

# Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Fr. Joel Rippinger

Part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library  
*Education is Key-Alternatives Education* Oral History project

Interview # EA-A-L-2018-009

Father Joel Rippinger, a teacher, coach and administrator at the Marmion Academy in Aurora, Illinois, was interviewed on the date listed below as part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library's *Education is Key-Alternatives in Education* Oral History project.

Interview dates & location:

Date: Feb 16, 2018    Location: Marmion Academy High School, Aurora IL

Interview Format: Digital audio

Interviewer: Philip Pogue, ALPL volunteer

Transcription by: \_\_\_\_\_

Edited by: \_\_\_\_\_

Interview being  
processed

Total Pages: \_\_\_\_\_    Total Time: 1:40 / 1.67 hrs.

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The interview is archived at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in Springfield, Illinois.

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## Abstract

Fr. Joel Rippinger, *Alternatives in Education*, EA-A-L-2018-009

**Biographical Information Overview of Interview:** Father Joel Rippinger was born in Aurora, Illinois September 1948. Living in Aurora, he often heard the new bells from the Marmion Abbey. This led to his work at the Abbey during the Christmas Tree season and in the summers. Joel attended St. Meinrad Minor Abbey in Indiana and graduated from high school in 1966. He entered Marmion Abbey in 1968 and completed his novitiate in 1969. He attended St. Procopius College and earned a degree in history in 1970 and earned a MA in history from Notre Dame University in 1971. Father Joel was ordained as a priest (Benedictine Order) in 1974. In 1976, he studied in Rome, receiving S.T.L. (Licentiate of Sacred Theology). Father Joel then joined Marmion Academy where he has served as student/faculty chaplain and teaches AP History and Theology. He also coaches the tennis team, is department chair of theology, and serves as a resident hall prefect. Father Joel has had numerous religious articles published in scholarly journals. He has also served on missions to Guatemala.

This interview reviews the history of Marmion (Military) Academy dating back to its origins by the Benedictine Order in 1933. Marmion has been an all-boys school which first originated in downtown Aurora. At one time, Marmion had two campuses, serving day and residential students. Eventually the two were combined and Marmion moved to a 325 acres campus which had originated from two farms. This interview looks at the unique features of Marmion: all boys, a large ROTC program, a LEAD program, a college prep school, a parochial school, and a strong athletic/activities component. Father Joel explores the relationship of the school with its alumni, the Board of Trustees, parents, the St. Meinrad Abbey, the Marmion Abbey, the Diocese of Rockford, and its sister schools, first Madonna and now Rosary. He discussed the school's curriculum along with school funding, tuition costs, scholarships, student community service, faculty recruitment, and accreditation. Advantages of such a school as well as the future challenges were examined.

**Subject Headings/Key Words:** Marmion Academy of Aurora, Illinois; all boys schools; parochial education; St. Meinrad Abbey; Marmion Abbey; Marmion Academy and Benedictine Order; Madonna High School for Girls; Rosary High School, Aurora, IL; high school ROTC; LEAD (Lead, Education and Development); Marmion Academy athletic programs;

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