

Two Guys Milwaukee (and Chicago)



When Julie Tolan, Vice President for University Advancement, sat down with Rev. Robert A. Wild, S.J., the President of the University, and Law School Dean Joseph D. Kearney to elicit their comments on matters of mutual interest, she had lots with which to work. There are many points of convergence in their respective life stories. Both Father Wild and Dean Kearney grew up in Chicago, on the South Side, and graduated from St. Ignatius High School. Each was drawn to study in the classics. Both had stints in Boston, Father Wild earning his doctorate at Harvard and later serving as President of Weston School of Theology, and Dean Kearney studying for his law degree at Harvard. And of course, most centrally, both have rich Marquette experiences and exciting strategies for taking the University and the Law School to new heights of excellence in teaching, research, and service. The following are some of their comments.

* *Two Guys from Milwaukee*, a Warner Brothers movie released in 1946, cast Jack Carson as a wisecracking cabdriver and Dennis Morgan as a likable Balkan prince. Anxious to learn the “American way,” Morgan joins Carson for a night on the town. Humphrey Bogart and Lauren Bacall appear in a closing-scene cameo. The movie made its premiere in Milwaukee, which was the childhood home of both Morgan and Carson.

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CHICAGO

FATHER WILD: Growing up, I often took the Rock Island line downtown. My father was in real estate and building management, and the firm managed a variety of downtown buildings. He probably drove a number of people nuts, but he would see all these things that needed attention and get them addressed. 310 South Michigan was one of his buildings, the one with the beehive on the top, and I can remember as a kid trekking through the sub-basements with my father, looking at this enormous equipment that they had for compressed air for heating and cooling. I think that it is probably fair to say that some of my interest in buildings derives from those experiences.

FATHER WILD: When I grew up there, I was not that appreciative of Chicago. I was happy, when the opportunity came, to go to other parts of the country. The interesting thing is that when you come back after all that time away, as

I did in 1984, and live in the city again, in my case Rogers Park, you find you have a real appreciation for Chicago. I could see the energy, the pulsing energy. As one of my Jesuit friends said, watching people emerge from the subways downtown, you know these folks are *serious* about making money. And there is a good cultural life. There's just a lot of civic energy. It really is, I think, this tremendous mix of people. You can go down to Devon Avenue, and all kinds of different nationalities have their stores and restaurants, particularly now various South Asian communities, but the Jewish community still is well represented, and Croatians and Greeks. It's Chicago.

DEAN KEARNEY: You used the one word that I definitely would have also used, which is to say *energy*. New York would be another example, I suppose, where the energy is almost palpable. You can almost feel it when you are downtown. And it is true in Chicago even more than it was

when I was growing up. I remember in the mid-1970s Chicago's downtown really seemed to be dying. You would go there, and there would be the rundown movie theaters—the Woods, the State and Lake, and other places such as that. What has happened over the past 30 years in terms of turning around the decline of the downtown has been extraordinary and probably not at all inevitable. And the building boom in that time has expanded on some of the best traditions in Chicago in terms of creating new and interesting architecture. While not every one of the buildings is a success, many of them are. For example, Millennium Park is very interesting and unquestionably a tourist draw, probably not least because it is architecturally interesting. As for its merits, I go back and forth on them.

FATHER WILD: I really like Millennium Park myself. I do think that some aspects of it are an acquired taste. Although I can't say that every single aspect of it succeeds, it is a sign of this large amount of energy and belief in the city and its future. Ed Brennan, our former board chair who works in Chicago, remarked that in his lifetime he really believes Chicago will have gone from being a good city to a great world city. I think there's a lot of truth to that. To be sure, I am a Milwaukeean now, and I know that you feel very much that way yourself—there seems to be no shortage of Chicagoans who apparently prefer life in Milwaukee. And, continuing on the architectural point, I have been encouraged by some of the recent architecture in Milwaukee. The Quadracci Pavilion, or the Calatrava, at the Milwaukee Art Museum particularly stands out, and it is a good reminder of the role buildings can play in shaping our view of a region's possibilities.

TEACHING AND RESEARCH

FATHER WILD: It is critical for Marquette to get excellent talent in the classroom. That is where the rubber meets the road. Faculty really drive the University. I mean that's just the way it is. It comes from the nature of our work.

DEAN KEARNEY: When I think back on high school at St. Ignatius, for me the remarkable fact, probably more than any other, is how many memorable teachers there were. My

parents were college teachers at local schools in Chicago. My mother taught at National College of Education, which is now National-Louis University, at the downtown Chicago campus. My father taught at Chicago State University, which he had attended when it was Chicago Teachers College. They both were products of local schools, and both got their advanced degrees from Loyola. Education was sort of the family business, and their view always was that if you had one or two teachers in your lifetime who made a real impression on you, you probably had done better than the vast run of the populace. Looking back, I had at least three or four teachers at Ignatius alone who were extraordinary. Some of them were Latin and Greek teachers.

FATHER WILD: The move by a faculty member into administration has its costs. In your scholarly work, the risk is that after a while you're not a player any more, as I put it. You don't have the time to research and publish, and so going to the conferences doesn't carry the same excitement. A good faculty member eats, drinks, and sleeps the discipline. You are learning from your students as well as imparting knowledge. You are immersed at some cutting-edge point in your discipline, writing and researching. You are engaged with your colleagues. That's such an important part of the life of a good faculty member, and I think that it gives energy. And teaching—I don't care at what level—ought to give energy. There are constant sources of feedback—colleagues, students, your own work, and the reactions you get from people reading the stuff.

DEAN KEARNEY: I feel fortunate as dean of the Law School that I am able to maintain a connection with the students in the classroom. That is certainly the tradition at Marquette Law School, and it is probably more common at law schools than in other parts of universities. The real challenge, though, is trying to stay current in the scholarly work. I have done a little bit of scholarship as dean, but it gets harder all the time. It really is the case that you have to take a lot of joy in your colleagues' accomplishments as scholars, and you have to regard any time you can spend following a research thread as an unexpected gift. I haven't ceded the field altogether, I hope, but it is a struggle to stay in it.

THE PRIEST AND THE LAWYER

FATHER WILD: A homily is a bit like teaching in that you're trying to move people affectively but also intellectually.

FATHER WILD: We really do spend a lot of time preparing to be a Jesuit, and the level of intensity is fairly high. The point tends not to be recalled, but we were not founded to be educators. Ignatius originally thought it would tie people down too much, and he wanted a more fluid organization that would respond to needs within the church as they were emerging. He didn't intend to establish an elite group, but they were all university-trained at the best university in Europe. A master's degree meant what it said. They were qualified as masters, teachers, and at the university level. Ignatius was not the most brilliant in the group, but he had brilliant organizational capacity and spiritual insight. There were several people more brilliant than he, and they were a real mixed group, the ten of them, the founders. But it all circled around Ignatius.

FATHER WILD: I also did pastoral work when I was at Harvard. I got fired out of one parish. The pastor—remember, this is 1970, just after Vatican II—didn't like part of my homily. But what really bothered him is that I went to the back of the church and greeted people after Mass. He said that's a no-no. He told me that if I agreed not to do that any more, then I could stay. By that time I had already seen the handwriting on the wall, and I had found another parish with which I was happy. So then I went to this parish in Malden—"Sacred Hahts" ("Hearts" to non-Bostonians). The pastor there had been trained at Boston College and probably thought that all Jesuits were nuts. The only time he ever gave me static was when I tried to have altar girls, and he said "no." He said I would lose all the altar boys. They would go on strike if I continued. So I said all right, no altar girls.

DEAN KEARNEY: In my family, four of the five of us siblings are lawyers, but four of the five of us, differently counted, are teachers. I am not quite sure what I would have done had I not been a lawyer or a teacher.

FATHER WILD: Well, I, of course, would laugh and say I was genetically programmed to be a Jesuit. I had an uncle, Ed Colnon, who was a Jesuit, and I have a cousin, a first cousin, who is a Jesuit at Loyola in Chicago. But the fact of the matter is that it was really the Jesuits teaching at Ignatius, especially the young scholastics, who sort of primed the pump. I must admit it was second semester of my senior year before I went through the application process. The penny didn't really drop until somewhere in the senior year.

FATHER WILD: I have thought many times what I would have done if I hadn't become a Jesuit, if I had gone to Holy Cross—as I was signed up to do. I think I'd have been a lawyer, or at least that thought had crossed my brain. But to say that isn't to say that I could imagine how it would have turned out, because lawyers do so many different things. Something I've come to realize is the diversity of possibilities we discover as we move through our lives.

DEAN KEARNEY: I was invited to join the priesthood only once—and then only facetiously by one of the priests waiting in the sacristy with me shortly before my wedding was about to start. Needless to say, I thought that it would be poor form to accept the invitation. I was already a lawyer at that point and indeed about to seek a full-time law teaching job after a number of years of clerking and practicing. I sometimes say that law teaching was something in which I had been interested even before it was rational for me to be—by which I mean, before I had gone to law school. I suppose that it was a combination of my own attraction to law and the family influence with respect to teaching.

BOSTON

FATHER WILD: There is a kind of arrogant side to Harvard that I didn't like, but the other side of it is, the whole world is there, and it's just an extraordinary environment. That's what juiced me up originally that first summer in Cambridge. After that I thought that, if Harvard takes me, that was the place to go, in the United States certainly or even worldwide, for New Testament studies.

DEAN KEARNEY: The academic and intellectual resources there are pretty remarkable. When I was a third-year law student, I wrote a paper on recusal of judges in medieval canon law. I would sit there in the Treasure Room at Harvard Law School, poring over medieval Latin texts. It was my last gasp at pretending to be a classicist, I suppose, although my students might think I'm still trying, with some of my Latin phrases or allusions. I tell them that I use no phrases and make no allusions that an educated person historically would have been unable to appreciate. I co-teach my Advanced Civil Procedure class with a lawyer from downtown Milwaukee. He is perfectly capable of doing the Latin as well, and he told our students recently that the motto of the class should be *Forsan et haec olim meminisse iuvabit*. I don't recall his translating it for them. Why would we?

FATHER WILD: There is a culture at Harvard, a world of educated men and women. And the libraries are astounding. I was in every one of them including the law library. My dissertation dealt with odd material and strange languages that took me all over the institution. I had one article in Serbo-Croatian that stopped me cold. Fortunately, the lady who lived across the way was the curator for Slavic-language materials at Widener Library and was a good friend of ours. She'd come to Mass at our house all the time, and she said, "Well, let's just go through it." It just is extraordinary. There's no place quite like it. I mean, I was looking for lots of weird stuff, and it was there.

FATHER WILD: Harvard was a great experience for me at many levels, even though I was happy eventually to get out of the hot house at Cambridge. I was already a priest, and I was in a program with older students. As a graduate student, you live life in your department. Ours was not a huge department, but the people came from all over. We had a South African, a member of the Zulu tribe who was a good friend of mine, a Methodist and wonderful guy. We had the son of a rabbi in Oklahoma City, who was one of our youngsters. We gave an honorary degree two years ago to Eleanor Stump, who was a year ahead of me in the doctoral program and ultimately decided that philosophy was what she ought to be about, and she is now a

distinguished professor at St. Louis University. It was a very interesting group of people.

DEAN KEARNEY: I was at Harvard for just the three years, and going through law school is much different from going through graduate school, not least because you can pinpoint with exact certainty your terminal date. The second Thursday in June, if I recall the Harvard graduation schedule correctly—three years after you arrive in Cambridge for law school you will be leaving Cambridge. And I had put my seven years in on the East Coast. While I certainly enjoyed my classmates very much, I would not say that the law school was a warm place. And I do think that Marquette—maybe it's because we try harder—I do think that the University and the Law School here do a pretty good job in trying to care for the individual student. We do have some students who think that that should translate into something along the lines of going soft on a course requirement from time to time, but I've been very impressed by the University in not taking that route. At the same time, it is important for us not to get too self-satisfied about the matter.

SPORTS

FATHER WILD: I like going up and seeing the Packers play. I follow the Packers. I admit I betray my Chicago roots, but I'm approaching my 20th year living in Milwaukee. You cannot cross that border and start living in this state without realizing very quickly, especially in these latter years, that the Packers are *the* athletic institution in this state. And so going to Lambeau is both an athletic and cultural experience. And when I discovered that I had a block of six tickets on the 50-yard line, rather good seats that came with the office—oh, there are some perks in this job—I decided they ought to be made use of. Now, these are only for what's called the Milwaukee series.

FATHER WILD: My first love is basketball, and Marquette basketball without question. I got interested in basketball as a spectator sport when I started my first year of teaching high school in Cincinnati. We ended that year as state runner-up. And I went to all those home games and

tournament games, even away games. As a young Jesuit, you go to everything. What a surge of energy that gave to that institution. In making that run, we lost the state championship by a point. We were good all the years that I was there. Great guys. Great human beings coaching in that era. The basketball coach was a fine teacher and a good coach.

FATHER WILD: You know, you get all this static out of certain quarters about athletics, and you do have to insist on a program that has integrity. And you can never say, “These problems can never happen here.” You have to create the right climate, and I inherited a situation with an athletic director who really cares a lot about that. There is certainly a low, low, low tolerance, as there should be, for mischief in our athletic department, which is what we want. We want our program to run with integrity, and I think we do a pretty good job in that regard.

DEAN KEARNEY: We are barely two years into it, but you must be just delighted thus far with our involvement in the Big East conference. I ran into Greg Kliebhan [Senior Vice President of the University] the night after the U Conn game last year. We were at a stoplight, and I saw that he was in the car next to me. I rolled down my window and asked him, “How many people are going around saying that the move to the Big East was their idea?” His response was to laugh and say, “Well, everyone knows that it was your idea, Joe.”

FATHER WILD: It has just been terrific for us. We’ve been able to strengthen our presence in the northeast, where we have lots of alums. We’re beginning to connect more easily, more readily. You just feel more energy in that whole group of alums. That’s a work in progress, I think, connecting with these men and women who are out there. But then, of course, not everybody gets all excited about athletics. But for an awful lot of people, it is a tremendous rallying point. And last year we exceeded all our expectations for how we would perform in the league. Those Big East games turned out just the way we thought. Every one was an incredible event. I don’t care what team you’re playing. It’s just an

amazing league, and it’s no surprise that it got as many teams as it did in the NCAA tournament at the end of the 2006 season, including us.

DEAN KEARNEY: My own great passion in sports has always been the White Sox—another family tradition. I accepted numerous congratulations for their winning the 2005 World Series because everyone knew that it had been a substantial personal accomplishment on my part. For a while after that I worried that sports would become pointless for me (could a sporting contest ever matter again?), but then I recalled that it remained important that the Cubs *not* win a World Series. The Brewers’ move into the National League the first year I was living in Milwaukee enabled me to root for them as well, although sports loyalties formed while one is young are usually a lot deeper.

THE LAW SCHOOL, THE UNIVERSITY, AND THE REGION

FATHER WILD: With regard to the Law School, what energized me, candidly, was the same person who energized you, Howard Eisenberg. In my case it was his drafting of a letter for a law bulletin that was going to come out under my name. He sent the letter over for my review. I was prepared thoroughly to revise it. Then I read it, and I called him and asked, “Did you write this yourself?” He said he had. The letter was amazing. It was a statement about the Law School’s mission and interface with that of the University and it talked about Ignatian values. So Howard and I connected very early on—I arrived as president six months after he came on as dean—and I thought, “This guy is the real deal.”

FATHER WILD: My experience while on the Marquette faculty [from 1975 to 1984] had been that the Law School was just not part of my world. Some of that is natural. It’s a



professional school, and it has a certain independence. You're forming people not simply for an academic discipline but a real profession. Students are socialized into this profession. It's more than simply academics. But on the other hand, to see the values of the broader University as they had been emerging over time and to see Howard's strong sense of sharing those values in a way that made sense in a legal education environment—well, I was excited by that. And I knew Howard wanted to move things forward. Part of the way he did that was to recruit you here.

FATHER WILD: Of course, Howard and I did not always agree in the first instance. We would have these big arguments, but I knew his heart was in the right place, and he was a good advocate. If the person is not a good advocate, you probably do not have the right law school dean. Howard worked constantly to build a first-rate law school, and that impressed me. And I went on a number of trips with him, visiting with various donors or groups of donors for the Law School, and met some tremendous people. So we were able to make a lot of common cause together.

DEAN KEARNEY: One of the key things that attracted me to come here in 1997 was my sense that with Howard the Law School was a place that was aggressively moving forward and was on the advance.

FATHER WILD: A lot of that had and has to do with resources. Howard was the one who really brought the issue of the Law School's finances front and center. At the time, it was clear the Law School was looked on as a financial

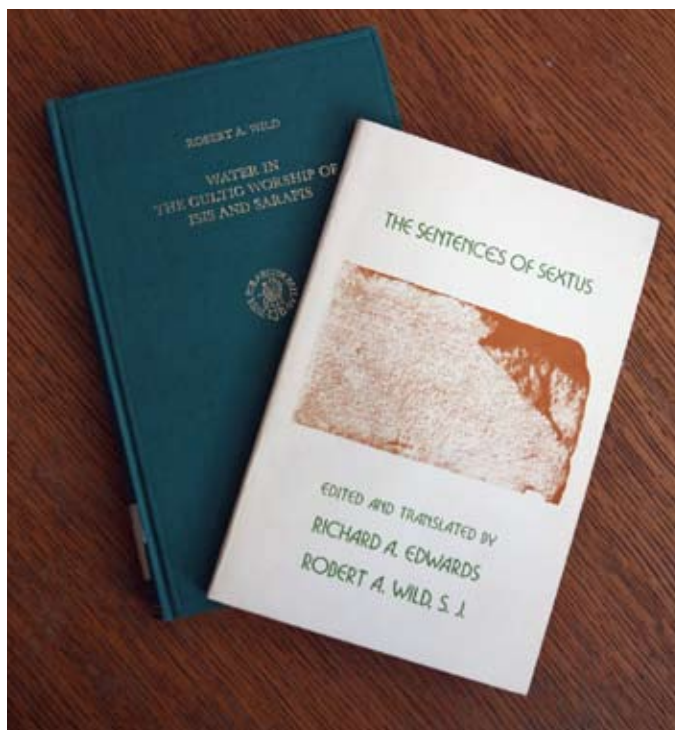
cash cow which we were milking dry. And so that had to be turned around or it would simply be hopeless to try to grow a stronger, better law school and to engage the

alums with the school. So making the decision on the Law School financial agreement, as challenging as it was at that point in the University's history, I think was very important not simply for the Law School but for the University as a whole. There's not much question that it has worked out well all the way around.

DEAN KEARNEY: It really is an extraordinary position to be Dean of Marquette Law School. It is like few other deanships in the country. It is a

much more important civic position than being dean of any law school in Chicago, including the University of Chicago or Northwestern, for the simple reason that this is Milwaukee's law school, and in very few other cities could a similar thing be said.

DEAN KEARNEY: We've only begun to scratch the surface of what it means to be the law school for this region. In the past it might have been enough for us to educate a disproportionate number of lawyers and judges in the area. Now, even beyond that fundamental role, we want to be a prime agent in building the civil society here, by acting as something of an intellectual commons, a neutral forum in which those interested in law and public policy can come and engage, explore, debate, and maybe even help forge some possible solutions to problems that the society faces. The region needs political, economic, and cultural drivers, and Marquette Law School is progressing toward being a key driver.



FATHER WILD: There is no question that the Law School has made a lot of progress, and next we have to crack the nut of the building. The faculty is more visible, and not only because it is larger. The progress is important to me. I felt the same way with the Dental School. These schools are professional schools. We want them to be high quality because if they can be really high quality, this is going to lift up not simply that part of the University, but the entire University. That's particularly true in a law school, which is a high-visibility school. Trustees would make that point as

well. There are certain schools that I think give particular visibility to an institution. Those are just the facts of life. But apart from that, I think that educating men and women as lawyers is a very worthy enterprise—truly they are, as we Jesuits say, men and women for others. Legal education goes way, way back to university education in the medieval period. So the ties with the broader University are deep. And to see the rapprochement between the Law School and the University as a whole is, I think, very encouraging. •

DEAN KEARNEY'S REMARKS AT THE PRESIDENT'S PICNIC

At the most recent President's Picnic, an annual affair held in August, the University spent a few minutes marking Father Wild's tenth anniversary as Marquette's President. The most memorable part was a lighthearted but warm imitation of Father Wild by Joseph Simmons, Arts '04—something of a bold move, when one considers that Mr. Simmons recently joined the Jesuit order. Although that imitation cannot be captured in print, the following are remarks that Dean Kearney delivered at the invitation of John Stollenwerk, Sp'62, Grad '66, Vice Chair of the University's Board of Trustees.

Thank you, John. I interviewed in 1996 to join the law school faculty, and the dean at the time, Howard Eisenberg, later told me that what I had done before I was 18 was more important in my getting the job than anything else. He meant being from the same neighborhood on the South Side of Chicago as Father Wild, the President of the University, and having gone to the same Jesuit high school, St. Ignatius, as Father Wild. I sort of doubted Howard, but certainly made sure, several years later, to wear a *maroon*-and-gold tie when I interviewed with Father Wild for the deanship.

Since then, my job, like that of others at the University, has been on a daily basis to seek to implement Father Wild's and the Board's vision for Marquette: that it achieve such excellence that, in any conversation on the top Catholic universities in the country, Marquette will be mentioned as a matter of course. There have been great strides during the ten years of Father Wild's leadership. Consider the example of the Raynor Library, which is transforming the undergraduate experience at Marquette. Or the athletic department's challenge and achievement as a member of the Big East conference. And I know that my colleagues in the Dental School take great pride in the astonishing momentum they gain from their new curriculum and building.

Father Wild's demand for excellence underlies all of this. He requires excellence of himself in representing the University, and in this way he leads by example. He proceeds *confidently*, which, many of you will recall from your Latin classes with the likes of Father George Ganss, comes from the Latin *fides*—faith, loyalty, trust—surely among the essential characteristics for leadership of this great University. I hope, when we join in the toast that John will give in a few moments, that you, like me, will be thinking not so much of the past decade, but to paraphrase what they might say at a political convention: "*Ten more years!*" •