

Interviewee: Jose Manuel Goyos  
Interviewer: Miguel Gonzalez-Pando  
Date: March 1997  
FIU Number: 524

Jose Manuel Goyos = JMG

Manuel Gonzalez Pando = MGP

MGP= ... de la invasion...

JMG= Estuviste preso alla?

MGP= Si

JMG= You got a story to tell too

MGP= Si tambien

JMG= Eso es incredible...

MGP= So you got to the airport

JMG= The airport, and the next thing I really what I recollect was being on a van or some type of little bus or something, and on my way somewhere, I don't know where. Now as they say that I don't even recollect how many other kids are also, other kids, but I don't recollect exactly how many kids and then I was at Florida City. I guess that was the camp, apparently, where the younger kids went. Kids that were like nine or ten or less than ten perhaps, down, went to Florida City. I don't think there were too many kids that were below eight or seven. It is interesting because I interviewed one in my project, in my dissertation project that was six and a half or so, seven. He was probably the youngest one of the youngest. It wasn't, because they say in some of the literature I have read that it was kind of like from nine or ten to seventeen, eighteen, and the real numbers is, yeah, yeah, a little lower and a little higher. Some kids said they were seventeen or sixteen or whatever who were older, and a lot of things went on with the papers. I was at the camp there. I don't know exactly, but I know it was not, I don't think it was longer than a couple of weeks maybe.

MGP= Your feelings as you arrived at the camp, that first night

JMG= It was, I remember still going to a little house and they were bunks to sleep in. I am an only child, so I was used to my bed. I slept in a large room that we had on upstairs. On top of my dad's business. I was quite away, my parents were like in one corner and I was in another. I remember one of my worries, one of the worries from my mom was my asthma, which I had pretty badly when I was a baby. [inaudible, 02:37] I almost died a couple of times and I guess it was getting better as I got older, but I still suffered from asthma pretty badly. I remember my mom making a comment about that. I'm thinking about that. Then I came into this house and there were a couple of bedrooms and there were other kids and I remember the gentleman and the woman, very nice, there was all

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that was, that was basically. Again, It was like going off to camp. I guess what camp must be like, since I have never been to camp. That must have been with summer camp was like. Going off and you were staying there with like these house parents and that was that was basically. I don't recollect to being, feeling particularly lonely or anything, as a matter of fact, none of that. I think that had to do with the fact that all the other kids were all Cuban, we were of the same language. I was still in the same ambience, if you will. It was not like all of a sudden I was taken from one place to another. However, leaving there and get shipped to New York was a whole different. Well, leaving there and I guess it was several weeks later. I don't have any idea because I have no concept of time at that point. I remember being put on a flight. I was told about going to New York, I remember being told about if I wanted to go to New York or I was going to New York. And New York, of course, New York was New York, the capital of this world here. To me it still is and I remember being told about going to New York. And off I went to New York. I said Oh yeah, I remember. Yeah, absolutely. I'm going to New York, no problem. Ignorance is a beautiful thing. Off to New York I went. I remember getting off the plane. I remember being picked up again in a van. This time it was cold. See, now the scenario changes totally because now I left the sun, the brightness, the gayety if you will, that been with a bunch of other kids, now it's just myself, and if I remember correctly, there was another kid in the van. And it was grey. It was grey and it was cold and it was ugly. It was just, there was no, there was not too many, there were trees, but there are not too many leaves. Obviously, it was autumn or winter and it was not nice. I was cold and now all of a sudden there was no Spanish. I don't recollect anybody speaking Spanish. And we're off. The next thing I know, I was in a, I guess, in an orphanage, basically, what it was. It was an orphanage; it was in Sparkill, New York. I will always remember. It was and orphanage, Catholic orphanage, I guess. All of a sudden, there was no Spanish. All of a sudden, there was just, it was like I was taking one minute and just put in a totally different planet. That was the beginning of a really tough time. That was a real tough time. Now all the sudden, I couldn't communicate. Not only did I not understand what they were saying to me, it was cold. I didn't have a coat. I don't remember having a jacket or anything. I was still wearing the same little suit jacket that my mother gave me. That was the thing to take with me. This little suit jack, made of wool. Just in case, my mother said you never know where you end up, I guess she knew. It was all of a sudden I was frightened, all of a sudden, now this was not summer camp; or if it was summer camp, it was somewhere where the summer had forgot to get there and now was dreary. I could not communicate. I didn't understand what they were saying. All of a sudden, it was at night and, I remember, I was all of a sudden, given like a bunk in a living area. There was sort of like, I guess we were separated by ages, and basically the little ones nine and ten year olds or whatever we were. We were in this one larger room. We were all separated. Everybody had like a little bunk. I guess bunk is the best way to describe it and there was an older gentleman who I guess was in charge of the group. That's where you slept. I can

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tell you the one thing, well I can remember a lot of that period. All of a sudden, when it dawned on me, I started to cry. I usually stopped crying for the day would begin at night. It was automatic. It was like when it got dark and I got to my bed. I just started to cry, because all of a sudden it was, where was my mother, where was my father, where the hell am I? It was tough. That was the... that was a psychological metamorphosis that I entered into. Maybe I was toughen up. Childhood had ended.

MGP= When you say it was tough. Are you talking about life, or there the physical, the food, the regime, or are you referring to...

[Technician approached to fix interviewee microphone 08:21-08-29]

JMG= When you say what was difficult, when we say what was tough, the outside or the internal psychological. It was all tough. It was all tough because now, I remember that milk was not warm and it didn't have sugar in it. Milk now was cold and it was with some stuff, I get it obviously was cereal. I couldn't figure out what it was. The food. I had no idea; it was just some stuff there. They were, was all boys. There were boys that were much older. We were all separated by ages, I guess. There were boys and there were... It was difficult. It was difficult all the way around. It was difficult. It was very difficult. From every perspective you could think of front of, from the physical, from the psychological, to the emotional, to the philosophical, to whatever you weigh it was, it was tough. It was difficult. Keep in mind that here I was used to be probably a mama's boy. Now there was no Mama. There was nothing even close to mom. At some point, eventually I connected. There was a nun, who to this day, I can never tell you who she was or what, but I still have what she looks like, in my mind, that like it was yesterday, I could still describe her. She was a very young. Well everybody look tall to me, but she was tall and very beautiful, very white, white skin thin. She saved my life, I mean emotionally. She saved my life, because I remember that - she was a teacher, I guess - I had her and she was my teacher and I guess she must have seen the fact I was to look like a mass emotionally, depressed as all hell. She took a warming to me. I remember she would talk to me and I didn't know what she was saying but she would talk with me, and the fact that she would talk with me, to me, she would take me by the hand that she would walk with. I remember, I guess it would happen sometimes on the weekends, which was the only time, the rest of the time it was hardcore army,,you know, school, after school, do whatever, and go to sleep.

[Break in recording, 11:15-11:32]

JMG= Continue?

MGP= Yeah

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JMG= So she was, she was very kind. Like I said, I don't know what she did, but I think, it was just a touch, the female touch, the feminine touch and the fact that someone even spent, was giving me the time of day. I think emotionally that she kept me alive, as I look back. Otherwise, it was not fun. It was very difficult. I got beat up... to some degree, I am not gonna say I was thrown out the window, or anything like that. I got punched around a few times, I didn't know what was going on. What I still recollect was the fact that apparently things would get stolen. And the first words I learned in English where the Cuban kid, the Cuban kid did it. I remember the Cuban kid did it. The Cuban kid was obviously me and the Cuban kid had to go bend over, they had the execution style thing and you bend over and you got whacked with the good old nun style. It wasn't a nun, it was this older gentleman and you got whacked. I do not know how many times I got whacked but I got whacked a bunch of times because everything that happened, apparently I did it. After a while, I think I just became like a lamb and I just went in as soon as I heard the Cuban kid. I'd just be OK and get whacked a few times. Eventually. There was another kid there, Jorge, who's a couple years older, much taller than I, was another Cuban, apparently no other kids there. Jorge was apparently, had somehow, a family was apparently would come in. These folks would come in to see him, and since I would tag along with him, sometimes, whenever there was times, I would tag along with him. These folks and they were not... They were, they were related some distant way to his family, but they were, what I understood was they were in the process of taking him out of there. They felt sorry for me, and they were going to try to take me out along with him. Luckily, that's what happened. To this day, I don't know exactly, I can't tell you exactly, how long I spent at The Good Hotel orphanage there in Spark Hill, but. I've got to imagine because it was about a year between leaving Cuba and seeing my mom again, so I must have spent a good nine months, ten months, maybe somewhere along the line there, maybe. Again, I don't know how long I was in Florida City, but I survived. That was like, I know for a fact that, that period of time there psychologically, I went from Republican to communist or communist to Republican. It was a total metamorphosis. I know that that has affected me, probably still continues to affect me psychologically. I don't know unconscious way. I think that that's part of you survived it somehow. You cut off emotionally, I think to some degree, and that's how you become. It makes you, really, only frightened of certain things. I am frightened of most things. So it's all up, it's all uphill, downhill I should say. I think that those kinds of things leave an impression. I do believe it leaves an impression on you emotionally, physically, emotionally, psychologically. How crazy I am that's always debated. It builds something an inner kind of survival, toughness, or whatever you may call it. When that family took me out, they were... It was a couple and they had two daughters. One I think was already married, one was older, she was maybe like late teen and I went there, I think with Jorge, but he left right away. If I remember correctly, he wasn't around much and left right away. I didn't see him anymore. I was left with that family and I must have been with them for a little

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bit, had to be. I remember being put in a Catholic school somewhere in New York City. Upper West Side. That was great because the mother, the wife was, I guess was, I don't really recollect too much, the father. They had no boys. I guess they had been married for some time and never had boys and they had two girls and I was the golden child. I was the boy. I went from being in the Gulag Archipelago, to all of a sudden, now I was okay again. I was wanted. This guy was very very good to me. Really, kind of I was the son, for a while. It was, I guess, it was obvious because his daughter hated me. She was not at all very happy about having me around, I remember that. I remember there was tension because apparently, he drank and there were times, I now remember, there were fights about it. I guess his drinking and stuff. I was a kid I didn't know that stuff. I've never really been exposed to that and but all I know was that you know this girl didn't particularly like me, although I tried to make friends with her. I really I remember. Trying to be good, stay the heck out of the way and all that, but it was obvious she didn't like me and didn't want me around. The mother, could have gone either way, but he was very nice and I remember him. He would put me there in front of the television with him and he put his arm around and he was just real good. That went on for a while. Some interesting stories in school because, of course, anything that happened the Cuban kid did it. I was still in trouble, unfortunate I was always in trouble. This time I wasn't... because in Cuba I was, I was terrible. I was always get thrown out of school in Cuba for the right reason. That I was always talking and not paying attention, but now I was a good boy... and still get thrown out. Eventually my mom came.

MGP= Through this time, perhaps a year and a half or less

JMG= For about a year

MGP= Were you able to talk to your parents?

JMG= Contact with my parents was minimal. I remember, at the orphanage, I remember that I spoke to my mother one time by phone. They somehow connected. I think the nun and all that, somehow connected me. I think it was, there was an issue of I think that they wonder whether I was going crazy. I think my sadness and stuff was obvious and I wasn't doing anything odd that, I mean, I wasn't doing crazy things, but it must, I must have looked like not too good. I remember talking with my mom, somehow through me pushing and this nun and all that, I remember talking with my mom. Who told me about that she was preparing to come, that she was on her way and I don't know whether it was true or not, but that helped. That was kind of a shot in the arm. That was it. I sent letters. I would write now and then to my mom who told me later that when she would get my letters, she was destroyed, because apparently obviously in my letters I was not having a good time. Summer camp was not fun. So, being a mama's boy, my mom had gone through so much with me with the asthma and all of that. Apparently, I must have been writing some nasty letters because she said, I remember telling me, that when she would

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get a letter of mine she would just be destroyed, emotionally. But I remember talking with her once, and that was it. Letters.

MGP= You ever feel, at that time, did you ever feel anger towards her? Did you feel abandoned?

JMG= Oh, I yeah. I yeah. How did I feel? I mean, how did I... did I feel abandoned? Did I feel angry? I think I was, I was extremely sad. I was angry. I felt deceived. I felt abandoned. I felt... totally confused because you gotta keep in mind, I didn't know what's going on around me. I just followed, wherever the group went, I went, whatever they ate, I ate, whatever. I was like just following along so I felt all those things, and that was probably on a good day. On a bad day, I don't even want to say in front of the camera what I probably felt. Because you... I guess that's where maybe having all the good love and all that other good stuff that I had as a child. Maybe just kind of survive, you somehow survive and you somehow figure well it must be. I don't think I gave it too much thought, it was just surviving the day. Basically it was just surviving the day.

MGP= Tell me what you remember of the events leading to seeing your mother again. You mentioned your mother, your mother, your mother; your father?

JMG= Yeah. When the events leading to see my mom again and as you say, my father. My father was, was always very much secondary, because basically all the child rearing, I think, in general was probably done by my mom. I always remember my dad working and see my contact with my dad, which was interesting, was I always remember that my dad and I after a certain age. I was a pretty good swimmer and stuff, what would happen was that my dad on Sundays he and I will go to the beach. That was our day. We would wake up early. This was I guess for some time. I'd go to the beach. I remember it being cold. I remember my dad being this big guy. We will go to the beach real early on Sundays. Just he and I, that was father and son time. That was really all that I remember in terms of spending time with him, because he owned a little business and he was mostly devoted to that.

[Non-related comment: Comment on the air conditioning]

JMG= That was it. I didn't spend a whole lot of time. The person that I actually, the male figure that I spent a lot of time with was my uncle, who was his brother. They both came from ... from Spain. You see how, I am an immigrant; I am the son of an immigrant. He migrated from Spain to Cuba and then and I migrated from Cuba to here, so if we've kept it going, hopefully my children won't have to. My uncle was a real... I loved my uncle. My uncle was like my father and a Big Brother. He was a taxi cab driver and these were the, I guess, they were not the high-class folks of town from what I was told, and my uncle, but my uncle was just obsessed with me. I was like a son. He was wonderful. He would take me everywhere, I guess when I wasn't in school I was with my uncle. He was like, it was just I was just his baby boy. He was just, he was terrific. He was dearly

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missed him and you know, just missing all that because in the little town of Caibarien, which was a small place. I mean everybody knew you, so it was, it was like in the movies, like a small town. When I look at movies now if they make a little movie with kids in a little town, it was wonderful. It was like, it was La La Land. The ironic part is that my dad, I never got to see my uncle again, ever. And that always is, there is one of the things that I that I resent more than anything, because there's a part of me that I know I'll see Cuba again and certain things, but I never got to see my uncle again, ever. As a matter of fact, he died not too long ago. When I was debating about going, because I didn't really want to, in any way, support Castro's situation there. I debated about going back to see my uncle. The ironic part is that he was there, he wound up committing suicide, because he was left all alone. That I'll always have inside of me, that I feel like... For me, in essence leaving there and come in here and all that, but I feel like he took this man's life. He took his world and this man was very important to me. So they owe me, at least for him. Other than that, I wasn't, I don't in a sense regret a whole lot and stuff. You learn to survive and continue.

MGP= Getting together with your mother again, how was it?

JMG= The events leading to it. I don't recollect all that much. All I know is that one day she... I don't even recollect even going to pick her up or anything. I just recollect all of a sudden that she was there. I think it happened because I got home from school one day and she was already there kind of thing.

MGP= Because of the needs to edit, if say she... I do not know who she is...

JMG= What I remember is that getting home one day from school and that my mom was there at the house with his family and. My mom all of the sudden appeared. I don't recollect whether you know I had any forewarning or she's coming, not coming. In all honesty, what's interesting is that I guess that perhaps that orphanage was so bad, that being at this house I already felt okay. By the time this family took me and I was with them, although there was obvious tension there, and there was a sense of some people want me at some people don't want me; or, maybe I should say one person likes me and the rest, they are basically tolerating me. I already felt ten times I was already fine, because I was already... I already felt it since I was back in an apartment. This was in New York City and I was in an apartment and I felt that I was, in some ways, part of a family and I already felt safe and I felt okay. I wasn't emotionally... hurting. That's the best way I could describe it. Then all of a sudden, my mom is there. By this time, I don't recollect being all psychotic and my mom is here and being all happy and thrilled, or whatever, I'm sure I was happy. I remembered that we lived there in New York and their place for a little bit, but I guess it was time to get out of there. We went to some other little apartment near. That was brief. Then we moved over to the other mecca where all the Cubans up North, which was Union City, New Jersey, right across from the Hudson. First little city as you come out of

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New York, sort of like Brooklyn as you leave Manhattan or the Bronx. All of a sudden, we are going over to some friends of hers, or ours, from Caibarien, had an apartment and we were given like a small spot, little room, half a room, where we could sleep there. There was like, I guess, it was a some type of thing on the floor, where to sleep. We moved to Union City to their place. As a matter fact, their son, these folks' – he's here in Miami, he is a business person here- but we were there. I still didn't have a coat or anything. I guess the coat that they gave me, they took back over there at the orphanage and here I was again with my little jacket, my little wool suit jacket that my mom...

That was an interesting time. That was sort of like two people kind of lost. I think she was as lost as I was. I remember we went to... one day we went to - this always sticks in my mind- we went to the to the Catholic Church. Apparently, we were looking to get some clothing. We didn't have any cloth, we didn't have anything. All I can remember was the fact that we were, they would give us anything they had. They actually took us to some kind of basement, or somewhere, there was some clothing. I think there were things there for, I guess, families of the diocese or whatever of the church. Somehow, I guess, my mom explained to me later was that they asked us for proof that we were Catholic. I don't know how you prove you are Catholic, unless there's some kind of... you're branded or something. Somehow that always sticks, as something that really bothered me and obviously bothered her. Then later or whatever it was, we ended up at another church, not a Catholic. I don't know if they were Protestants or whatever they was, but I remember they didn't ask any questions they just gave us stuff. They gave us some clothing. That always sticks in my mind. We won't get into too much of that, but that always sticks in my mind with my good friends that are Catholics. So it was ironic, that it was the Catholic Church that really supported me and they kept a lot of us alive, at that time, they failed me as I see it, but I forgive them. I am sure they've forgiven me for all my sins. That was it, my mom and I started life in lovely Union City, New Jersey. Nineteen, I guess, it must be probably by then [19]63, or early [19]64. I came in February [19]62, so that had to be probably towards the end of [19]63 year or somewhere along there. That was it, my mom and I.

MGP= How was the relationship with your mother changed... [telephone rings]... during this time?

JMG= Relationship, how did my relation with my mom, did it change or if it changed? I would imagine. I don't recollect a whole lot about the initial part. I think after she was here a little bit, I think, things just kind of right away. I think she must have... My mom was very special, in a sense that she was the... her parents died when she was very young. I mean, she was literally, parentless, by the age of like nine or ten so. My mom literally lived with some family and she was kind of like across between the servant and living there. She had a pretty tough life, she was a very special woman. She was a love



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machine. She was just very warm and I was her baby boy. I am sure she seduced me again just by loving me, she right away. Obviously, I don't recollect being angry with her. What really was interesting is that I recollect some anger with her later on, when I was older. Actually, the one that I recollect being angry with, was my father, but that's a whole other... he came in... We were separated. I didn't see him for about sixteen, seventeen years or so. We were separated. I know that I held a bunch of anger towards him and, of course, I mean it's a longer period of time. I remember taking a tantrum on him when I was an adult. I was remember catching myself. I was already had a Masters in Psych and I was already working. I think, it was at that point [coughing] working on a Masters in Social Work at that point in NYU. I remember taking, got angry with him about something and yelling and ready to beat up. I was ready to beat this guy up until the little voice inside of me says what are you doing? You're yelling at this humongous man that now I had to look down, and older and stuff. It was real sad. Very poignant, kinda time. Obviously, I realized then that I held all this anger and resentment about, I guess, feeling abandoned. And all those, there's a lot of that kind of stuff that, I am sure, surfaced at different intervals and over different issues. Who knows whether some things may have been adolescent rebellion stuff, or it may have been just anger at being kind of abandoned, if you will. With my mom, she was, like I said, she was very special and she more than made up and we went off. I think also was the sense that, I think, that whole thing with the church and not getting something and we had to wait and we did have, and again, it was surviving. We didn't have any money to eat basically. I think that brought, that pretty much brought home to me. The fact that it's a hey be thankful. It's you and her and good luck, because you don't know what's gonna happen and we don't know when we're going to eat and how, so be thankful for that you have her, and at least now, you can start together and go on. That's what in essence brought to me, forget about little stuff.

MGP= Did you get at some point on your life an opportunity to talk to her about why did they do it, how did she feel, how did you feel as a reality? [JMG coughing]; have you processed that?

JMG= To what degree I, in my mind, processed all the separation stuff and all that. Yeah, you gotta remember that my mom and I spent a bunch of time by ourselves, and I remember we talked about different things and we talked about it. It is interesting because if you ask me to specify what she said and how she explained it all, I really don't recollect. I think that the gist of it is that somehow she explained to me. She obviously made explanation that made sense, on some level, to me about the separation and I knew. I mean, I knew how much she valued me. I always do internally that I was very much valued as a child. So I somehow internally knew. She didn't have to go through a whole song and dance about please forgive me kind of thing. I don't recollect us going through that. I just recollect that we just kind of went on, we just picked up [snapping finders]. I think as we

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went along and once we got past survival, or at least we got used to surviving, we had talks and we had all that, but there was no time to get too psychological. It was hustling. I remember as a kid I used to get up at four o'clock, four thirty in the morning. I must've been ten, ten and a half and I was already delivering the newspaper, the early newspaper, the early in the morning newspaper to make a few bucks. I run home, eat something and then go to school. I remember I'd be hustling at lunchtime, getting sandwiches and lunches for the teachers, which got me a dime and a quarter. Which there was a tip and then I remember after school I was working at the luncheon at where I got the sandwiches, washing dishes and helping out there. So I was hustling for money all the time. I still am [Laughing]. That was hustle time. I knew, I mean, here I was a kid that had no idea. I had it all in essence, even though we were not rich by any sense, but I knew, by just our situation, by the fact that I only had probably a couple pair of pants, and one coat and could couple of shirts, that we have to survive. It was working. My mom was doing whatever she could. As a matter fact, one of the many jobs she held for many years was a bookie; was booking numbers, illegal numbers, and she was great because nobody suspected of such a sweet old lady with a nice little kid. She used to book numbers. She had half of the police force over their booking numbers through her, because they suspected of her. We were legend in Union City there for a while. So there was no time, I mean, life picked up and you had to go.

MGP= Jose, all of this, you think it has influenced you relationship with your kids?

JMG= Yeah. How all that impacts on my own situation, my wife, my children and all that. I think there is... I am not too smart, obviously, because I never figured half of these things out. I don't spend a whole lot of time analyzing a lot of stuff. It impacts in the sense that I didn't get married until I was older. So there was a sense of me that there was like, I think marriage at all that meant responsibilities. Again, because I think I felt that, to some degree, I had to care for my mom too, I think we both. I felt like I was already... I had an older sibling that I had to care for because she didn't know any English as I picked up English. I had to drag her along through a lot of things. So, I always felt that since I cared, I was responsible for her. I wasn't, no particular rush to get involve in marriages and all that. By the time I did, at least for me, personally, I think I have always... There is a part of me that turns off, to some degree, emotionally, I know, emotionally. It just kind of goes on cruise control and so to what degree it affects. I know it affects because when I get off cruise control, and I feel and I think, I see my children. These are four kids here; one is a stepson, who is my child basically, who are raised, so there is four of them. If I think too much about the responsibility, I'd be [Whistling] suicidal in thirty seconds. So I don't even think about that stuff and all that. I just... I am fortunate that my wife is very smart and very loving. She has kept me together probably. I am strong. I mean, I am as dumb as I am, and as whatever I am. I am a hustler and I'll work however many hours there are in a day and I, and I'll work even some more hours. I will add more hours in a

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today. I know I'll do whatever it takes just so we don't have to go on welfare, which my mom and I did for several years. I don't know what that flag so. I have learned to enjoy the moments. I live as the saying goes carpe diem. I lived the moment. I live the day and there were sometimes, every now and then, once a month maybe, for about 5 minutes, I think about next year [Telephone ringing], but I don't... I live the day. I've learned to live the day. I've learned to enjoy my children. Each day is best as I can. By the time I get home, and since I work so hard during the week and I am fortunate that I am always busy, whatever time I have, weekends, I soak that up. I just eat that up. [Telephone keeps ringing]

[Break in recording to discuss alarm sound, 42:08-43:22 ]

MGP= The sixty thousand, sixty four thousand dollar question

JMG= I heard there is such a thing. I am waiting for the sixty four thousand

MGP= If you were faced with a similar situation, you must have thought about that. How would you feel having to...

JMG= If I was, yeah. You talk about, that's one of the questions that I asked in my research. If I was faced with the same dilemma as my parents. What it has taught me and I've talked with Monsignor Walsh who had spearheaded all this stuff. He and I have talked about it. One of the things that I am going to do is to try to contact parents and do some talking with parents and research that angle. Could I do with my parents did? Now that I'm a parent, I realize what an incredible decision that had to be for them. Circumstances being that, I'm sure, there were many people who thought that it was very much a temporary thing, because I think many kids that I've interviewed and stuff for this, have told me that they were told we'll meet in a couple of weeks or months whatever. So I think that many parents, at least, had the delusion that it was going to be a quickie. You know this was not going to last long, this was going to be quick. Could I do the same thing? I don't know. I really don't know. I do some little bit of traveling now, consulting work, and I have found that after... In the beginning, when I started to do it, because I do it with a baseball, Major League Baseball, with baseball club, and when I first did it, I was all excited about all this baseball crap. Now after about a grand total of two days, I want to go home. I mean, I miss my children. So could I make the same? I don't even know. I don't know if I have enough courage to be quite honest with you, and if I felt that there was any way possible, I don't think I would ever separate. I mean, we would probably all die together.

MGP= Vamos ahora a cambiarnos el sombrero. You did your dissertation. It's a study about the Pedro Pan children; What basically were you trying to address with your dissertation?

JMG= My dissertation was basically a first step in doing research and becoming a little bit of a researcher which I will be doing, hopefully when I grow up, doing some more of it. I

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wanted to do something on the Pedro Pan kids, which is what we were called. There was not much done at all. There has not been much done, which is incredible. Actually, the one who pushed me to go in that direction was Doctor Cherry, Andy Cherry, who is a professor at Barry University, who has become my mentor, if you will. He is the one that kinda said won't you do it on this. This is an incredible situation here. The scary part was that there was not much in the literature about, really, done with this population, but nevertheless, that's how I ended up. What did I wanna do? I just wanted to begin to get like a baseline of data on us, on our group. A lot of things are said, you know, a lot of things have thought of, a lot of things that maybe this, maybe that. How did this. How did that. Until you start to really research, as you well know, until we start to really look at it systematically, you could only hypothesize or conjecture this and that, but you can... you have to go to the sources and begin to really do the job of asking. Figuring out this and that. So I decided to, with a framework of resiliency - theory or model- because, I think, that probably applies to us as much as any other model or theory; with that, as a framework, to study us a little bit. I sent out some questionnaire and a couple of self-report measurements and interviews. What I did was what they call a quantitative and qualitative, like bind them both, which I thought was much more solid. So I did the qualitative, being interviews, to get the picture and it is in the dissertation, what was talked about. Obviously not everything, but, much like what we are doing now. To interview all of us adults who were children then, to get a picture of what was your story like. I interview five little boys and five little girls who are now not so little. I got everybody's story, some very... I mean, mine is mild compared to some other things others have been through, good and bad. Difficult. But that's the beginning.

MGP= What were some of the, not only for those ten interviews, but from the other questionnaires, if you had an opportunity to evaluate it; What are some of the things, the most traumatic experiences that many of the Pedro Pan children share?

JMG= In terms of what was the most traumatic or most difficult, or perhaps good. I like to think of some of it is good stuff too. It ranges from some people saying that, basically, their experiences is, basically, positive. There were some, I interviewed a young man that ended up in... one ended up in Washington State on out west, not Washington DC, but Washington State. Another young man ended up, where he ended up, New England, somewhere I have to look and he, you know, one of them was basically, was literally, adopted almost, not from a physical but from an emotional standpoint. To this day, he still lives there by... His father passed away, his mom is now in Spain, and he never really reunited per say all that long with her. He stayed right there where he was picked up and grew up there. Other stories that just listening to them and just, many people wrote things to me, just heartbreaking. One of the ones that I interviewed that I have on tape is probably, had to be, if he wasn't the youngest guy, he had to be next to youngest, he was only like six and a half, he wasn't even seven years old when he left and his father had

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died. Father had some type of, I think, died... he said he figured out later was from stress, or heart attack or stress induced there, but his father dies, then he leaves so his mom tells him I'll see you in a couple of weeks, and seven and a half, eight years later, is when he sees his mom again. He doesn't even know her, he doesn't recognize her. How do you explain that? I mean, mine was sweet compared to... This young man, just went through some very incredible experiences. Talk about resiliency. This guy is resilient. Should have his picture next to a model. I've spoken to two girls, women now, girls at that time who went through real difficult time, from abused to non-abused to almost abused, to weird stuff going on. Difficult because you know for many kids, particularly the ones that were not that old and for most kids, we didn't know English. I mean, we were literally just kind of taken from here... because if you take us. You take some kids and then ship them over to a culture that is somewhat similar, I would think that, to some degree, the shock or the change is not as difficult. However when you take us from our culture. Little Island, Caribbean, nice little island, as I call, a little paradise, to here and to some kids ending up to not such a good places, unfortunately. You name it, we've got it. We got every story possible, including good, there's a lot of good too.

MGP= Were the main conclusions that you...

JMG= That were all... our main conclusions that we are all crazy. Part of what I was looking at, in my work, was to see what factors assisted us in surviving. What factors; Was it the fact that you were placed with a brother or sister and there was a sense of continuity for you... Was there that you know where you were. They were kind and it was okay. I was looking at factors that helped us, not only, I was not looking only for the traumatic, but I was looking at the factors that allowed us to survive; the Kind of keep going and to somehow be resilient and just continue. There are many people reported a priest or nun, like I talked about, or a particular foster parent in a sense, or stepparent, or whatever you want to call, or people that they lived with that were kind, a sibling or a peer. Many things. Sometimes study and just reading and just focusing in on studying, studying because many of us were told you gotta study, you gotta make us proud, you gotta you gotta do well, you can't, kind of, don't screw up, represent us well. I think that you could certainly get very, for sake of survival, you can very much get [making sound and signaling with hands something being sucked up] I think psychologically get hooked on to something, which helps you kinda get through, from sports to people to studying, to whatever it took, to a cousin or someone that was kind. I think that many people that report -and you know- what's interesting is most people although reporting some very difficult moments in difficult times, there are many people who still report. I think many people have not recovered ever. I think that that was such a traumatic situation for them that somehow they didn't get the brakes that other people got and they've never really. There is a lot... one of the things I want to find more and more is us and see really, because often times you'll hear about some of us who were fortunate, they did well

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business and you know has this money or has that or whatever, but I gotta believe. That they were supposedly around fourteen thousand, which by the way is probably the largest influx or migration of unaccompanied children in the history of the world, not only the Western part, but probably the world. There's gotta be a lot of pretty scarred up people to that or not make it, if you will, whatever make it it is. So our story is just being told, I think our story is just being touched now. I think there's a lot you can do I mean, just you take some of the tapes I made and you'll see, as the people you interview, we can make a couple of movies we can come up with, a couple of good movie scripts for all this stuff, because there is...

MGP= We talked the other day with Monsignor Walsh if he had leave the priesthood and married a Pedro Pan girl [JMG laugh]

JMG= Yes. Yeah. It is amazing. It's amazing that as large of a migration or as we were. You know, because keeping in mind that we were, Monsignor Walsh expected a hundred two hundred people, kids for maybe a couple of months or whatever, and all of a sudden we just kept coming. Kept coming, and kept coming to the tool of over thirteen, fourteen thousand kids they say. That's a lot of kids. You talk about an incredible effort on the part of him, the Catholic Church, and everybody else, because a lot of other churches and everybody helped out, from what I understand, to [inaudible 57:53]. As he was saying, I've interviewed him and we are in the process of a massive interview, he and I, for the archives at Barry University. He basically told me that there is no way that, he doesn't think, this could be done now, given the laws and the things about transporting children from one state to another, he was doing all kinds of things. He said that he is not even gonna talk about, just to get kids to places to have a place because it was so many kids.

MGP= Anything else that you feel is relevant to that we haven't touched?

JMG= Anything else that's relevant. I am not sure. I think as soon as you leave, and as soon as you stop, I'll probably think about thirty five thousand other things... It would just be. I really would love to see if you get a chance, and I'm going to certainly try, to who would be interesting to get the perspective, I think, of a parent or a couple of parents about their side of the story. You will certainly get it when you interview some a few of us. I think you'll see some common themes, abandonment, anger, loss, confusion, sadness, depression, anxiety. All that good stuff that many people may still do and may still suffer. I think you are talking about, basically, the plight of an immigrant. I mean the plight of an immigrant is always, unless you have something really that you're going to that's all set up for you, like going off to vacation to a hotel. The plight of any immigrant, which is makes me always very sensitive to not just Cuban immigrant to any of us, the plight of an immigrant is like the movie *The Godfather*. It can be very scary. I think there's a tendency to do whatever it takes to survive. Particularly depending where you go to whatever country you go to, and whatever sort of philosophy or value is embraced by that

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country. This is very much a great country, but a very tough country that I think pretty much embraces that Darwinian kind of the strong has to you know, you gotta get stronger or else you get eaten up. So you do or you fake it anyway.

[End of interview]

Transcribed by: Ximena Valdivia, July 14, 2020