# Patrick Joseph Marrin Interview

**00:05 - Fr. Cornelius Hahn (Interviewer)**

In the time that you've been in the province, how would you summarize the spirit of the province? Just like in terms of people, if you could give people or events that summarize what you perceive in your life in the province, to sort of be a shining example in a sense of what the province has been like.

**00:34 - Patrick Joseph Marrin (Former Friar)**

Well, I think I was impressed for my next number.

I think I was impressed, as are most of the young guys, with the men we were first introduced to in the Studium.

When I came in in 1965 out of Loras College, things were pretty much the same way they had always been, at least for most of my...Most of the guys within the 20 classes before me. In other words, we had full Latin office. We had the whole business. And it was my, I like to call my class the, you know, sort of the watershed, the point where things really started to break apart. It was while we were at the Novitiate that the double studium went to Dubuque.

**01:26**

Jaime Guy left.

The prior, Angers left. And Dolan left. And then two years later, the not-my-novice master, John Jacobs, who I think was the first man to teach me that you cannot rest your vocation on another person. In other words, if you don't have it yourself, and if you can't survive the soul-searching that their departure, then maybe you ought to question whether or not your vocation is on a firmer foundation. So I was very much impressed with these guys, and the guys that I had in the studio, I would say that I still carry inside of me as significant others, people who I talk to and whose voices I still hear in memory, people like Crilly, who is like everybody in the world's dad, and Nogar.

**02:29**

I only learned, you know, really much later some of the personal problems that Nogar was having. At the time, I remember I had a conversation with him, and I'm sure that he must have done this to many students, in which he would single people out and simply

sit down with them to affirm them. Maybe it was his experience in the Order that, you know, there had been such a critical spirit in the Studium that people had been destroyed on Because everybody wanted to be perfect, you know, the intellectual formation.

But he sat down with me, we talked for an hour one evening about things that I was interested in. And then, you know, my memory was, you know, he told me that just how great I was. And, you know, to stay with it and that there were good things were going to happen. And that, you know that I, you know, I don't know.

**03:19**

I don't always believe in premonitions and stuff like that, but he was a man who spoke with a certain urgency. And Crilly in the same way. I mean, when he was good, he was the teacher who I think first instilled in me a desire to be a teacher. Because some of his classes were so powerful. His ability with the Socratic dialogue to draw things out of me and out of the dummies who were my classmates that we didn't know we knew. And to weave them together into new ventures and you know, thought.

And Doc Powell, I'm convinced. I have such a profound respect. I think Doc has been one of the greatest gifts. You speak of seminal thinkers. And I'm sure, you know, as I often hear statements, you know, from the people who live with Doc, you know, that Doc is slipping and that he's, you know, the prophet is not accepted.

**04:25**

And if you're with him all the time, But he has had a profound effect, I think, on many, many, many people. And I carry him, and I still... Some of my theology is still unfolding on, say, a remark, a chance remark that he made in the refectory, or up in the rec room. One of those silly little things that was sort of ten layers deeper than the average conversation, and which would take you years to quite understand what he's talking about. One of his remarks was...

that in the history of the church, the selection of bishops had proved two things. First of all, the freedom of the Holy Spirit to give charisms where there were no offices, and the freedom of the church to give offices where there were no charisms.

**05:15**

It was just one of those offhanded remarks, and it's helped me a great deal.

So I carry individuals like... Those, I think, one man who even today, you know, still represents, you know, the process that the province has gone through in the, the best at the provinces gone through is Jimmy Burke.

Here's a guy who well was brought up, from South America, came up for South America was ill. He really, his labors apostolic. It was broken in some respects. And came up to the states with some health problems. Graham I think concerned about the

Studium and wanting to put in a man he could trust and asked Burke to be the student master.

**06:07**

And he lasted a year and a half and again was close to a breakdown because of the changes that were going on in the Studium. And yet, I think, still in that setting, represented a perception of what the Dominican spirit was all about and an honesty about what he saw in the studium and the need for the Christ life and the Christocentric community in a time when I think many would admit the houses of studies were turning into country clubs and the spectrum of lifestyle had really gone to some real extremes, some real neurotic kinds of things were going on. And I think Burke suffered a great deal and went through a conversion experience.

**06:56**

He came around a corner. And I think those are the best men in the province today, men in their 50s and 60s who made it around that corner and who now have achieved a kind of quality perception of the church and where Christ is present in his church now. The thing that where I am, you know, my disciples will be, they've gone to where he is. You know, Christ didn't say I'm gonna come to you wherever you are, cuz I think sometimes, well, you know, I'm but a Burke's commitment to preaching he.

Yet I think his need and the promises need to be reconciled with him. And I think so many other men whose growth has taken them beyond.

**07:47**

What may seem to be the pettiness of intra-provincial, picky, picky, picky, so on, they still, they see something so much bigger going on in the church. And I think it's their continual prayer in the sense that the order is going to come to that. And perhaps some of the crises that we're experiencing now, not least of which I think is going to be financial crises, it's going to strip away a lot of this. By necessity, we're going to have to get down to the business.

**08:22 - Fr. Cornelius Hahn (Interviewer)**

Just along those lines, where then do you see the future going?

**08:28 - Speaker 2**

Well, I really think that the order, as a group of people committed to preaching, to evangelization, has never had an opportunity since its foundation, an opportunity to be what we are than right now. And I think in the near future, when the demand for evangelizing and preaching to touch people with the word, people are so hungry. I

mean, people say that everywhere in the parishes, everywhere you go. We preach on Sundays, and you look out at the people, and they're not angry. They're not arguing with you.

They're not looking for an apologetic or for you to get up and give some kind of a personal testimony of, a justification or something.

**09:23**

I think so many people were apologizing from the pulpit. They really are just hungry to hear the word, and you can almost feel, sometimes when you preach the simplest of principles from the gospel, you mention the Father's love, unconditional love, or you just develop some of the parables, and you can almost sense that there's something stirring in people. There's such a great hunger. And I think evangelization is going to find its richest implications in ecumenism. Because I think there are many people who are being prepared from all kinds of different Christian denominations who know each other instinctively when they meet. And they may be Baptists, Methodists, Catholics, but they know each other instinctively.

**10:10**

There's that... That sense of family that our Lord spoke of, you know, that is not blood, it's not denomination, it's not faction. But we know, I know you, because we speak, we're hearing the same thing and we. There's a kind of an inner, you know, a conspiracy, and when these people come into contact, you know that they know. And I think that network is going to be developed tremendous amount. And again, it's going to be a tremendous challenge to the, I think, the inside outside mentality of.

Are a challenge to our men to be able to work with other people without suspicion, without raising the, as Nogar would say, waving the family flag and all the rest of this.

**10:54 - Fr. Cornelius Hahn (Interviewer)**

If you had one minute to speak to the whole province, what would you most like to say to them?

**11:06 - Patrick Joseph Marrin (Former Friar)**

I think I would say that... This is just one thought that's been on my mind, that the greatest message that we can preach to, that we have to preach, first of all, is our love for one another. And that if we abandon each other, if the young abandon the old, or if we cannot be reconciled within the province, then we really have lost what I think is the main source of our authority to preach to others. We are experiencing in the tensions within the province the same thing that everybody else goes through in their families and in society in general. It's a rich experience.

**11:55**

And if we don't run away from it, expecting somehow that you've got to shake loose of all these things that are bugging you in order to be free enough to preach, you get out and you have nothing to say to people because you've escaped the human condition. I think it's a test of the brotherhood first. And if we can succeed there, if we can come down loving each other for all our differences and everything else, then we can speak with authority to people.