

## **My Last Memories of My Time at St. Ann's™s**

My father had cancer of the head from a blow he suffered when he banged his head against his workbench. At first, the cancer was removed. A year or so later, though, two more bumps came up and were treated the same as before. Finally his whole head was filled with cancer, and he eventually went to the hospital in Framingham, Massachusetts. He was mobile and could help the nuns with the other cancer patients.

The Sisters notified me in April that I should come to see him soon, for the cancer would eventually hit the brain and he would go fast. I asked permission to go for a visit and was told that I could go but could not miss any classes, and could not sleep out overnight. I was told to be back the same night for classes the next day. I was stunned. I went after class for the long ride and was able to have at least two hours or more with him, coming back late that night to New York to be on time for classes. I told my mother that the Provincial had allowed me to come now to see him but that I could not come when he died. That was in April.

Dad was very pleased with my visit and had written me a letter to tell me how sorry he was that he had not encouraged me in my vocation, and asked me to forgive him and told me that he was so pleased with my dedication to the Lord. He died in November, and my family, knowing that I could not come, did not notify me when he died until after he was buried. I later went with my family to his grave on my next visit home. I could not understand why the Lord had done this to me, but the answer was to be learned only ten years later. He died in 1938 and he had spent his last months helping the Sisters as they treated the cancer sufferers who were not as mobile as he. He had been happy to help to the very end. Later, in 1948, I would receive the reason why the Lord had wanted me to have that suffering. I now bless His Holy Name and continue to let Him rule my life.

Finally, I find it necessary to recall an exceptional loyalty among the students who have been touched over the years and who have remained especially close to me. The students of the Hevey School in Manchester were much too young to stay in touch, but that was not the case in Lowell. One of the students I had in Lowell decided to join the Marist Brothers and presently Bro. Henry Lucien is still a proud product of the Lowell class of 1936.

The four-year stay at St. Ann's™s Academy was far more successful as far as faithful and loyal graduates, and that is because of the full four years spent together, and the follow-up of many of them after those initial years. Even after St. Ann's Academy moved to Archbishop Molloy School in Queens, the old St. Anners, as they were called, continued to support and help out whenever they were asked. For some of these men it became a loyal friendship. One of the students, a boarder for the twelve years from grammar school through high school, is John Foster, who later worked and traveled for the U.S. government and has always been faithful in seeking out and visiting Marist Brothers all over the globe. Our paths crossed in many of these countries, and he has been in contact with me all these years.

I wish to mention the John Frey family, who have been loyal for years, and I also kept in touch with Msgr. James Haggerty, who had been ailing for some years, as well as his brother, Bert Haggerty, who kept me posted on the condition of the monsignor. Another who has brought honor to the academy was Hon. Judge Thomas Galligan. I had been very close to his entire family. He worked hard to run activities for our newly founded mission of the Philippines. It is a great pleasure for me to still receive visits from these loyal alumni, who take the time to pop in to visit an old fogey occasionally. Donald Shea has been the liaison with the rest of the graduates of 1941, has been faithful in keeping me posted, and continues to keep in touch, concerned about my health.

Frankly one of the quietest students I ever had has become the most loyal. Salvadore DiPalma went on in business, working for the U.S. government in professional worldwide inspections that also take him all over the globe. He has been in touch with me since his Academy days, and periodically pops up unexpectedly, but always with a genuine hug and good news. To this day he has been loyal to everything Marist, and more especially so to our Marist foreign missions over the many years that I was also working for the Marist missions. If he goes on a trip or for a retreat, he will always drop me a card.

His latest project from a recent visit was to encourage me to go ahead in providing some kind of monument to our Blessed Founder here on campus. He felt that something here on campus should be a reminder of the hard work done by the Marist Brothers to get this college started, and a good way to do that would be the memorial which was planned, and to which he has heavily contributed to get it started. This was not just a public relations idea, but also one that came from a loyal alumnus who can never forget the training of the Marist Brothers and is proud of being an alumnus.

The people I have mentioned mostly started contact with Marist and myself in 1941, and to have so many still loyal and still active in their concern is really remarkable. I could not write about St. Ann's Academy without mention of its loyal alumni. It was not the place or the name, for they are still as loyal to Archbishop Molloy, but it was and has continued to be their appreciation of the dedication of the Marist Brothers.