

Venard Memories You Can't Dream Up

- And I just had a vision of standing next to Fr. Knipe outside the little store as the dinner crowd left the hall, and he looked up to see one or the other of us passing a chocolate cake from the server's table out the little window to Jack. I may have set a record on Bro Paul's penal squad, sorting screws.
- And there was the night that we were all up smoking in the bell tower after lights out and someone tripped over the rope to the bell and.....
- Who was with me on the way back from Bald Mt. when we started a fire in the living room of an abandoned house that took on a life of its own. I believe I spent four weeks sorting screws Yup...We no sooner got back in the building and were directed upstairs to write about our house warming party without the opportunity to get our stories straight. As I recall, we started a fire in the fire place and Mike picked up an old mop in the corner and stuck it in the fire. Goofing off he started swing the fiery mop around yelling..."Here come the Vikings...burn the house down and rape all the women". Well a few sparks here and there were too much for that old abandon house. Later that day on the way back from Bald Mountain I hooked up with John. Last I remember is we were rummaging thru a car junk yard and a farmer chased us in his pickup through the pastures. Dodging between the cows kept us from him catching up with us. Was the same trip when we hit the hornet's nest coming down the mountain. Jerry got stung about a dozen times.
- Talking about roof stuff, I vaguely recall the squatter girls coming home after a date/dates. And I recall they parked under the trees above the apple cellar and we'd chuck water balloons. I often wonder how good we might have been had we not been in the seminary. Speaking of the squatter's woods, and the "still" I tried to build down in the woods off the lower pasture, anyone remember the Sunday when these "whoomp," "whoomps" were coming from the room off the refectory (across from the music room)? Those were the gallon jugs of fermented apple cider we had been hiding in the cabinets exploding.
- I remember that softball throwing contest. Good God Jim...You had the best arm in high school even as a freshman. I just couldn't believe that girl only lost by 10-20' or so. I remember a priest coming up to me as I was looking down watching the basketball game (Mt. Pocono). He said, "I got a girl here who can out throw anyone". Who's got the best arm in the school? I thought about giving it a go myself but opted to grab you instead.
- Do you all remember the first day of Fr. White's history class when he told us what each of our last names "really" meant? Peterson—now that was a tough one.
- One quarter during my Junior year, I was in charge of the athletic department. Keeping the equipment up to date, liming fields and such. During that quarter we had our annual Olympics. My story involves the 100 yard dash. Each class was represented by 2 runners.

Al was one of our runners being the fastest in our class. The starter gun went off and as it turned out Ray came in 1st and Al took 2nd. When the time keeper read the stop watch to the contestants, Al started jumping up and down screaming, "I broke the world record, "I broke the world record." The question was asked, "If you broke the world record, then where's that leave Ray?" "Jack, get out the tape measure and check this field!" said one of the priests. Yup, I laid the field out 30 yards short. Everyone had to race again.

- Al sat behind George. I believe we were in freshman religion class and I can't recall the priest's name. George was asked a question and stood up to answer. Al, behind him, was playing with his Kane chair tilting it back. When George went to sit down he gave out a yell, fell completely backwards grabbing his desk which fell on top of him. He was on his back on the floor with his desk upside down on his chest. He stood up and started crying, "I sat on my balls, I sat on my balls." and proceeded to curse out Al. Both were excused from class.
- It was 1970 and you and I decided to go to Maryknoll, NY to visit (Fr.) Curt Cadorette. We got there and inquired but as it turned out, he was not there. We grabbed a six pack and sat in the court yard and drank it. We soon became focused on "The Gong" that was only rung once a year at Departure Ceremonies for the Missionaries going to the missions. Soon, there was a daring contest on who would bang "The Gong".

You found a short branch of a tree on the ground and proceeded to bang the piss out of "The Gong". It was approaching darkness and lights started coming on behind us throughout the buildings. We ran around the corner of the building and hid behind a bush. It could not have been 5 minutes later when we heard sirens and could see the flashing lights of police cars around the corner in the front of the building at the main entrance. "Is it possible they would call the cops just for someone banging "The Gong", I asked you. Little by little with backs against the wall, we moved towards the main entrance.

We watched as quite an entourage of cars, limos, police drove up the circular driveway. Something big was happening! You all recall the numerous prayers we said at Marknoll for the release of James Edward Walsh from his in house confinement in China. He was imprisoned for 20 years (*Arrested in 1958, sentenced to 20 years in prison, freed in 1970 – RPV* [<http://www.nytimes.com/1981/07/30/obituaries/bishop-james-e-walsh-dies-missionary-jailed-by-chinese.html>]). Well, as fate would have it, here he was, right before our eyes, being escorted back home to Maryknoll, NY. Pomp, ceremony, speeches soon followed. We left the bushes and soon were standing in the crowd becoming witness to this historical event. Honestly, you can't make this stuff up.

Visionaries before our time.

- I guess we were into sneaking around buildings and making loud noises. I recall Bill was part of this patrol, but not sure who else. Seems like Curt may have been along. I used to bring back M-80 fireworks and cord from the farm I worked at during summers. An inch of cord gave us about five minutes of fuse. And so one evening we snuck over to Mount St. _____? (*Marymount RPV*) where they looked after problem girls—they not knowing

there were apparently problem boys across the lake. We got uncomfortably close to the building, set our small charges, and then we retreated to the resounding “boom” “boom” of those M-80s, designed to scare off crows, now hinting of a pending siege. And those were in our pre-alcohol days.

- I could probably find the biology lab to this day, given an hour’s head start. A lot more places I can find with less time, none of which I should have approached even then. And I still have my slide rule. And I recall Bill helping me at 2:AM finish up my “ski slope” science experiment (flash camera with two metal balls falling from different heights but attaining the same speed before they hit the floor). I believe the title of my experiment should have been “smoke and mirrors.” I have absolutely no idea how we existed on so very little sleep back then. Wake me up now and say “hey, let’s go raid the refectory,” or “go sleep on the roof of the library,” or “go catch a smoke in the bell tower,” or one of many YGBSMs, and each outing will no doubt have a different ending.

(Back to Physics projects) Senior year. Fr. Milroy. My project consisted in dropping a box containing a pendulum and mic to record the ticks of the pendulum to determine the period. Recall the formula for the period of a pendulum:

$$T = 2\pi\sqrt{L/g},$$

where L is the length of the pendulum and g is the force due to gravity.

My experiment was to drop the pendulum in the box from a pulley with a weight attached so that g is replaced by g - weight and check to see if the formula for the pendulum's period is still valid. I determined T by recording the ticks of the pendulum and then playing back the recording using a stop watch to figure elapsed time.

Forward to the final presentation where we all were required to set up our experiment in the lab and demonstrate and explain it to interested visitors (other faculty). Most had no problem with my experiment. I recall describing it to Fr. Whelan, Fr. Ratermann, and of course Fr. Milroy. Actually, I originally got the wrong answer and had to change my calculation to get the expected answer. Fr. Milroy nodded, but I suspect he might have thought that I was cooking the books just a bit.

The only person who thought I was on drugs was Fr. Vittengl. I told him to imagine himself standing on a scale in an elevator. If the elevator falls he would weigh less. Not a chance, says Vittengl.

- Speaking of blowing things up; John comes to mind. Remember when he started the rocket club. It was short lived and frowned on by the faculty but I did enjoy the launches he pulled off. He got these rockets thru some type of mail order company. I remember when he made a cannon. It was a metal pipe which he had drilled in a hole. He stuffed it with gun powder and set it up at the lake. He loaded a marble as the projectile and shot it clear across the lake. The pipe itself flew straight up about 10' in the air. I was impressed.

It was John who set up a pyrotechnics display on our Sophomore "free day". Our theme was the Civil War. The school was divided up between The North and The South and as you recall we would compete all day. He built replicas of The Merrimac and The Monitor out of cardboard which were placed on a table to the left as you would enter The Refectory. As the student body came in, these two ships started firing at each other. The firefight didn't last long as they soon caught on fire and were quickly doused.

- I do remember "Freedom Days" generally equated to a trek to Bald Mountain. I still have the calendar of the Nicholson Bridge, another of our destinations. I have the distant view of the peak of Bald Mt. as seen from the hallway outside the main Study Hall imbedded in my memory, always beckoning us to return one more time. Then there was Bell Mt. across the way, but that was for the sick, infirm, and weak of spirit. Something we could probably have done after lights out, and were my memory better, we may well have.
- I remember what it was like to finally make it be big-time sophomores, where the main change in status included not sitting in front in chapel, and then having that second alley of benches in the locker room. Damn, but then we were somebody. And by the time we were seniors, we had our own set of sinks and mirrors! And were in "charge" of squads! Oh, let those good times roll.
- We were pretty brazen towards the end ("One for all..."). Study Hall #3 was it? By the Lab? And so Curt yells at all the junior classmen up front (another benefit of being an upperclassman) to turn around and get their noses in their books, and JR and I drop out the window and high-tail it to Clarks Summit to catch a movie. For some reason I think it was a western, maybe Man Who Shot Liberty Valance? Then back to the campus in time to meld into the washroom crowd before lights out.
- One of my fondest memories (and one I'm most jealous of) is the night you slept out on the roof outside the dorms, I think it was above the library. I know that after you did it I wished I had done it too.

I remember that as well. Can't say I slept all that well, but it was another notch in the belt my mom had to explain away to Fr. Wolken on visiting Sundays.

- I got The Nicholson Bridge on the wall in my work shop. I climbed through, up and over those arches - one of the coolest things I ever did, must have been with you. Remember the air shafts in the abandoned train tunnels we found on the way back from Nicholson that one year. Those tunnels were mystical. I remember coming out at the other end and it was spring time and there was still snow piles and yet I remember green growth on the walls abutting the tunnel entrance/exit - wow, Sri Lanka like. Some years back I took the kids to see it. Quite a marvel from a distance with the pastures below. I know I did manage to climb thru the bridge with a repetitious amount of ladders and walkways, maneuvering over the arches enclosed below the bridge. Someone got through it with me. I believe it's claim is that it's the largest all concrete bridge in the world.

- Here's one memory I cherish. The night of the Christmas Gaudeamus our senior year. I don't remember the Gaudeamus, but I remember a bunch of us slipping out to help Brother Dave haul the tractor out of the lake. As I remember it he'd been clearing the ice so guys could skate and we all took turns pulling on the winch to help get it out. I remember the Sisters bringing big thermoses of something hot, probably coffee, and I remember the night being cold and crisp and clear and heading back into the building feeling a part of something significant.
- I remember the way we said the rosary every evening, or the different ways we did it, and the cool way it felt to pass other clusters of guys praying it together at the same time.
- This story concerns May Devotions which we said each May outside on the front porch at the main entrance. As I recall we said them each evening before night study hall. Certain members of the class ahead of us were the main characters. Each evening the members of This Order would race down the hall to be front row at the wrought iron railing. We would stand and say some prayers and songs before the statue of Our Lady. In time I realized why they were so eager to be first. Below the railings was a garden area and being May, the flowers were in bloom. They had a contest each evening to see who could spit into the flowers below. Things got rather militarized as time went on. Each would wear a yellow or green rubber band around one shoulder. The yellow rubber bands were The Yellow Gobs and the green were The Green Gobs. Of course The Green out ranked The Yellow. You would work up a lugie and spit and try to get it into the flower. In a low voice you'd hear: *Aten hut*. They would come to attention, snap their rubber bands and the spitting would begin. I guess having a cold helped, or maybe that was cheating. I don't know. As Bill once said, "there were no limits in our attempts to amuse ourselves."
- It had to be the first few months of Freshman Year. I woke up in the morning to find someone in bed with me. I started yelling and waking him up screaming, "Get out of my bed." Within a few minutes I realized I was in his bed, top bunk and all. For days, I heard people talking about the 2 freshman who had slept together. I really can't recall whose bunk it was but it was next to mine. Needless to say, I never discussed this with anyone.
- It must have been Junior Year and I get a message from The Rector, Fr. Wolken, to report to his office. He asked me "What was I doing walking around last night on the first floor"? I told him I wasn't and he said Fr. Vittengel talked to you and told you to go back to bed. I said I never talked to him and maybe I was walking in my sleep. Wolken said that it was very unlikely, people may walk in their sleep but they don't have full conversations in their sleep. He gave me a warning and said this behavior was unacceptable and he would consider what punishment to give me.

Later I talked to Fr. Vittengel. I asked him, Where I was, What did I say, etc. He told me and I said I don't remember any of it. "I must have been walking in my sleep." He told me..."I thought you were but I decided to report you anyway, just to make sure". I remember saying, "O come on Vit you know I...er...er I mean Fr. Vittengel, "it was obvious I was sleep walking , please talk to Fr. Wolken" for me. I guess he did because nothing else came of it.

- Still Freshman Year and it involved a classmate named JF. It was about 2 hours before lights on and I wake up to see him hanging out the window and mooing to the cows in the pasture. What's that nut job up to I thought and I fell back asleep. Lights come on and everyone is looking out the windows cause the cows had broken thru the fence and were walking everywhere around the building...in the apple orchids in the back parking lot, front parking lot, and up the stairs where we held May Devotions, in the ball fields, etc. They roused the Senior Class and round up the cows under the direction of Br. Miguel.
- I do remember smoking after lights out. I think we leaned out of a window or sat on the window sill with our feet outside. I don't recall ever getting caught doing that. I came in junior year and started smoking on the twin engine 'propeller' plane that brought me to Scranton. Cigarettes were given to all passengers at that time. A little pack of 4 Marlboro cigarettes. I never had permission to smoke nor did the priests ever question it.
- I do remember though going down to Clarks Summit for pizza after lights out. I think four of us snuck down over the hill toward the pool, had our snack and successfully returned without notice. It was a major accomplishment.
- I learned to drive a stick shift there driving the old garbage truck. I can remember Jack with his elbow out of the window on the passenger side and he did not shut the door completely. I remember making a sharp turn and Jack attached to the door with only his arm swung completely out till it sprang back. I can still remember my relief when he made it back into the truck. I thought I was going to have a short driving career.
- OK, as to the Knipe story I alluded to shortly after hearing he passed away. Let's just say he and I never got started on the right foot. I don't believe he ever thought, through the years, I was up to anything but no good, always some sort of subversive plan in the works, and truth be told, he was probably right. However he almost had me ready to quit right after that first visiting Sunday—I thought no institution that barbaric was going to last for me. We each remember the first time we had family/company visit for that first visiting Sunday. And so it was I made it through those first 3-4 weeks at the Venard, welcoming that day when Dad, Mom and my five brothers and sisters piled into the wood-paneled station wagon and made the 3-hour drive. I suspect we had a picnic lunch at one of the tables or benches overlooking Bell Mt and the Apple Orchard. Before they left, my Mom gave me one of those long chocolate bars, octagonal in shape, about a foot long, that the local boy scouts would have been selling back home. A special gift from them, a prized possession, one I put in my locker, in clear view, a memory of the visit, headed down to dinner, savoring the treat for another day. I'm sure I recall hearing about sharing leftover food from visiting Sundays with the rest of the refectory crowd, but somehow the small candy bar didn't make that cut, or I didn't make that connection. So what an emotional tragedy it was when I came back to the locker after evening prayers, already missing my family, to find the one memory of their visit gone. I looked accusingly at all those who bunked nearby, wondering who would be so mean as to steal what was so small in value but at the time, so precious to me. It was far more than a lost chocolate bar that was at stake here.

You can then only imagine my surprise when a day or two later, I found my name on the next (of many, many) Wed afternoon's "penal squad," where I was introduced to Brother Paul and sorting screws. Apparently I had violated the "shared V-Sunday goodies" rule. Actually I spent two consecutive Wednesdays as a result of the chocolate bar episode, continuing on week two the mounds of interrelated and absolutely mindless screws left behind after week one. Sometime between that visiting Sunday and the ensuing Wed I realized what had happened, and who was responsible. And I don't think I ever forgave him completely. Apparently not, or I would not remember enough of the moment to pen these lines. We got along through the years, but it was always forced. Unlike a Mildew or Trettle, I never felt Knipe had the time to talk to me, that there was always something else he needed to be doing. I suppose Deans of Discipline can be like that, and need to be. I regret his passing, as I do each and every person I ever knew and respected, and am truly sorry that a future visit to Maryknoll will not involve a conversation with him about the past. After all these years, even the bad times are good.

- Yes, initiation nights...Run for your life!. About then I found out what "blue noses" and "pink bellies" were all about. I was a little guy back then and was often left alone. I guess I wasn't worth the effort. Then again, guys like Mike and Nick were good game to run down. I remember on numerous occasions that (name), with much eagerness, would single out Mike Walsh. I suppose they were the two biggest guys in each class. Honestly, in a fair fight with out 1/2 your class watching, my money would have been on Mike. Just never cared for (name).
- Hey Jim, remember that little cubby hole we carved out under the stairs. As we know, you had no choice during recreation but to leave the building for an hour plus of outside activities. That could be pretty rough on those cold mid-winter, Penn, days. I was in charge of athletics and right across the room from the athletic dept. were those steps with 2 short doors underneath. I managed to get a card table in there, 2 chairs and electric. More than once Knipe would be chasing everyone outside and we'd be in there laughing as they scurried by. He'd often be standing a matter of feet from us yelling as people went out into the snow. We usually got a few games of pinochle in and on a rare occasion, studying. I'm not sure if anyone else knew of this as I don't remember any intruders. Something that good just couldn't be kept under hat too long.
- Then again, I remember a handful of us snuck down to the rec room one night. It was probably after mid-night. I believe you and I went in there to play cards. Yup, it was Jim who balanced a bunch of pool balls on one of those tall ash trays and placed it up against the doors. As it was time to go back to bed he called in "There's a priest coming". We panicked and flew open the doors resulting in a horrendous clatter that echoed up the stairs. Pool balls bouncing everywhere. I thought for sure the jig was up. Jim, already a flight ahead of us, laughed his way all the way to his bed.
- OK, as to the refectory raids. Wasn't me with the dumbwaiter, though there are few who might try that gig, and JC rises to the top of that prospective list. While I do not remember ever breaking into the kitchen through that chute, raiding the refectory was second nature to me by senior year. Someone at some point must have shown me the way, because as a sophomore I had the process down, as I remember sleeping between

the younger Kantorski and Cushing in Fr. Knipe's dorm and slipping out to go do the routine deed even back then. For the life of me, I have no idea what compelled me to think a handful of apples, jar of pickles, and a large can of roasted peanuts was worth the night's sleep, and the risk of discovery, but there you have it. However to this day, especially when I lived in Colorado and on a cool Spring or Fall late evening as I looked at the stars in the sky and listened to and felt the wind coursing through the pine trees, I'm transported back to many a wee-hour outside the Venard chapel, experiencing the exhilaration of yet another successful refectory run (to what purpose I still haven't concluded, except perhaps, because I could). I'm guessing more than one of you accompanied me on these ventures over the years, so will have your own stories, though more often than not, the exhilaration of the pending raid expressed just before lights out took on a different tune several hours into sleep later—I suspect more chose not to tag along when I woke them than followed through, a decision I would now certainly agree was the wiser of the options. There was a certain window just to the left of the main outside porch that faced the lake and a butter knife would easily slide the latch. Then a short drop to a counter top, and have at it. For a while there, we had a trash can buried in the woods in which we'd keep the goodies. And then there was always the bath house where we would go after dinner for some added snacks. Thrill of the chase, I imagine.

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- After JO mentioned the infirmary the other day, I was reminded how competitive being admitted was on the morning of a major test or incomplete project. And how I once showed one of you (again, maybe you, JO?) while lying in bed that if you “quickly” dipped your thermometer in the hot tea—seems like one's temp was taken right as a meal was served—you could get another degree or two out of the little bastard. On the other hand—and this happened more than once—if you were slow to dip and remove the stick, your reading would be just this side of boiling. And then you'd be shaking the devil out of the thermometer trying to get it back within a survivable range. The timing in completing this task and the infirmary proctor making the repeat rounds didn't always work out.
- I remember stashing apple cider under the pine trees, visiting the bottles for the ritualistic turnings, and partaking of the nectar (probably vinegar) we'd concocted...
- As to the folk music reference Bill speaks of...You'll recall that I was a folk fan (remember drooling over the cover of the Marianne Faithful album?). The class ahead of ours....they were folkies, too...I remember one Gaudeamus/hootenanny on the gym floor, probably at the beginning of the junior year, and how cool I thought the fake books they'd put together were with the songs and chords in them). And it was Curt who introduced me to Joan Baez (the serious side of folk music).

But I was also a die hard Stones fan (though none of us could be as intense as Bill was)....and it was the Stones and the Beatles that graced the walls of the Music Room (Smoke Filled Holy of Holies) and the Supremes and Mitch Rider and Little Peggy March (a nod to Ozzie) whose music filled the air. music was a big part for most of us. The Folk revival, The British invasion, Motown, Soul, we were bombarded from all sides in the new rock scene. The Surf scene and

Doo Wop would soon be a thing of the past. I recall and still listen often to the great folk artists: Peter, Paul and Mary, The Kingston Trio, The Limelighters, Bob Dylan, The New Christy Minstrels, The Seekers too name a few.

Bill was certainly in the forefront with his liking of The Rolling Stones. How dare that Mick Jagger (The bad boy of rock) live in sin and corrupt that angel, Marianne Faithful! I know I spent many an hour in the music room. The atmosphere in there wouldn't have been complete with out Jim, with his two pencils, enthusiastically drumming on one of the ashtrays. This certainly was a sign of things to come for him. Speaking of music, who could forget the day Bill led the entire school, before a school meeting, in that great Motown song, Do You Love Me. He soloed for a while and then we all chimed in.

- (Two more on the dreaded senior project). Just one more in a long line of tasks that I put off a bit longer than was wise. I don't recall the project as clearly as the panic that accompanied it to the end. Any belated focus came down to not wishing to be grossly embarrassed—damn the grade. Surrounded by flaming toast, black soapy boxes, oscillating wave duplicators and wind tunnels, where was I to hide. I do recall myself and perhaps two others (one was Bill) the (late!) night before, putting finishing touches on our projects, trying not so much to see if each would work, but if we understood what we had created and could explain it in a way that suggested we understood. I would deserve an "A" for Abysmal, as in failure. And by late at night, I mean refectory-raiding late. Almost early. As to the project, in my case, I built what looked like a theme park wooden slide, down which rolled a ball bearing. At the end of the chute was another ball bearing, slightly displaced. When the balls hit each other, they would (oh, please tell me you know how this ends).....fall. I believe it was Newton who first published the fact that if you drop something, it will seek the welcoming arms of mother earth. Then again, it might have been Boyle. Or Venturi. Or Yogi Berra. I'm not exactly clear as to the specifics. I seem to recall Fr. Milroy and others moving quickly past my display, perhaps a courtesy nod, then on towards the smoking toaster. Anyhow, when the balls hit, I had a camera set up that took a time exposure of that freefall. I believe the object was to prove that two ball bearings, one falling straight down and the other slightly askew after being knocked off its perch, would.....fall. I probably threw in a formula, and maybe to please Fr. Knipe, a French word. Like merde. I should have given that project more thought.

Physics project! Mine was so pitiful I've all but blotted it from my memory. I remember it involved shining a red light on a soap film to see the way the light showed wave movement across the film, or some such thing. Must've based it on something in the book I suppose but I can't imagine I had any more clue then than I have now about what I was doing. I remember building a pretty nifty black box while on duty with Brother Paul in the carpentry shop (I really liked that duty) to mount it in with an aperture at the end to shine the light through but that's about it.

- I remember painting large canvas backdrops for the Animal Farm set. I had finished early and had an extra canvas that I painted in a slipshod way to mimic a barn door - it looked horrible. Eddie came to check on my progress and his face turned to a look of horror when he saw what I had done and realized that he would have to live with what some

might refer to as an abstract expressionistic barn door at best. Anyway, as he tried to console himself I stepped on the canvas bringing a shriek from deep inside his lungs and slid across it to the other side where I had a much neater barn door prop turned around so he couldn't see it. He was beside himself since the production was set for that night and we had obviously run out of time and material. We had a good laugh when I turned the good prop around and he let go with that halting, hiccupping laugh of his. Lord knows that may have set him on edge prior to your use of sacred candles, Nick. I loved the book and the production - in my memory one of the best if not the best play at the Venard during my stay.

I was there when you put on that performance for Eddie. Animal Farm should of had such actors. I had just come in prior to you finishing up with the one on the floor. I was head of The Drama Club that year and you never let on to me that you had finished the good barn door. I believe I said to you, "looks a little crude, no Bill? I couldn't say much as this was all volunteer work on your part and if I could have done better; I would have. "It'll be fine", you said as Eddie walked in. Edie about died when he saw it and he made some comment. Where in you said "O.K. let me just touch this up" and you slid across the wet painted canvas. As you were apologizing you spun the other good version around. Do you remember Ed's comment once he realized he had been put on? He said, "Actually, I prefer the one on the ground". He was trying to do his best to hide that hiccup and cracked voice bit he got when he got nervous, and minutes prior was near in tears.

- Anyone remember going over to the all-girls college for plays? I believe I did a few times. I did join the French Club, as we occasionally went over there and conversed in French with their club members. Not that I could put 2 words together, but I was there for the company.
- Your mention of Fr. Wolken brings back some memories. I remember him in freshman algebra class standing in front of the class with both arms extended doing a great imitation of Lady Justice with her scales of justice. His point, very confidently given, that if only one could understand the analogy between a balancing scale and dealing with algebraic equations, then all of algebra would cease to give us even the slightest of difficulty. I remember thinking: "Great analogy, but it does not really help. One doesn't deal with negative weights, now does one? Nor does one take square roots and deal with irrational weights."
- Sophomore year I was assigned the dorm where Fr. Condon was the monitor. I had the job of turning the lights on at 6am every morning. If you recall there was a Latin phrase that was called out by the light switcher (something that began with "salve", maybe good morning, I can't remember). The awakened sleepers were supposed to reply, in Latin, but only one or two were non-comatose enough to say anything, much less correct Latin. No one was checking Latin grammar at that hour.

Fr. Condon's room doorknob was about 2 feet from the light switch. One afternoon, right after the daily manual labor meeting, Fr. Condon comes up to me, smiling in a rather strange way, and asks me if I remember turning on the lights in his room at 3am. I say no,

that would be completely impossible. He smiles and says that's good.

Then I recalled the dream I had that night in which all I remember is Fr. Condon's shocked expression as he looks up at me while lying in his bed as I say to him "Salve ...".

I had the problem of sleep walking and talking in my sleep at the Venard, though it happened rarely. A fellow seminarian (don't remember who) once told me of my yelling trig formulas out an opened window at 3am. He was worried I would fall out.

- I also recall Fr. Ratermann putting his hands on two side-by-side desks and using the desks to swing his body back and forth. He would use this technique when getting to a very interesting point of Latin grammar. On explaining what the anti-penult is and what it means for the accent to go on the anti-penult rather than the penult, this wire-thin priest would point with the index finger of both hands like he is about to shoot someone with his pair of six-shooters. (and in a later e-mail from sender): Oh, how embarrassing. Fr. Ratermann would be the first to correct me. It's *ante* penult not *anti* penult.
- I also remember the use of the pair of six-shooters as the preferred method of orchestrating the class in conjugations of any verb that was especially interesting. In the words of Fr. Rotterman, "If I wake you up in the middle of the night and ask you to conjugate the verb, Ferro, and you know it"...."Then **that** man knows his Latin"!

I remember an awful lot of laughing, and an awful lot of wonder, and it all felt very good, almost all the time....and it still does.

I remember the beauty of the place...and the spirituality of it. As I recall, it brought out the best in us.

We were bad, but we were so very good at it.