


Spring 2017

Interview of Edward Koronkiewicz, F.S.C.

Edward Koronkiewicz FSC
La Salle University, koronkie@lasalle.edu

John J. Behan
La Salle University, behan94@student.lasalle.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <http://digitalcommons.lasalle.edu/histdeptohall>

 Part of the [Catholic Studies Commons](#), [Educational Leadership Commons](#), [Elementary and Middle and Secondary Education Administration Commons](#), [Higher Education Commons](#), [Higher Education Administration Commons](#), [History of Christianity Commons](#), [Oral History Commons](#), [Secondary Education Commons](#), and the [Urban Education Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Koronkiewicz, Edward FSC and Behan, John J., "Interview of Edward Koronkiewicz, F.S.C." (2017). *All Oral Histories*. 113.
<http://digitalcommons.lasalle.edu/histdeptohall/113>

This Interview is brought to you for free and open access by the Oral Histories at La Salle University Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in All Oral Histories by an authorized administrator of La Salle University Digital Commons. For more information, please contact careyc@lasalle.edu.

Field Notes

Interviewer: John Behan

Interviewee: Brother Edward Koronkiewicz, FSC

Date: April 2, 2017 at 12:00 P.M.

Recording Location: Brother's Office, Office of the University Registrar, David L. Lawrence Administration Center, La Salle University
1900 W. Olney Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19141

Log Created by: John Behan

Recording Equipment: MacBook Pro Laptop Computer using QuickTime Player Application

* Field Notes completed on 4/26/17

The Interviewee: Brother Edward Koronkiewicz, FSC was born in 1954 and lived in St. Mary of Czestochowa Parish in Southwest Philadelphia where he also attended grade school. After he finished 8th grade his family moved to St. Laurence Parish in Upper Darby, PA. He graduated from West Catholic High School for Boys in 1972 and spent the next year as an Aspirant to the Christian Brothers while working at Philadelphia National Bank and attending Peirce Junior College. He received his habit at the La Salle University Chapel in 1973 and made his final vows in 1981 at the same chapel. Brother Ed graduated from La Salle with a B.A. in Secondary Education/Social Studies in 1976. His student teaching was completed at West Catholic High School for Boys and he finished the school year teaching Social Studies at Bishop Walsh High School in Cumberland, MD, where he taught for the next two school years. His next assignment was teaching Social Studies at Archbishop Carroll High School in Radnor, PA. During his nine years there he served as teacher, Disciplinarian, and Vice-Principal. He also coordinated the transition of Carroll from a co-institutional school to a co-educational school. During the 1988-89 school year he worked at West Catholic High School for Boys as Vice Principal while managing the merger of West Catholic High School for Boys and West Catholic High School for Girls into one school. He served as Assistant Principal for Academic Affairs at this new school, West Catholic High School, from 1989-2000. In June 2000, Brother Ed brought his many years of experience in administration and scheduling students and classes to La Salle as the new Associate Registrar, the job he holds to this day. In addition to his duties as Associate Registrar, he is the chapter advisor to the Alpha Chi Rho Fraternity and serves on the Calendar Committee and the Core Advisory Committee. In his spare time Brother Ed enjoys cooking, walking, reading, and spending time at his favorite place - the Christian Brothers shore house at 31st and Central in Ocean City, NJ.

The Interviewer: I, John Behan, was born in Darby, PA on December 29, 1971 and am a life-long resident of Holmes, PA in Delaware County. I graduated from La Salle University with a B.A. in Secondary Education Comprehensive Social Studies in May 1994. I then completed a M.S. in Educational Administration from Gwynedd-Mercy College in 2012. I came back to La Salle University in January 2013 where I earned a certificate to teach English as a Second Language and then started in the Master of Arts in History Program at La Salle in the Fall of 2015. Currently, I am employed as a 7th Grade Language Arts and Social Studies Teacher at G.W. Childs Elementary School in the School District of Philadelphia.

Background: This interview, including the log and field notes, is a requirement for HISTORY 650 – Oral History, which in turn is a required course for an M.A. in History at La Salle University. At the beginning of the semester, the instructor for the course, Dr. Barbara Allen, mentioned a number of people the University wanted to have interviewed for the Digital Commons Archive. After a few weeks of thinking about who I would like to interview, I decided to interview Brother Edward Koronkiewicz, FSC, the Associate Registrar at La Salle. I decided to interview Brother Ed because I have long admired Catholic Religious and the work they do. My father and all my uncles were taught by the Christian Brothers at West Catholic High School in West Philadelphia and my family had a long-time personal friend who was a member of the Christian Brothers.

My first introduction to Brother Ed was on February 28, 2017 via an email I sent him asking if he would like to take part in the interview. He responded a few hours later stating that he had spoken to Dr. Allen who told him about the project and that he would be happy to help me with the interview. He also told me the best time for him to be interviewed would be on a Sunday afternoon. I emailed him back later in the day to thank him and to let him know I would be in touch to choose a specific date for the interview. I emailed Brother Ed again on March 17 and proposed three Sunday afternoons during which we could meet, and I also asked him if I could stop by his office the next time I was on campus for an informal introduction. He said yes and I agreed to stop by his office to meet him for the first time in person on Tuesday, March 21. Also, on March 17, I emailed Brother Ed Sheehy to ask him if he had any background information on Brother Ed Koronkiewicz, and he told me he loved the shore, loved to cook, and also listed some of the jobs he held before he came to La Salle.

On Tuesday, I went to Brother Ed's office on the 3rd floor of the David L. Lawrence Administration Center at La Salle at about 4 p.m. I had to wait a few minutes for him because he was advising a student and then he appeared from his office and invited me in. We shook hands and introduced ourselves. We briefly discussed the interview format and I informed him that it would be a minimum of two hours and when it was complete the interview would be uploaded to the La Salle Digital Commons website where people from all over the world would be able to listen to it if they wished. Before I left I commented on a mug he had on his desk which had the mascot of Archbishop Carroll High School, the Patriot, on it. He told me he was a faculty member there for 9 years and we discussed a mutual friend, also a Christian Brother, who taught there at the time. After agreeing to the formal interview on Sunday, April 2 we exchanged goodbyes and I left feeling optimistic about the interview and happy that I had asked Brother Ed to do the interview with me. One week later on March 28, I emailed a list of questions to Brother Ed so he would not be too surprised at any of the questions that I planned to ask him on the date of the interview. That was the last time I had any contact with Brother Ed until the day of the interview.

I wanted to make sure I had enough questions about the different phases of Brother Ed's life – his childhood, high school years, formation as a Christian Brother, and his career once he took his final vows. In order to prepare for the interview, I listened to an interview with Brother Arthur Bangs. I wrote down almost all of the questions he was asked and took away some that I did not want or need to ask. I also added some questions I thought would be interesting for both

myself and Brother Ed and any future listeners. Also, I listened to an interview with Dominic Galante, the former Registrar at La Salle who worked for the University for almost 50 years. I was able to get many questions about working as a Registrar by listening to this interview. Most of the questions I asked about Brother Ed's early life were taken from Paul Thompson's "Life Story Interview Guide". Finally, I sent my interview questionnaire to Dr. Allen about two weeks before the interview, and she approved of all the questions.

Description of the Interview: I made sure to rise early on Sunday April 2 so I would not have to rush to La Salle for the interview. I woke up at about 6:45 a.m. and then went to mass at Our Lady of Fatima Church in Secane, PA, my home parish. While there, I asked God for His help and guidance on this project. I returned home at about 8:30 or so and made sure that my recording equipment was working properly. For about the next hour or so I relaxed and went over the questions I wanted to ask Brother Ed. I left my house at about 11 a.m. With traffic, it takes about 50 minutes to drive to La Salle, but since it was a beautiful, sunny, early spring Sunday it only took me about 40 minutes. I parked on West Olney Avenue right in front of the David L. Lawrence Administration Center at about 11:40 a.m. and sat in my car for a few minutes before I went to his office. Unfortunately, the large, black iron fence that says "La Salle" on it was locked and I thought I would have to walk all the way around to another entrance and perhaps be a few minutes late for the interview. Luckily a student approached in a few seconds and she held the gate open for me. I then walked up to the door of the Administration building and called Brother Ed's cell phone so he could let me in. He greeted me cordially at the the door a minute later and he escorted me to his office on the 3rd floor. He invited me to sit anywhere I thought was comfortable, and I chose to sit across from his desk so I would be able to plug in my laptop. He sat behind his desk, and we shared a few minutes of small talk.

I made sure the QuickTime application was working one last time before the interview started and took notice of the nice view of the Quad that Brother Ed has from his office window. Brother's office seems like like a "normal" administration office that could be found on any college campus in America. There are framed diplomas on the wall, some pictures of family, and a mug emblazoned with the mascot of one of the High Schools he taught at on his desk and some shelves with books. The room seemed to match his personality well. It was equipped with what he needed to do his job but not filled with unnecessary distractions or too many decorations.

We started the interview at 12 noon. Brother Ed was very friendly throughout the interview and answered all questions thoroughly. He did not refuse to answer any questions. He often would pause and think before answering a question. Brother Ed did not seem preoccupied or in a rush to finish the interview. We did not stop for any kind of a break. We only stopped twice so he could show me a picture of himself while Disciplinarian at Archbishop Carroll High School in Radnor, PA and a photo of the Brothers' shore house in Ocean City, NJ. By the time the interview was complete at about 2:45 pm, Brother Ed seemed glad to be finished. As a somewhat quiet person I do not think he normally talks about himself for such a long period of time. During our two hour and forty-minute discussion, he showed interest and good humor, and I am very grateful for his cooperation.

Notes on Recording: I recorded the interview using a pre-installed application on my MacBook Pro Laptop Computer called QuickTime. The interview is broken into three different recordings

because I accidentally stopped the recording twice when I only wanted to pause it. One time Brother Ed signaled for me to stop the interview so he could show me a picture of the Christian Brothers' shore house in Ocean City, NJ and another time he wanted to show me a picture of when he worked at Archbishop Carroll High School in Radnor, PA. Both times I paused the interview, but when I tried to "unpause" it, I actually stopped the interview.

Editing the Transcript/Interview Log: Although I included some direct quotes from the interview, this is not a complete transcript. The log is a summary of the main points of the interview. I used quotes to stress something or to show importance. I used minute separations to divide the log into manageable segments. The interview is in three parts because twice I accidentally stopped the recording and the recording had to be started again. I listened to the interview on my MacBook Pro while writing the log.

Brother Edward Koronkiewicz, FSC - Interview Questionnaire

Interview Questions for Oral History Interview of Brother Edward Koronkiewicz

1. Is it ok to record this interview?
2. When and where were you born?
3. Which hospital?
4. Do you have any siblings and where are you in the age order?
5. Were you raised in Philadelphia?
6. What section/neighborhood/parish?
7. What street?
8. What is your ethnicity? Is the ethnicity of both of your parents the same?
9. Do you remember your grandparents?
10. What were they like?
11. Were your grandparents born in America?
12. When did they come here?
13. Where did they first move to when they arrived in America?
14. Do you know what they did for a living?
15. Can you describe their character?
16. Did they help to raise you?
17. Were any of them a very strong influence on you as you were growing up? How so?
18. Where were your parents born? (If born out of Phila. area ask how they ended up in Phila.).
19. How did your parents meet?
20. How long were they married?
21. What did your parents do for a living?
22. Did they always do that for a living or did they ever change careers?
23. Was there ever a time of prolonged unemployment for either parent? If so how did the family cope?
24. Did your father want you to follow in his footsteps?
25. Can you describe the character of your father? For example, was he an affectionate man? Were you close to him?

26. Can you describe the character of your mother? For example, was she an affectionate woman? Were you close to her?
27. Who was the disciplinarian in the family – Mom or Dad? How did they discipline you?
28. How would you compare your mother and father as influences on your life?
29. Can you describe what morals and values your parents tried to instill in you as a child?
30. Did your parents hold up any examples of how to live your life to you?
31. Are either of your parents still alive? If not when did they die?
32. What was the role of Catholicism in your home?
33. Do you consider yourself as having had a very religious upbringing?
34. What role did the Catholic Church play in the neighborhood you grew up in?
35. In what ways were you and your family involved in the Church when you were growing up? For example, altar boy, lector, volunteer, cantor, etc.?
36. What elementary school did you attend? Which religious order staffed your school?
37. Could you describe yourself as a grade school student? Were you shy or outgoing, a very good or average student, etc.?
38. What kinds of activities were you involved in at school?
39. What kinds of activities were you involved in outside of school? Ex. Sports teams, Cub/Boy Scouts, etc.
40. What was discipline like in the school you attended?
41. Did most of the other children from the neighborhood attend the same school?
42. Did your parents ever consider sending you to public school?
43. Were there many kids in the neighborhood?
44. Could you describe your brothers and sisters for me?
45. Could you describe your childhood in any other ways? Is there anything you would like to add?
46. Do you think your childhood was very similar to that of the other children in the neighborhood?
47. Do you remember when your family bought their first TV? Do you remember how it changed your family or life in general?
48. Where did you spend the holidays?
49. What was the family structure like?
50. Did you all have chores?
51. Did the siblings attend the same school?
52. What were vacations like?
53. Was a lot of time spent outside?
54. Are there any aunts, uncles, cousins, or other family members or any other people in your younger years who had an important influence on you that you would like to mention?
55. Was there tuition in grade school or high school?
56. Where did you attend high school?
57. Where was it located?
58. What years were you there?
59. Could you describe the high school for me?
60. Did you enjoy your years there? Why or why not?
61. Was high school discipline the same as grade school? How so?
62. What were the biggest differences between your high school and elementary school?
63. What High School activities were you involved in?

64. Were there any teachers or staff members who had a particular impact or influence on you? How so?
65. Did you think of going to college while you were in high school?
66. How did you know what classes you wanted to take while in high school?
67. Did you help pay for your high school tuition?
68. What was your first job after high school?
69. What did your brother and sister do for a job after high school?
70. Did you have to worry about being drafted into the military?
71. What made you want to become a Christian Brother?
72. How did you know you had “the calling”?
73. Can you describe your “calling” for me?
74. When did you enter the Christian Brothers?
75. Why did you decide on being a Christian Brother?
76. Did you ever think of becoming a Priest?
77. For those who may not know, what is the difference between a Priest and a Brother?
78. What was the reaction of your family when you told them you wanted to enter the religious life?
79. Where did you go when you first entered the Christian Brothers?
80. What was the first year of your formation like?
81. Ask some questions of what it was like before and after the changes of Vatican Council II if applicable.
82. What was a typical day like for a young man who was training to be a Christian Brother?
83. Could you describe the years of your formation to me?
84. How many years does it take to become a Christian Brother?
85. Were there any times you doubted or questioned your vocation?
86. What were your favorite and least favorite parts of your years of formation?
87. What vows does a Christian Brother take? Could you describe them for me?
88. Is any one vow in particular more difficult than another?
89. When you were being trained as a Brother did they train you for any career in particular? Did you have any say in this?
90. Who teaches Brothers in formation?
91. Did you live in the same place the entire time of your formation?
92. When did you first start working as a Christian Brother? Was it before you took final vows? What was this job? Can you describe it? Did you like it?
93. How do you think the formation of Christian Brothers has changed since you were in formation?
94. Do you think these changes are positive, negative, or both and in what ways?
95. How have the Christian Brothers changed over the years since you first joined?
96. Where do you live now?
97. Do you live in a community of Christian Brothers?
98. Over the course of your years as a Christian Brother have you usually lived in a community with them?
99. Take me through the different places you worked over the years as a Christian Brother.
100. What were your jobs in these places?
101. Does any job stand out to you as your favorite? Least favorite? Why?

102. How do the Christian Brothers deal with any special requests the Brothers might have such as how far they are stationed from their home town, etc.?
103. Did your superiors discuss changes that were in the works for you when you were younger such as promotions, job changes, location changes, etc.?
104. Were you allowed to apply for different jobs or were you told where to go by a superior?
105. What advanced degrees did you earn after your formation and where did you earn them?
106. Did you enjoy that experience? Why or why not?
107. What other responsibilities did you have as a Brother while you were working at your school job and while studying for your advanced degree?
108. Which of those responsibilities did you enjoy the least? The most? Why?
109. Have you ever been the superior of a group of Brothers? If so, did you like it? Would you want to be a superior in the future?
110. Do you have a spiritual advisor in the Christian Brothers? How do they help to guide you?
111. Have you ever been a spiritual advisor to other Brothers and how did you help to guide them? If not is this something that you would like to do?
112. Have you ever helped to form young men in the process of becoming Christian Brothers in a formal way? If so how?
113. How do you see yourself as an example to younger Brothers or young men in formation?
114. How many men are in formation today to become Christian Brothers?
115. Before you started to work at La Salle did you have any experiences here? What were your first impressions of the school and the campus?
116. What was your last assignment before you came to work as the Registrar at La Salle?
117. How did you feel about leaving that assignment? Ex. Were you ready for a change?
118. Did you feel your work at the job was finished or was there still something that you would have liked to have accomplished at that job?
119. Who first talked to you about coming to La Salle? Were you hoping to one-day work here or were you thinking that maybe you would be stationed somewhere else?
120. When did you first start to work at La Salle?
121. Were you excited, nervous, apprehensive when you were told you were going to be working at La Salle?
122. Did you have any say in the decision to start working at La Salle?
123. Did you have to have any special training to start working in the Registrar's Office at La Salle? If so what was the training and how long did it last?
124. What skills that are needed to work as the Registrar did you learn in your careers before coming to La Salle?
125. For those who do not know, what exactly does a Registrar do?
126. What are your favorite and least favorite parts of the job?
127. Describe your staff for me and how do you manage them?
128. What do you think your leadership style is and how does your identity as a Christian Brother influence that style?

129. What is your vision for the Registrar's Office? Are there any changes you would like to make? What would you like it to be like in 5 or 10 years?
130. How would you like to leave the Registrar's Office for the person who will one day take your place?
131. How has the Registrar's Office changed since you have come to La Salle?
132. Has the job become easier or more difficult? How so?
133. Has the Registrar's Office taken on any new responsibilities since you have come to La Salle?
134. If you could change something about your job immediately what would it be?
135. What are the biggest changes you have seen on campus since you have come to La Salle? Do you see these as positive changes? Why?
136. What are your other responsibilities at La Salle? For instance, are you on any committees? Which ones? What is your role?
137. Is there anything in particular you would like to get involved with at La Salle? For instance, helping with one of the student clubs or teams or the theater?
138. What responsibilities do you have as a Christian Brother at La Salle or to the Christian Brothers in general? For instance, do you supervise anyone or lead any committees or organize anything for the Brothers?
139. How do you find a balance between your responsibilities as the Registrar and your work as a Christian Brother and a person who also needs leisure time?
140. What do you most enjoy doing for fun?
141. Do you have any hobbies or interests you would like to mention or discuss?
142. Do you get to have much time for yourself?
143. How do you make sure you have some time to "recharge your batteries" so to speak?
144. Has anyone had a very big influence on you as a staff member at La Salle? How so?
145. Is there anything in life you have a great desire to accomplish?
146. Is there any place you have a great desire to travel to?