population, you had the Anishinaabe, you had the, the community that was there year-round, you had the military community, but it was very small. And in the winter, it would be augmented. Same thing with the fishing. You know, the fishing was—was there fishing through the ice? Certainly. But the primary fishing would've been with nets and, and then packing it off and sending it. When Mackinac became the state—the national park—1875, I think—you know, tourists coming in from all over on steam ships. Before the Mackinac Bridge, you had the state ferries that went back and forth, and, and the high time was spring through fall. In the winter, you would have the local population. So, it's always been much less in the winter.
MONIZ:	Mm-hm. I'm curious to hear a little bit more about your other charitable and missionary work. I know you've been in—you were in Haiti for a couple years, is that right?
BOYNTON:	India, Mexico, Haiti, and I have done an awful lot of medical brigades to Latin America. And I've oftentimes taken people; medical professionals, students or regular civilians from Sainte Anne's and from Mackinac. So, I've taken a lot of those people down to—especially the kids, you take them down and—I say,

	you know, these people come from Latin America. I want you to see what they're coming from.
MONIZ:	Hmm.
BOYNTON:	You might—you might have a certain image in your mind of why these people from Central America are coming. Well, let's show you how they live. Okay. Now, you know why they're coming.
MONIZ:	So, could you talk about where you've been on these medical brigades?
BOYNTON:	Oh, I've taken people to dental, medical, eyeglasses, physical therapy, even sometimes construction, all over Honduras, all over Guatemala, Nicaragua, El Salvador. And then I was a couple years in Haiti, so during that period, I had people come down. I brought people to Mexico before. I just love the exchange. I like to introduce cultures to each other, and I like to do it so that they're on an even playing ground. So, the Americans don't come down with everything. If the Americans come down, I take those kids, I pair them with kids from Honduras and they're going to do a construction project. Those American kids are going to get schooled in how to make cement, or how to dig a posthole or how to paint a wall. Suddenly, those American kids are no longer in charge. They're, you know, they're the weaker of the two. They're not in the position of power. I'd like American kids to experience that.
MONIZ:	Mm-hm. Okay. How long are those trips?
BOYNTON:	Anywhere from a week to two weeks. Nine days.
MONIZ:	Mm-hm. And can you talk a little bit more about the experiences the kids have had? Or any—
BOYNTON:	Oh, yeah. I mean, my own nieces and nephews have gone. Nowadays, they can make Facebook friends with those kids, and so they can continue on. Some, some kids find it life changing. Other kids find it an adventure, and, I think some kids aren't affected by it. Here's a great kid, a Mackinac kid, Jamie Andres [phonetic]. I brought Jamie down there. Jamie is an old, old island family. Jamie is a magician. He would come to the Thursday night dinners and just go around to the tables and do magic tricks. It was awesome. So, Jamie come down, when these kids are in line for the dentist, do your magic trick. And he met with a lady who works on the island, Ingrid. She taught him some

	Spanish so he could say hi, how are you, that kind of thing. And he was the—he was a hit. He really could relate to those kids and, and allow those kids to relate to him, all through the language of magic. I've always said there's a number of international languages. I always thought it was music and soccer. That's what I originally said. But taking kids down there, there's a lot of international languages. Magic is one; any kind of sport—not just soccer. Food, the exchange of food. Art is another one. There's nothing I—there's nothing funner to see—in spite—kids from here, here being U of D High. You know, bring down these football players, give them a couple of things of fingernail polish and say go polish the little girls' fingernails. Oh, it's a riot—
BOYNTON:	—to watch that happen. But while that's happening, the doctors and dentists and eyeglasses are doing their thing too. So, it's not just let's put your— paint fingernails. That's how to relate to them, while at the same time, offering medical services.
MONIZ:	Mm-hm. I'm really struck by the depth and diversity of international connections that Sainte Anne's has—
BOYNTON:	Mm-hm. Yeah.
MONIZ:	—in the Mackinac Island, which is a small, fairly remote island, has. Do you think people who live there year-round have a sense of themselves as being in an internationally connected place?
BOYNTON:	Oh, I think so. I think they know that the world comes to them. All you need to do is walk downtown and listen to the different languages spoken. On any given day, you will always hear Spanish, Tagalog and, and, and Jamaican, Betawi. You could also hear Chinese. Just among the workers, you could hear any number of Eastern European languages from—that you can think of. From Romanian to Polish to—they're all there.
MONIZ:	Mm-hm.
BOYNTON:	It's kind of cool.
MONIZ:	Mm-hm. That's amazing. And then, could you talk a little bit about your experience in Haiti, because you were there for quite a while?

BOYNTON:	I was there for almost two years. Marquette was a missionary. I kind of always wanted to do that. My uncle was and I put my name in for volunteer to work internationally. And the provincial one time asked me, he says, are you open to going to Haiti? And I had worked on the island for a long time, I would—taught for a long time. I recruited for the Jesuit and said this is the time. So, I went down there and I'd already had French under my belt. I went down there, first thing you got to do is learn the language. I learned Haitian Creole. It was weird. Haiti is—Haiti's got a, a wonderful history. Of course, it's even connected to Mackinac, because there was a Jesuit priest, Father François Xavier de Charlevoix, who Charlevoix, Michigan is named after. He did maps of the Great Lakes, was in Mackinac Island, and then, in the 1700s, he also went down and worked in Haiti, it's a former French colony. But it was primarily a slave colony. And they revolted in 1804 under Toussaint Louverture and they got their independence. They were the first country to get their independence after the United States and it was by a slave revolt, which made the United States want nothing to do with that. And they've struggled ever since. And I'm not even sure what the answer is, because you could do 25 different doctoral dissertations on, on the, the possible solutions to the problems of, of Haiti. But I went down there having been to Mexico, having been to India, seeing poverty on a pretty extreme scale, especially in India. And the poverty in Haiti is, is right up there with the worst poverty in, in India, it's overpowering. It's tremendous. And the lack of structure, the lack of societal structure. There's no running water—if, if you have running water, it's because you put it in yourself. You know, electricity, just what you would think of. And so, what we were doing is, we were running schools, Foi et Joie schools. Faith and—faith and Joy, most of the world knows them as were known as Fe y Alegria. And I was the—I had been assigned principal of a Foi et Joie school. And I was—I started on January 1st, I guess, as principal of the school. January 12th, we had that earthquake.
MONIZ:	Mm-hm.
BOYNTON:	January 12th, 2010 at late afternoon, about 4:20. Everything changed then. The whole country, which had been in turmoil, was now in turmoil and desperation. And I've… I've yet to see a proper counting of how many people died in that earthquake. I've seen 300,000. I've seen 800,000. There were days *I thought I* saw

	800,000, so I mean, it was just crazy. I, almost immediately, went back into the center of Port-au-Prince. I went with a group of mostly young military—former military—volunteers from the United States, who started this organization that I helped them with called Team Rubicon. Look them up. They're everywhere now. They've been on the cover of Time magazine. Team Rubicon started in Haiti, and now they're responding to this most recent hurricane. It's a tremendous relief organization that is like the Minutemen. They will go immediately. So, we did, you know, disaster relief. My, my time in the medical brigades helped me tremendously because I was used to medicine, and, and I could help the doctors patch up compound fractures and amputations. And, oh, the dead people were everywhere. They were piled up in the streets like, like firewood. The school, we had a flatbed truck. So, we would load up the truck with the dead and bring them to the mass graves. And we'd go to refugee camps and just open up a clinic. And the immediate international response for the first two weeks after the earthquake was, was, was *really* bad, especially on the side of our country. There were not many Americans there and the few Americans that did go there, were kept in the embassy for fear of violence. And there was violence, but not like what they were fearing. You'd go into a refugee camp and there'd be people with compound fractures, hadn't seen a doctor. Now, we're eight days after the earthquake so gangrene and amputations and—it was just overwhelming. It was—it was absolutely overwhelming. That lasted for about three months. Then, we moved into evaluating buildings. I worked with architects and then, we worked into reparation of buildings and I started working with a really great group. I worked with HEART 9/11. HEART 9/11 are the firefighters, police officers and construction workers from the World Trade Center. They started this group called 9/11. HEART 9/11. Bill Keegan was their president. They came down and helped us with our buildings. A wonderful man named Ray Arana, with an organization called Relief Team One, he came down. He came down, spent six months with us and helped us rebuild the buildings. Trained the local Haitians how to do cement repair and roof repair and plumbing. And we got our schools up and running again. Our

	Jesuit communities up and running again. Other schools up and running again. We started building schools in the refugee camps and we were hitting on all cylinders with the exception of, every single place in Haiti that you can possibly imagine, from top to bottom, left to right, it's, it's corrupt. Haiti is very, very, very, *very* corrupt. And it's just hard to work in that environment. And eventually there was—there was a lot of violence. They were killing people in the streets... The scurvy—not scurvy. Where you get dysentery, what is that disease? Cholera. The cholera epidemic broke out and that was introduced by, by the United Nations workers. From Nepal. They were the ones that introduced the cholera into the country. Haitians got very anti-foreign and the elections sprung up and the violence was crazy. And most of the money that I had helped raise was just going poof, poof, poof. I didn't know where it was going. And so shy of—just shy of two years I left Haiti and, and came back. My religious superior said, "You can do whatever you want. You know, you just got back from Haiti." So, I started teaching at U of D High again and continued with work on Mackinac.
MONIZ:	Got it.
BOYNTON:	I did that until—I taught here for three more years, then I went back into recruiting and I continued to work at Mackinac. I remember crying and coming back and seeing the Mexican ladies. Because when I was down there, the Mexican news was covering the earthquake. At one point they were in a camp and they just yelled out in Spanish, is there anyone here that speaks Spanish? No one answered the yelling, and I said, "I do."
MONIZ:	Mm-hm.
BOYNTON:	They came over and they interviewed me about the work that we were doing in the refugee camps. It went all over the, the national Mexican news and they said to me—on the news and said, do you have anything else to say? And I said I'd like to say hi to all my Mexican friends from Mackinac Island. And they all saw it. They all saw it.
MONIZ:	That's cute.
BOYNTON:	So, we were—we were—and then there's Facebook, we were in touch, when we would have electricity. I remember crying when I saw those Mexican ladies again and so happy to be back. So, I taught three more years and then did four more years as recruiting

	and was on the island every summer. This past year, I met with my provincial superior and he said, "You know, we love what you've been doing on the island." They'd even been up there to visit. He said, "But you know, 25 years...we got to ask you to do something else."
MONIZ:	Mm-hm.
BOYNTON:	And you know in 1996 when I did the museum, my dad was thinking of retiring. And I said, "Oh, don't do!" In 1997, the following year, my dad started working at Sainte Anne's and my mom retired too. I had all those great years working with my mom and dad. My mom learned Spanish enough that she could get by. Dad turns 86 today. I think he's probably on the island right now. It was so great working with my family. My nieces and nephews would come up. Jesuits from all over. Former students from U of D-I would come up. It was absolutely wonderful. Great friends with the pastor, Father Jim Williams, but you know, all things come to an end. So, when my provincial asked me if I would take on this year-round position off the island, I was very sad, but I didn't fight. I knew I couldn't fight it. They'd let me do it for so long.
MONIZ:	Mm-hm.
BOYNTON:	So, I think now—things carry on—they're still doing the meals. Some people are doing the, the English classes. Again, if everything that I was doing was Jim Boynton independent, it shouldn't have happened. It happened, but it, you know, it doesn't—it's not worth continuing. Let's find things that the people can do.
MONIZ:	Mm-hm.
BOYNTON:	There is a great lady, and my favorite lady in the history of Mackinac Island, that's Madeline La Framboise. Have you been in the museum?
MONIZ:	Yes, I have.
BOYNTON:	So, you've seen her grave. When the Jesuits left in 1767, there were no more priests and she was there in the early 1800s, and she kept things going. She taught the Catechism, she gave alms to the poor, she fed the poor, she created community, she got people together and she was an islander. She donated the land for the

	church, she's buried there. You know, there's Margaret Doud now, there's Leanne Brodeur.
MONIZ:	Mm-hm.
BOYNTON:	Was it the same after the priests left and Madame Le Framboise did her ministry—I'm sure it wasn't the same, but that doesn't mean it's better or worse. And is it the same now that I left? I know it's not, because I get phone calls all the time. You know, I miss them, they miss me. But things continue, and you know, it might be better in the future. So, we'll see what happens.
MONIZ:	Let me ask you for a few final reflections.
BOYNTON:	Yeah.
MONIZ:	Is there something that didn't go right or that you regret about your charitable work so far?
BOYNTON:	On Mackinac Island?
MONIZ:	Just in general.
BOYNTON:	Well, Haiti was a shit show. If I would've known then what I knew now, at the beginning of Haiti, I think things would've gone better. And that was to, to keep much tighter control on the finances. I'm not sure how I could've done that.
MONIZ:	Mm-hm.
BOYNTON:	With the island, the only thing that I would've done differently is, as a Jesuit, we don't get missioned for years at a time, we get missioned a year at a time. And when I started in 1996, I thought I'd be there for one year. And then when I was there in 1997, I thought I'd be there for another summer. So, I was there for 25 individual summers. I never knew how long I was going to be there. So, I was never really in a position where I could make long term plans. Because I didn't really know if I was going to be there the next summer. And then when I got used to being there every summer, all of a sudden, I find out I'm *not* going to be there that summer. So, what difference would that make? I'm not even sure. But I wasn't able to make the, the long-term plans that I wanted to, and then when I started making long term plans, I got pulled.

MONIZ:	And do you have a proudest accomplishment of your charitable work?
BOYNTON:	The most difficult thing that Father Marquette and Dablon and all those early guys had to do was to get to know the indigenous population. And the only way that you can get to know the indigenous population is if you learn their language. And it's hard to learn the language and I put in the time and I've, I've learned Spanish, I've learned French, I've learned Creole. I know those Mexicans because I—if you know—if you can speak their language, in some sense you know how they think. For not being a Mexican, which I'm not, I visited their country. I've spent a year in their country; I've been to their homes. I know where they come from, I know them and, and I believe I, I know and understand them. And to me, that's the face of God, right there. I have seen the face of God in many different faces and for that I am tremendously blessed. And I believe I have received far more than I have—than I've ever been able to give.
MONIZ:	And so final question.
BOYNTON:	Yes.
MONIZ:	Since you established a museum, I know you think about objects. Is there an object that captures your philanthropic story?
BOYNTON:	My favorite objects in that museum are the ones that have been there forever, and those are the parish registers. They go back to 1698, I think is the first entry, to the wedding that happened last weekend. But it tells the story. It's in French originally, by priests. The priests leave, it switches to English. The weddings and the baptisms were done by Patrick Sinclair, the commandant at the fort, who himself was Anglican. He was Protestant. But he could read, and he could write. And he called the people together and he performed the baptisms and he performed the weddings. And they're valid, in our eye. I mean, that— that's how the church—and then it switches—and we see Father Mazzuchelli, we see Bishop Baraga. We see the development of the whole parish in that set of books, and that's on display. I don't think there's anything better in that museum than those books. On the other side of the museum is the grave of Madame La Framboise, whose wish was to be buried according to the rites of the Roman Catholic Church on the church property. And there, there she is, she's inside her church. Those two are my favorite. The bell that called

	the people together. But there's all kinds of neat—there's the medals that have been found, and the crosses of the Jesuits and the books that the guys read from. But the parish register and actually, Madame La Framboise are, are, are just wonderful. They tell the story.
MONIZ:	Thank you.
BOYNTON:	Yeah.
MONIZ:	This has been a terrific conversation.