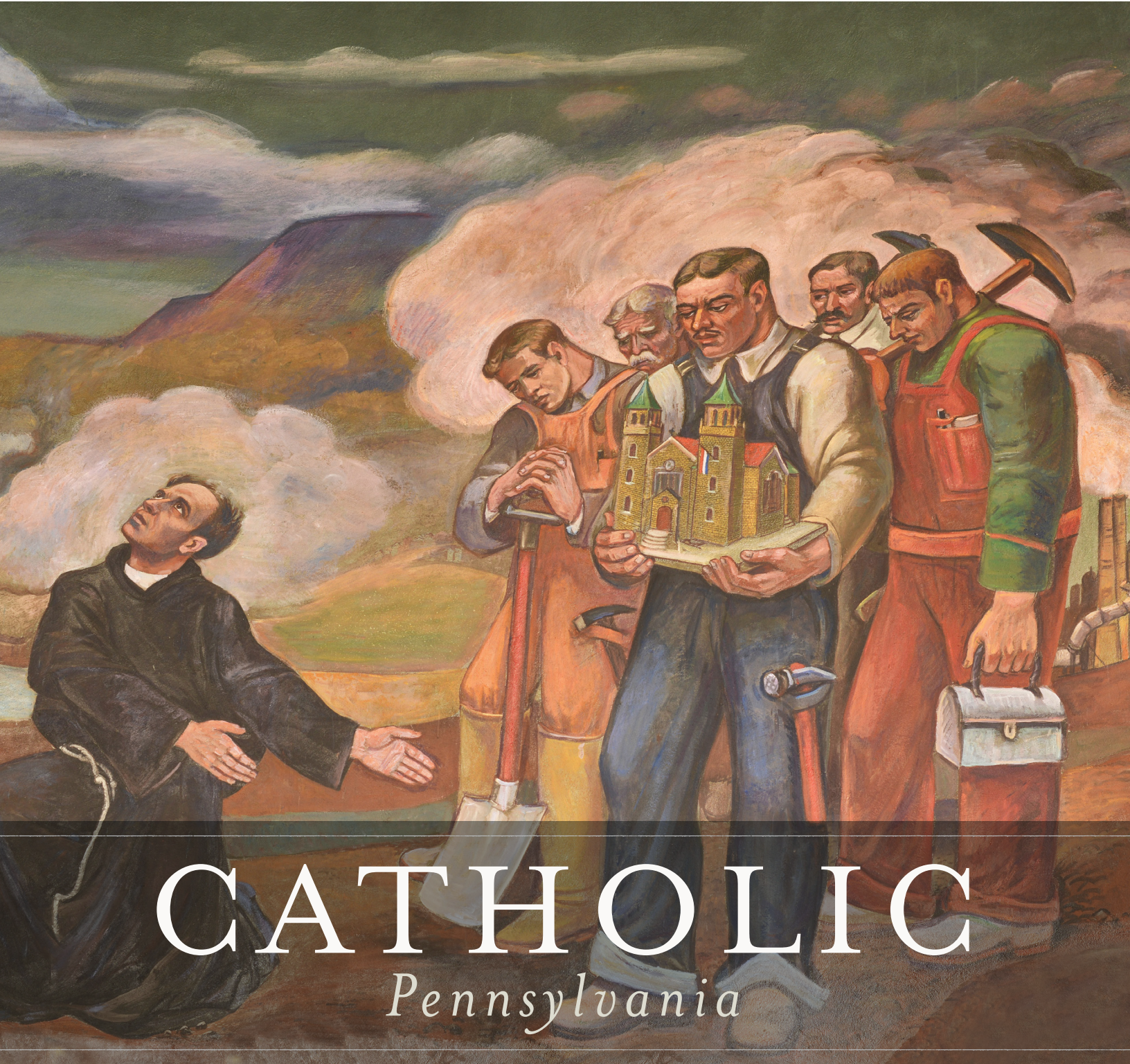


The Historical Society of PENNSYLVANIA
LEGACIES

FALL 2015

VOLUME 15, NUMBER 2



CATHOLIC
Pennsylvania

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In addition to the Historical Society of Pennsylvania's day-to-day operation as a special collections research library, the society undertakes many special projects and initiatives made possible by the generous support of our donors and partners. The Historical Society would like to thank two supporters

of very important ongoing initiatives: The Connelly Foundation and the George C. & Esther Ann McFarland Foundation.

We thank the Connelly Foundation for their continued support of our Balch programming. Since the merger of the Balch Institute for Ethnic Studies with the Historical Society in 2002, we have continued the legacy of the Balch through public programming, research fellowships, and publications. With significant support from the Connelly Foundation, we have been able to take our Balch programming to the next level, sponsoring major programs on the Chinese, Germans, and Irish in the region. Please visit hsp.org to see when our next ethnic history program will be!

The Ephrata Cloister Chorus sings from the balcony of the Historical Society's Reading Room as the crowd gets ready for a lecture by author and scholar Jeff Bach during a program on the illustrations and religious symbolism in the cloister's music books, part of the society's series of programs on Pennsylvania German history.

The Historical Society would also like to thank the George C. & Esther Ann McFarland Foundation for their sponsorship of Encounters, the society's biographical and genealogical database project. Generous support from the McFarland Foundation over the past four years has enabled the Historical Society's team to index thousands of names from valuable genealogical collections such as the Orphan Society of Philadelphia records and the

Russian Brotherhood Organization records. As a benefit of membership, society members will be able to access this growing database and the rich information on individuals it contains. Encounters can be found on the Members section of hsp.org. The generosity of the McFarland Foundation is allowing us to continue to add information from more collections to the database and in turn, help historians of all kinds make significant discoveries about their families and the past.



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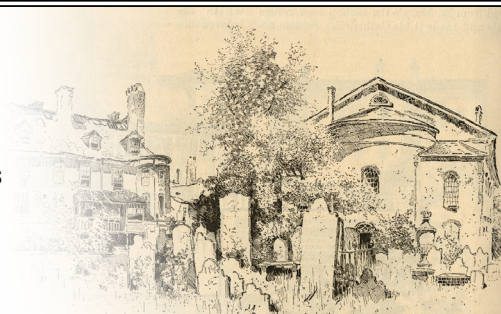
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Croatians in America, mural by Maximilian Vanka, 1937. Courtesy of The Society to Preserve the Millvale Murals of Maxo Vanka and St. Nicholas Croatian Catholic Church, Millvale, PA. Photo credit: Rob Long/Clear Story, ca. 2013. This mural is one of 25 murals covering the walls and ceiling of the interior of St. Nicholas Croatian Catholic Church in Millvale, PA, a historic Pittsburgh neighborhood on the banks of the Allegheny. Croatian artist Maxo Vanka painted these murals in 1937 and 1941 as his "Gift to America." They tell a provocative version of Pittsburgh's history, beginning with the presentation of traditional religious and folk images and ascending to the level of timeless commentary about social justice, the immigrant experience, and the horrors of war. In this cover image, Father Albert Zagar, the priest who commissioned the work, kneels to offer St. Nicholas, held by representatives of the Croatian community, to Mary, Queen of Croatia, who sits above him and the congregation in traditional Croatian dress with the boy Christ on her lap. To learn more, visit <http://vankamurals.org>.

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A Catholic Commonwealth

When William Penn drafted his Frame of Government in 1682 and then his Charter of Privileges in 1701, he established a catholic (that is, inclusive) commonwealth, one that welcomed a wide diversity of people, including people of different religious faiths. He proclaimed that “all persons living in this province, who confess and acknowledge the one Almighty and eternal God, to be the Creator, Upholder and Ruler of the world; and that hold themselves obliged in conscience to live peaceably and justly in civil society, shall, in no ways, be molested or prejudiced for their religious persuasion, or practice, in matters of faith and worship.” He called his province a “Holy Experiment,” and an experiment it was. In an era of official state religions and wars over religion, Penn’s vision was unprecedented.

That experiment, like most experiments, did not go flawlessly. There were failures and setbacks. Indeed, we experience them still. But the experiment was successful enough that Pennsylvania became a model for the new nation as it drafted the Bill of Rights.

Among those who came to Pennsylvania and exercised their religious freedom were Catholics. Catholics presented a greater challenge to Penn’s vision than did the diversity of Protestant sects that populated the colony and state—at least from the point of view of the Protestant majority. They tested the bounds of inclusivity and sometimes found its limits. Loyal to a foreign ruler in Rome, could they be loyal Americans? Their services, in Latin, and elaborate rituals were mysterious—and suspicious. Anxieties about ethnicity and class became tied up with anxieties about religion. Sometimes those anxieties sparked hatred and even violence.

The articles in this issue of *Pennsylvania Legacies* touch on a few of the many stories of Catholics in Pennsylvania’s past.

Maura Jane Farrelly describes the diversity found not only in Pennsylvania, but in the commonwealth’s early Catholic Church. Margaret McGuinness examines the important civic and social work of Catholic women religious in Pennsylvania over the last two centuries. Gary Agee reminds us that African Americans, too, have found a welcome home in the Catholic Church as he invites us to consider the significance of the Third Colored Catholic Congress, held in Philadelphia in 1892. And Robert Zecker looks at the role of the Catholic Church in sustaining immigrant—particularly Slavic—communities in Pennsylvania in the late 19th and 20th centuries. He also discusses the decline and closure of many of those churches in recent years. Our Window on the Collections essay also looks at a former ethnic church, African American St. Peter Claver Church in Philadelphia, which also was recently closed. As always, we include materials for educators, and in this issue we introduce a new genealogy column, this one focused on the use of Catholic records for family history research. The issue ends with an essay by Sam Katz and Erin Shipley on how their work on a film on Philadelphia’s Catholic history has sparked questions about current religious tensions.



The story of Catholicism in Pennsylvania—and the nation—is one of opprobrium as well as inspiration. We have not always lived up to Penn’s vision. Still, the experiment has largely been a success. Today, Catholics comprise the largest single Christian denomination in the United States, and they are firmly integrated into all aspects of American life. In Pennsylvania, 24 percent of all adults identify as Catholic, about the same percentage as for the nation as a whole. That is significantly more than did so at the turn of the 20th century, when about 14 percent of Americans were Catholic. Throughout our history, the growth of Catholicism has been closely tied to immigration. In the 19th century, the church was enriched by streams of German and, especially, Irish immigrants.



At the turn of the century they were joined by Catholics from southern and eastern Europe. Today, new Catholics hail largely from Latin America and the Caribbean. According to the Pew Research Center, 30 percent of all US Catholics were born outside of the United States, compared to 13 percent for the US population as a whole. These succeeding groups of immigrants have challenged our nation to reimagine what it means to be American—and, in turn, American Catholics, old and new, have challenged what it means to be Catholic. They have helped us to become a more truly catholic—if not Catholic—commonwealth.

Finally, I would like to thank the readers of *Pennsylvania Legacies* for their interest and support over the past 13 years. This is my last issue of *Legacies*. As this issue arrives in your mailboxes, I will be beginning a new adventure as Public Historian in Residence at Rutgers, Camden and co-editor of the *Public Historian*. *Legacies* will now be in the very capable hands of Rachel Moloshok, whose words you have read in our Window on the Collections essay and book and website reviews and whose superb editing has improved every issue for the past three and a half years. I look forward to reading future issues of *Legacies* with you.

TAMARA GASKELL
Historian and Director of
Publications and Scholarly Programs

(ABOVE) An undated photograph of the Cathedral Basilica of Saint Peter and Paul, Philadelphia. The church was completed in 1864. Boies Penrose Pictorial Philadelphia Collection.

Memories of St. Peter Claver Church

BY RACHEL MOLOSHOK

The Historical Society of Pennsylvania holds many materials that tell of Catholic experiences in the commonwealth and in American life from the 17th century through the present, including several collections that document the histories of specific Catholic churches. Among them are records that document the history of St. Peter Claver's parish, Philadelphia's historic first black Catholic church. Founded in 1886 by African American Catholics tired of the discrimination they suffered in the city's predominantly white Catholic churches, the parish found a home at 12th and Lombard from 1892 until it was suppressed in 1985. The church later converted to a center for evangelization, which closed permanently in 2014.

At HSP, interested researchers can access St. Peter Claver Roman Catholic Church Records (Collection 3513), containing material that primarily dates between 1985 and 1995 and includes newsletters, programs, parish registers, mass records, correspondence, clippings, and photographs. St. Peter Claver Roman Catholic Church Photographs (PG 60) contain numerous black and white photographs from the 1910s and 1920s of life in and around the church and its school. And one more small, single-folder collection (SC 92) contains copies of the church's deed from 1896 and an assortment of advertisements and pamphlets.

Prior to the establishment of St. Peter Claver parish, African Americans worshipped at various Catholic churches in Philadelphia. However, they experienced routine discrimination and segregation in these church buildings, relegated to sitting in the balcony or the back pews and, in some cases, restricted from taking communion until after the white congregants had done so. In 1886, black Catholics from St. Joseph's, St. Mary's, and Holy Trinity Church banded together to form the Union of St. Peter Claver for



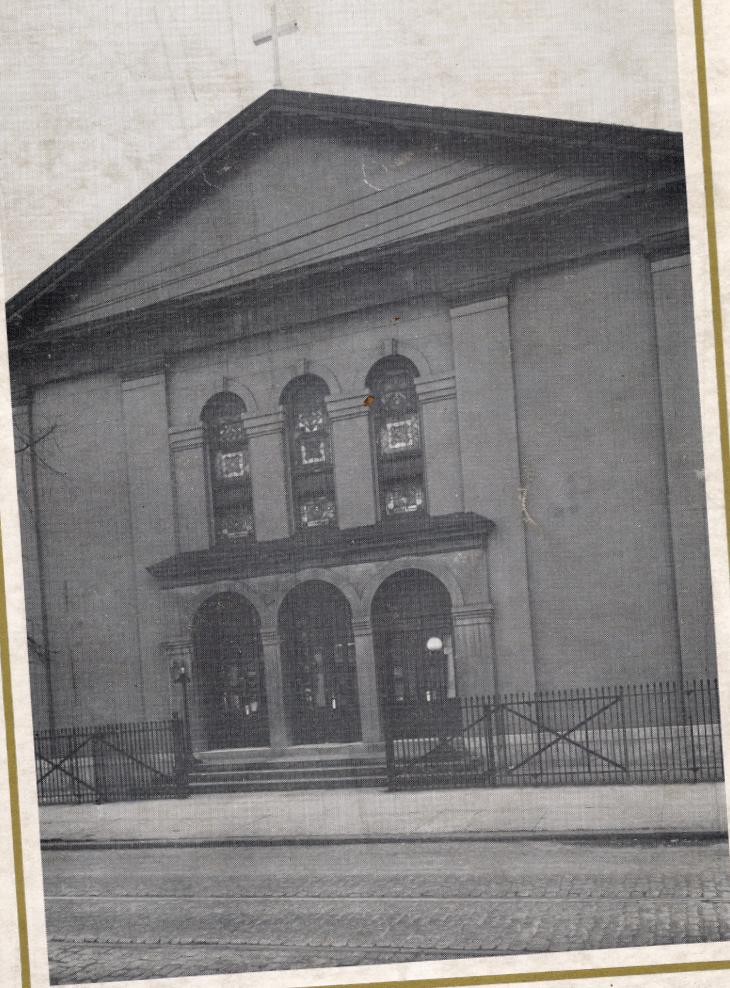
Girls' first communion class, ca. 1910s–1920s. St. Peter Claver Roman Catholic Church Photographs.

Colored Catholics. The union was named for a Spanish Jesuit priest who had been a missionary to enslaved people in South America in the 16th century and was beatified in 1851.

The St. Peter Claver Union's first priest was Rev. Ernest O. Hiltermann of the predominantly German-American Holy Trinity Church, located at Sixth and Spruce Streets. Holy Trinity hosted a separate 9:00 a.m. Sunday Mass exclusively for African American Catholics from 1886 until Hiltermann lost his assistant in 1887. St. Peter Claver Union members continued to meet every Sunday evening at private homes for services presided over by priests from Holy Trinity, St. Mary's, and St. Joseph's, while petitioning Philadelphia's Archbishop Patrick John Ryan for a home church and a priest of their own.

In 1889 their request was granted, and Rev. Patrick McDermott of the Holy Ghost Fathers arrived from Holy Ghost College (now Duquesne University) in Pittsburgh to become priest of St. Peter Claver. Partially through the assistance of Katharine Drexel, 832 Pine Street, then a school for African American Children, became the St. Peter Claver Union's first home. Accommodations in this small building were quite cramped: the school continued on the third floor of the building; the chapel was on the second floor; and the priest lived on the first floor. Every Sunday, the building overflowed with worshippers.

In 1890, a church building at 12th and Lombard Streets, formerly the home of Philadelphia's Fourth Presbyterian Church, went up for sale. Purchasing the building for use of the St. Peter Claver congregation would prove no easy task,



GOLDEN JUBILEE
of
ST. PETER CLAVER'S
1886 1936

(ABOVE) Exterior of St. Peter Claver Church at 12th and Lombard Streets, Philadelphia, ca. 1936. Cover of *Golden Jubilee of St. Peter Claver's, 1886–1936* (Philadelphia, 1936). (BOTTOM RIGHT) Boys' first communion class, ca. 1910s–1920s. (TOP RIGHT) Portrait of an African American priest, possibly Spiritan priest Joseph C. Burgess, date unknown. Caption on back reads "Black priest about 1914. Fr. Burgess? 1907." St. Peter Claver Roman Catholic Church Photographs.

but prominent members of Philadelphia's Catholic community sprang into action. Patrick Quinn, treasurer of the Beneficial Savings Fund Society, bequeathed \$5,000 to support the "proposed Colored Catholic Church of Philadelphia"; over the next couple of years, enough money was raised to purchase the building at 12th and Lombard and perform the extensive renovations necessary to make it "suitable for divine service."

On January 3, 1892, St. Peter Claver Church was dedicated, just two days before celebrating a mass opening the historic Third Colored Catholic Congress, at which

Rev. Augustus Tolton, the first African American priest ordained in the United States, spoke. The deed for this property, signed in 1896 by Archbishop Patrick John Ryan and the Congregation of the Holy Ghost and the Immaculate Heart of Mary, which administered the site, specified that the "premises are to be used as a Church for Colored People, parsonage, and school attached thereto. White people, however, being permitted to attend all religious services [and] to receive the sacraments of Penance and Eucharist in the said church." St. Peter Claver Church soon also became home to the Shrine of Our Lady of

Victories, which was established in October 1898. In 1906, St. Peter Claver's school was built next door to the church building.

St. Peter Claver Church and the St. Peter Claver school continued to serve as centers of Philadelphia's African American Catholic community for decades, but troubles loomed in the mid-1980s. In 1984, the St. Peter Claver school closed and was replaced by a women's shelter run by the Sisters of Mercy. On June 30, 1985, as St. Peter Claver Church members prepared to celebrate their parish's centennial, the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, to use the language of the church, "suppressed" St.

Peter Claver as a parish and instructed its members to join other congregations. The church building remained open as a “shrine site” for the Shrine of Our Lady of Victories, staffed by the Holy Ghost Fathers, and masses continued to be held at the site every Sunday. However, weddings, baptisms, and funerals (except for in special cases) could no longer be held at the church.

In spite of the parish’s suppression, members of the St. Peter Claver Church community largely continued to conduct church business and attend masses, services, programs, and activities at 12th and Lombard. The challenges faced by the historic church energized and inspired pride in its members. St. Peter Claver’s centennial was celebrated in 1986, as was its 101st anniversary in 1987. As a booklet from the 101st anniversary celebration, held on September 6, 1987, put it, “The people of St. Peter Claver are survivors. Although deeply hurt, shocked, and angered by the suppression of beloved St. Peter Claver Parish, they have gone forward and turned that negative situation into something very positive. . . . There has been a renewed pride in association with St. Peter Claver.” A few years later,

the church community celebrated another historic milestone: the 1992 centennial of the Third Colored Congress.

In 1994, the St. Peter Claver community suffered another blow when the congregation, which continued to worship regularly at the historic church building, was informed from the pulpit on May 15 that the church would soon become the home of a newly established entity called the St. Peter Claver Center for Evangelization—and that, as a result, all church activities would be suspended starting on June 5. Many members, several of whom who had been working tirelessly since 1985 to petition the Archdiocese of Philadelphia for, in their words, “a center and place of worship that would address the history, culture, and needs, including spiritual needs, of the African American Catholic Community,” objected to the decision regarding the establishment of the center without input from the church’s membership.

“We pray that you will realize that your present decisions for Saint Peter Claver is at best paternalism; with regards to African American Catholics, this paternalism is racism. . . . We seek your cooperation as we strive to work for justice and peace and to



enrich the Catholic Church with our gift of blackness,” read a May 23, 1994, letter from the St. Peter Claver Church Community to Anthony Cardinal Bevilacqua.

A sit-in was held on the morning of Sunday, June 5, but the decision regarding the establishment of the Center for Evangelization was not affected. A cynical letter to the editor of a Philadelphia newspaper, dated June 7, warned “Black Catholics, beware! Save your money. A suit against the archdiocese will mean absolutely nothing. . . . They are going to eliminate black Catholics, Italian Catholics, German Catholics, etc. The only thing the Archdiocese of Philadelphia wants is *wealthy* Catholics!”

Following the establishment of St. Peter Claver Center for Evangelization at 12th and Lombard, some masses and special programs continued to be held, and the building continued to house the archdiocese’s Office for Black Catholics. But the archdiocese—and St. Peter Claver—continued to be dogged by economic woes. On October 31, 2014, the center was finally closed, and the building put up for sale.

Members of St. Peter Claver’s congregation were hardly alone in their experiences; especially in recent years of economic instability, many beloved Catholic churches have closed across the city and the state. Community members’ memories of their church communities help their spirit live on, and archival records assure that subsequent generations will be able to learn from the stories of these churches and their communities. ■



Conflict and Community in Early Pennsylvania's Catholic Church

BY MAURA JANE FARRELLY





n a cold February morning in 1799, twelve jurors in Philadelphia were asked to decide whether James Reynolds had assaulted James Gallagher Jr. “with an intent to kill.” Both men were physicians in the city. Reynolds was an Irish-born Protestant with Deistic tendencies who’d been forced to flee Belfast in 1794, after authorities there had discovered his plans to liberate Ireland from English rule. Gallagher was a native-born Catholic of Irish descent, the son of a prominent Philadelphia merchant who supported the Federalist Party.

According to witnesses, Reynolds had pulled a pistol on Gallagher after Gallagher had pushed Reynolds in an attempt to remove him from the yard of St. Mary’s Church following a Sunday morning Mass. Reynolds and three other Protestants had been waiting in the churchyard, hoping to snag signatures from some of the Irish immigrants leaving the Catholic service. At least two church trustees had ordered them to vacate the area before the Mass began, but during the service, they had returned. They spread a petition across the flat, horizontal tombstone of a priest who’d been the pastor of St. Mary’s when the church was built in 1763. That petition called for the repeal of the Alien and Sedition Acts, a set of federal laws that made it illegal for anyone to criticize the federal government. They also made it harder for immigrants to become citizens and empowered the president to deport any immigrant whom he believed was “dangerous to the peace and safety of the United States.”

Reynolds’s strategy of focusing on Irish Catholic immigrants seems to have been a good one. Before they were hauled off to

jail and required to post a bond of \$4,000 each, Reynolds and his companions managed to secure the signatures of “a great number” of the men who belonged to the congregation. James Gallagher, of course, was not among them. Neither was John O’Hara, a wealthy church trustee who’d ordered the petitioners to leave before the Mass and who, like Gallagher, had probably been born in North America. Certainly the pastor, Leonard Neale, did not sign the petition. A native of Maryland, Neale testified that he’d instructed his congregants not to sign the document and had sent Gallagher and several other men out into the yard to convince Reynolds and his companions to “retire from the place.”

Federalist newspapers in Philadelphia quickly dubbed the kerfuffle the “United Irish Riot,” warning that opposition to the Alien and Sedition Acts was part of a greater effort by “Irish malcontents” to draw the United States into the conflict over Irish independence. In framing the “riot” in this way, Philadelphia’s newspapers missed a different but equally intriguing family feud that was brewing in Pennsylvania at the dawn of the 19th century. This disagreement was not among people of Irish descent; it was, rather, among America’s first Roman Catholics.

Given how small the Catholic population in early America was—and how much fear and animosity America’s first Catholics faced from the majority Protestant population—it can be easy to overlook the diversity and conflict that characterized the early American Catholic community. America’s first bishop, John Carroll, estimated there were no more than 30,000 Catholics in the United States in 1790, the year the country’s first census put the overall population at nearly four million.

(OPPOSITE) St. Mary’s churchyard, undated etching. (TOP LEFT) The Most Rev. Leonard Neale, Second Archbishop of Baltimore, undated, and (TOP RIGHT) The Most Rev. John Carroll, First Archbishop of Baltimore, ca. 1810. Simon Gratz Collection.

Given how small the Catholic population in early America was . . . it can be easy to overlook the diversity and conflict that characterized the early American Catholic community.

The vast majority of Catholics in the United States at the time of the country's first census lived in Maryland and Pennsylvania. These two colonies had been the epicenter of Catholicism in British North America. Maryland had been founded in 1634 by a Catholic nobleman. Although the Catholic Church was never legally established in that colony and Catholics never comprised anything even close to a majority, the faith was tolerated there for many years, and under the proprietorship of the Catholic Lords Baltimore, Catholics were a majority of the local political appointees. Pennsylvania had been founded in 1682 by a Quaker who was determined to have the colony be a place where "all persons . . . who confess one Almighty God to be the creator, upholder, and ruler of the world"—including Catholics—could "live peacefully and justly in civil society." It is not clear when, exactly, the first Catholics arrived in Pennsylvania, but throughout the colonial period all of Pennsylvania's Catholics were served by the Maryland Province of the Society of Jesus. That mission had been set up by the Jesuits, at the request of Lord Baltimore, not long after Maryland's founding.

Pennsylvania's first Catholics were probably migrants from Maryland. Indeed, the Calvert and Penn families that owned the two colonies argued about the border between Maryland and Pennsylvania until 1776, when the surveyors Charles Mason and Jeremiah Dixon finally settled the decades-old dispute. Some of the Catholics, therefore, who were counted as living in Pennsylvania in 1763 by a team of Catholic census-takers from London may actually have been living in what is now Maryland, or vice versa. That census put Maryland's Catholic population at about 16,000 and Pennsylvania's at about 8,000. The only other colony that had a measurable Catholic population at the time was New York, and that colony's 1,500 Catholics were not served by any priests.

About three-quarters of Pennsylvania's Catholics lived in or around Philadelphia when the 1763 census was taken; the rest were in Bucks, Berks, Lancaster, and York Counties. St. Mary's Church had been built to deal with the growing Catholic population in the city. Less than a block away from the smaller St. Joseph's Church, built in 1733, St. Mary's was still a spillover chapel for the members of St. Joseph's Parish at the time of the 1799 "riot." It was not until 1830 that St. Mary's became its own, separate parish.

The push for Philadelphia to have a second Catholic parish, however, came well before 1830. In 1787, several German families who attended Mass at St. Mary's formed a club known as the

"German Society" following the death of their priest. Although John Carroll, the prefect-apostolic who would soon become bishop, had promised that the new priest assigned to St. Mary's would be of German descent, Philadelphia's German Catholics were not happy with Carroll's choice.

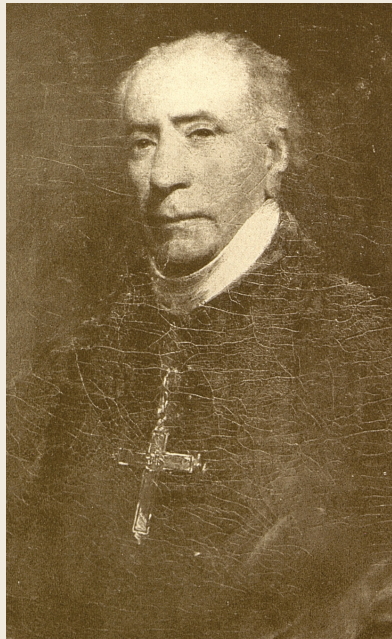
A slight majority of the members of St. Mary's congregation were German, as, indeed, were a slight majority of all Pennsylvania's Catholics at the start of the American Revolution. In spite of their majority status, however, German Catholics did not have much clout within the parish. Both St. Mary's and St. Joseph's Churches were governed by lay trustees of English and Irish descent, most of them native-born Americans. These men controlled each

church's property and were responsible for each church's financial affairs, a reality that must have been particularly galling to Joseph Cauffman, Joseph Eck, and their descendants, given that the two German men had been the second- and third-highest contributors to the fund that built St. Mary's back in 1763.

The Germans of St. Mary's feared that the priest John Carroll had chosen for the church, Laurence Cressler, would cater to the congregation's powerful trustees and ignore traditions and holidays that were important to German Catholics. In 1788, therefore, the German Society made plans to erect a new church and form a new parish on a parcel of land that one of the group's members had purchased on the corner of Sixth and Spruce Streets. Carroll approved the plans for what eventually became Holy Trinity Catholic Church—but only after the German Society had already announced

them. Understanding that the society had not been happy with his choice of Cressler, Carroll quickly pointed out that the new congregation's members would not be allowed to choose their own priest. Only bishops could assign priests, and lay Catholics should "never assume the exercise of that spiritual power, which can only be communicated to the ministers of Christ."

This wasn't the first time Carroll found himself arguing with laypeople over the appointment of priests. During the colonial period, the Catholic Church had had no episcopal infrastructure. The Maryland Province of the Society of Jesus had technically fallen under the auspices of the Bishop of London, who never once visited the colonies. The number of priests serving in Maryland and Pennsylvania was small and inadequate, and because neither colony had formally "established" Catholicism, the church had always been dependent upon the laity's generosity and religious





commitment for its survival. As a consequence, lay Catholics in the new United States felt entitled to “instruct” their priests about a variety of issues, including who their spiritual leaders would be.

In Pennsylvania, moreover, disagreements between priests and laypeople over the nature and jurisdiction of clerical authority joined a host of other, intradenominational disagreements that were a consequence of the Catholic population's longevity in the state and the class and ethnic diversity that came with that longevity. The violence in the St. Mary's churchyard in the winter of 1799 illustrated this reality perfectly.

By the time Reynolds pulled his gun on Gallagher, St. Mary's had been an Irish Catholic church for nearly a decade. Several families of English descent still worshipped there, but no one who traced his or her heritage to Germany attended St. Mary's anymore. German-speaking Catholics went to Holy Trinity, which had its first Mass in November of 1789.

Certainly language played a role in the development of ethnic parishes in Philadelphia. Although Masses were said in Latin, the conversations associated with Confession, Confirmation, and a host of other sacraments and traditions would have been in the vernacular. Laypeople, therefore, needed priests who were fluent in English or German, and whose accents were not so heavy as to inhibit the flow of conversations that could sometimes be quite personal. Ethnic devotions to particular saints—Nicholas, Patrick, George, or even Denis, after hundreds of French émigrés began arriving in Philadelphia in the midst of the Reign of Terror—also played a role in the development of different parishes, as did different religious traditions, such as congregational singing, which was important to Germans, or the “wake,” whereby Irish Catholics commemorated the deaths of their loved ones.

The congregation at St. Mary's Church was solidly Irish and English-speaking, but that did not mean that relations among its

members were without conflict. The man who pulled his gun on James Gallagher in 1799 may have been a Protestant, but Gallagher had a number of Catholic opponents in that churchyard as well. As a native-born American, Gallagher wasn't vulnerable to deportation, the way many of his co-religionists were; furthermore, he was wealthy.

The other trustees who managed affairs at St. Mary's were wealthy and native-born, too. John Ashley was the highest bidder when St. Mary's auctioned off its pews in 1809, paying \$1,000 for the privilege of choosing his Sunday morning seat at a time when per capita adult income in the United States was slightly more than \$200 a year. Charles Johnson was the son of the architect who'd designed St. Mary's Church. Even the church's pastor, Leonard Neale, came from a wealthy family that had a long history in British North America. He was a direct descendant of James Neale, an English Catholic gentleman who'd immigrated to Maryland in 1635, where he served on the governor's council and acquired more than 3,000 acres.

As the 19th century progressed, Philadelphia's poor and working-class Irish Catholic immigrants made it increasingly clear that they did not like having rich natives make all of the decisions in their parish. This class animosity came to a head in 1812, when the wealthy trustees of St. Mary's announced that they would not pay Father William Harold, a Dominican priest from Ireland whose sermons were popular with Philadelphia's growing immigrant community, the salary he'd requested. A nasty argument ensued. Father John Carrell, a native of Philadelphia who, like Harold, preached at St. Mary's, referred to Harold's supporters as “the lowest class of society.” He claimed disdainfully to have been “threatened by an Irish porter.” John Ashley received a note warning him that he would die if he continued to “run down our Clergy,” and Charles Johnson actually resigned from the church's board of trustees after he received two notes threatening to burn his houses “if you don't let the Clergy alone.”

(LEFT) Right Rev. Henry Conwell. *A Retrospect of Holy Trinity Parish as a Souvenir of the 125th Anniversary of the Foundation of the Church* (Philadelphia, 1914). (TOP LEFT) Old St. Joseph's Church. Frank H. Taylor Prints, Boies Penrose Pictorial Philadelphia Collection. The original church was built in 1733. This new church was completed in 1839. (TOP RIGHT) Rev. William Hogan, ca. 1840. David McNeely Stauffer Collection.

The following spring, Harold's working-class supporters won a majority of the seats on the board of trustees, primarily because a large number of immigrants had been eligible to vote in that election—their delinquent pew rents had been paid by William Harold. Harold had resigned from St. Mary's after his salary was denied. Once his supporters won the election, however, Harold asked to be reappointed. Philadelphia's bishop, Michael Egan, refused. The new trustees responded by firing their sexton (Egan's brother) and restricting the salary of John Carrell, who had assumed greater duties in the parish after Harold's resignation.

Nearly 10 years later, conflict between trustees and Philadelphia's new bishop, Henry Conwell, erupted once again, when Conwell attempted to oust the popular and charismatic Father William Hogan. Hogan and Conwell supporters came to blows in a riot that left hundreds injured during the trustee election in 1822. Hogan was later excommunicated.

Antics such as these are the primary reason America's bishops in 1829 identified lay trusteeism as "an evil that tends to ruin the Catholic discipline to schism and heresy." Allowing the laity to own church property and govern the affairs of a parish was, the bishops believed, no longer necessary—it had been outlawed in many colonies and the number of priests serving in North America had been abysmally low. Following this reasoning, they eliminated nearly all of the lay boards of trustees in the United States over the next 25 years.

Nowadays, Catholics tend not to express their anger over church-related issues with anonymous death threats like the one John Ashley received. Nevertheless, many of the differences that characterized Pennsylvania's early Catholic community continue to hold sway in American Catholic life. Indonesian Catholics living in South Philadelphia today, for instance, have

The Battle of St. Mary's, *Fought Tuesday, 9th April, 1822.*

[*Tune Chevy Chase*]

God Prosper long this Commonwealth
Our lives and safeties all,
A dreadful conflict lately did
At Mary's Church befall.

For doughty champions who engaged,
And pious women keen,
There never was a fight like this
In Philadelphia seen.

The worthy prelate of this place
A vow to God did make,
He'd drive young Hogan from the Church,
And all his honours take.

The thunders of the Church he hurled
At his devoted head;
But all amazed he finds the priest
Unhurt, and without dread.

Those dire anathemas which oft
Made mighty monarchs bow,
Bell, Book, and Candle-light, and all,
He finds quite useless now.

Trustees' election day drew nigh,
The prelate called in aid,
Men of all kindreds, tribes, and casts,
And men of every trade.

Some came from pleasant Wilmington,
And some from Brandywine,
From Dover far, and New Castle—
Not Newcastle on Tyne.

To banish Hogan from the Church,
And drive his friends away,

These tidings reached the Hoganites,
Long ere election day;

Who sent the bishop present word
That they should meet them there;
The bishopites not fearing this,
Did to the Church repair.

Those gallant champions boldly came
To take this church so dear,
On Monday mustering in the yard
As day did disappear.

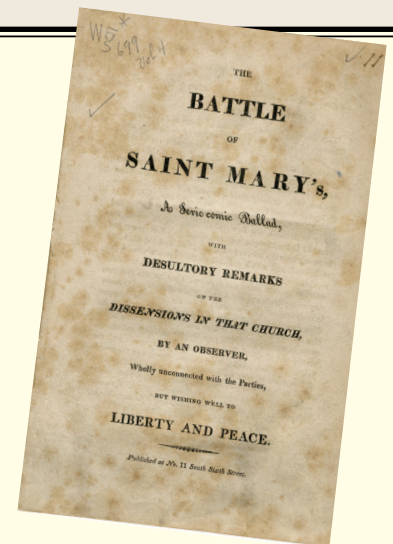
All night they feasted merrily,
On bread, and beer, and cheese,
And good strong brandy too, I wot,
Lest the bold blood might freeze.

This holy ground with missile bricks,
And piles of missile stones,
They covered well—that night prepared,
To break their foemen's bones.

They bore in hand their cudgels stout,
For swords may cut too deep,
The gate secured with bold and bar,
And thus their watch did keep.

Now when the morning dawn appear'd,
The Hoganites drew nigh,
With many a faithful Irishman
Who for his priest would die.

The bishopites, they now reviewed,
And their position scann'd;
They found that every point and pass,
Most skilfully was manned.



Well knowing from imprudent haste,
How many a battle's lost,
They cautiously thought well to halt,
Ere they attacked the post.

And though their courage was right keen,
Their ardour hot and warm,
Rashness they knew might hurt the cause,
And terminate in harm.

Besides, 'twas doubtful how th' attack,
In this case should be made,
Whether to tray by coup de main,
Or by an escalade.

While they thus paused, some citizens
Amazed to behold
Entrenched within that holy ground
A band so fierce and bold,

Did mount the parapet in front,
Holding by palisade,
When down it came, and with the crash,
A hideous uproar made.

not demanded their own parish, as German Catholics did in the late 18th century. But they have insisted upon their own Masses—as have their Vietnamese co-religionists. There are no rules about who is allowed to attend which Mass at St. Thomas Aquinas Church on 17th and Morris Streets, but if you go to the 8:30 service on Sunday mornings without knowing Vietnamese, or to the 11:30 service without knowing Indonesian, you will have trouble following everything the priest is saying.

Differences about the nature of authority and the significance of clerical pronouncements also continue to animate American Catholics—as Holy Trinity’s modern-day story reveals. In 2013, the church founded as a protest against Irish dominance within the St. Joseph’s parish became a refuge for people who lament—or, more controversially, reject—some of the changes brought to the Roman Catholic Church by the Second Vatican Council. For two years, Holy Trinity

was home to the Latin Mass: the service as it was performed before Vatican II changed the liturgy to the vernacular. Pope Francis has called the Latin Mass a “fad” that some Catholics are “addicted” to because they cling to the church’s older ways. “You cannot turn back, we have to always go forward,” Francis recently told a group of Catholics at a celebration of the 50th anniversary of the vernacular liturgy. “Let us give thanks to the Lord for what he has done in his Church in these 50 years of liturgical reform.”

As always, not all Catholics agree. ■

Maura Jane Farrelly is an associate professor of American Studies at Brandeis University in Waltham, Massachusetts. She is the author of Papist Patriots: The Making of an American Catholic Identity, published by Oxford University Press (2012).

Alas! for those who underneath
That iron pressure lay,
How many legs and arms were broke,
I list not here to say.

And thus good men of Mary’s Church,
Will you be trodden down,
If to the bishop you succumb,
And to his iron crown.

And now the barriers prostrate lay,
In rush the impetuous crowd,
While man to man, and hand to hand,
They fight with tumult loud.

Stand to it, friends of Hogan’s cause!
Your foes are well prepared!
On your strong arm this day depend
Rights sacred and revered!

They closed full fast on ev’ry side,
No slackness was there found,
And many a valiant combatant,
Lay bleeding on the ground.

In sooth it was a grief to see,
Such havock widely spread,
And tho’ some sorely wounded were,
Yet none I trust are dead.

Clubs against cudgels brandished were,
Bricks flew ’gainst flying stones,
Some had their noses broken there,
And some had broken bones.

For brave old A—y I must wail
As one in doleful flight,
Who when his wounded head was drest,
Returned to the fight.

And pious Dolly too, thy heart
Was Hogan to the core,
For him thy prayers were offered up
One hundred times and more.

“Scatter his foes!” she cried, “Oh Lord!”
As in the street she knelt,
But as she prayed, some ruffian hand,
On her broad back she felt.

This had a sad effect on Doll,
It changed her posture quite;
For tumbled now in mud she lay,
Half choked with rage and spite.

Old crone starts up, and at his head
A brick-bat large she threw,
Which whirring rapid thro’ the air,
Seemed threat’ning as it flew.

Unhappy wight! no nerveless arm
Dismissed that missile bat;
Which forceful takes his dexter ear,
And lays the cullion flat.

“Now ruffian,” said bold Dolly then,
As over him she stood,
And brandished her good brawny fist,
While he was in the mud.

But too magnanimous I ween,
To strike a fallen foe,
“Thus shall your cause,” she said, “succeed,
“And be as thou art, low.”

And peeping Poll from window high,
Thy courage I admire;
As you the battle-field surveyed,
You glowed with martial fire.

In person though non combatant,
Your heart was in the fight,
For whirring bricks about your ears
You disregarded quite.

And Polly cried with might and main
“Now Hoganites press on!
“Your foes are down, they tumble fast,
“Drive, drive them from the town!”

Meanwhile the battle raged sore,
Within that well-fought field,
But the poor bishopites bemaused,
Were now about to yield.

Alas! brave bishopites! what now
Avail your clubs and staves,
Your merry cheer on yesternight,
Among the tombs and graves.

Yet bravely I must say you fought,
Where late you feasted well,
And not till quite o’er power’d, did yield,
And struggled till you fell.

God keep this land of liberty
In plenty, joy, and peace,
And grant, henceforth, that feuds and jars,
“Twixt clergymen may cease. ■

The Battle of Saint Mary’s, A Serio comic Ballad, with Desultory Remarks on the Dissention in That Church, by an Observer, Wholly unconnected with the Parties, but Wishing Well to Liberty and Peace (Philadelphia, 1822).

SISTERS *and* SAINTS

The Catholic Faces of Philadelphia

By

MARGARET M. MCGUINNESS

Philadelphia Sister of Mercy Mary Scullion began working with the homeless and mentally ill in 1978, at the age of 25. As her ministry to this population grew into a lifetime commitment, Sister Mary was arrested at least twice for distributing food to those homeless seeking shelter in the city's 30th Street Station. Although never convicted, she spent several nights in jail. Such public demonstrations, along with other activities that included leading protestors into Philadelphia City Council meetings and badgering then mayor Ed Rendell to increase city allocations for services for the homeless and mentally ill, drew cheers from some and angry comments from others. Rendell himself once referred to Sister Mary as "Philadelphia's Joan of Arc because so many people want to burn her at the stake."

Boy and nun at the school of the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament, Bensalem, PA, 1940. Philadelphia Record Photograph Collection.







names of the 13 Sisters of Charity who nursed in Philadelphia, it is not clear which of these women religious ministered in Chester County. The traditional preference for women religious to remain anonymous may be the reason their names were not recorded.

Working with Those Marginalized by Society

In 1891, Katharine Drexel became the first member of the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament for Indians and Colored People. At the time, Drexel was most one of the most powerful women in the American Catholic Church—she was certainly the most influential Catholic woman in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. Her father, Francis Anthony Drexel, had died in 1885, leaving his daughters, Katharine and her two sisters, access to the interest of a trust fund established for his grandchildren. (Neither Katharine nor Louise Drexel had children, and Elizabeth's child was still-born. After Katharine's death, the fund was divided among 28 charitable institutions.) The three young women chose to use a good portion of their inheritance to assist various philanthropic projects, many of them connected to the work of the Catholic Church and its ministry to Native Americans and African Americans. As historian Anne Butler noted, "[Drexel] decided to use her fortune as an educational lever for those who had no money, no champion, and no opportunity in white society." One gift of \$30,000, for example, was given to the Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia in exchange for their willingness to minister to Native Americans in the Oklahoma Territory.

Katharine Drexel believed she was called to religious life but had difficulty finding a congregation that would allow her to do what she believed God was asking of her. Omaha bishop James O'Connor, formerly a pastor in Philadelphia, originally discouraged her from entering a convent, but finally agreed she had a vocation to found

her own religious congregation. In order to begin this process, Drexel began a novitiate with the Sisters of Mercy in Pittsburgh on May 6, 1889. After O'Connor's death in 1890, Archbishop Patrick Ryan of Philadelphia assumed the role of adviser and continued to advocate for the formation of a new religious community.

In February 1891 Katharine Drexel pronounced vows as the first Sister of the Blessed Sacrament for Indians and Colored People, generally known as the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament. Along with eleven women who hoped to join the new congregation, she moved into a temporary convent located at St. Michel, the Drexel family's summer residence in the Torresdale section of Philadelphia, while building a more permanent motherhouse in Bensalem. The grounds of the new facility included plans for a school for African American children, but some of the sisters' new neighbors were not so sure they liked this idea. When a formal ceremony to lay the cornerstone of the new building was planned for July 16, 1891, rumors circulated that a group of critics planned to disrupt the event, and perhaps even blow up the grandstand. Fortunately, the day passed without incident.

Forty-one women entered the congregation before the sisters moved to St. Elizabeth's in Bensalem in December, 1892. Of the 22 who remained in the community, most were from Pennsylvania. Educational levels of the women varied; the majority had completed elementary school, but a few had even earned some college credits. Many of the women had some work experience, and some had taught Sunday school at St. Peter Claver, an African American parish in Philadelphia that the Drexel sisters funded.

In 1894, Archbishop Patrick Ryan allowed the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament to minister outside of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. Several sisters were immediately assigned to St. Catharine's School in Santa Fe, which had been built by Drexel. Eight years later, they began working at St. Michael's School on the Navajo reservation in Arizona. The congregation's ministry to African Americans and Native Americans was not limited to

(LEFT) Indenture of John McGangy to John Duffeey, to learn the trade of cordwainer, 1819, signed with the consent of the board of managers of the Roman Catholic Society of St. Joseph, for Educating and Maintaining Poor Orphan Children. Roman Catholic Society of St. Joseph Book of Indentures, 1818–1831. (ABOVE) Some of the children taught at the school of the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament, Bensalem, PA, 1941. Philadelphia Record Photograph Collection.

EXTRA

Becomes a Nun.

Miss Drexel Enters a Catholic Convent.

Gives Up Seven Millions

Society Greatly Surprised at the Announcement.

WILL BE A SISTER OF MERCY

Her Future to be Devoted to Helping the Poor.

A sensation has been created by the announcement that Miss Kate Drexel, the second daughter of the late Francis A. Drexel, the distinguished banker, has decided to become a Nun.

As a postulate or "earnest seeker" in the Order of the Sisters of Mercy, she entered the Mother house of that famous order in Pittsburg. While not tantamount to becoming a novice, this step on the part of the late celebrated banker's daughter will, without doubt, lead to her becoming one at the end of six months, and finally to her permanently

TAKING THE VEIL.

Few who know the young lady doubt that but that such will be the end of her first step taken yesterday in the renunciation of the world, with all that it contains of family, brilliant associations, and great wealth.

...

No incident of the sort since the beautiful Miss MacTavish, of Baltimore, entered a convent will cause so great

A SOCIAL SENSATION,

As it was utterly unexpected and until now has been absolutely unknown outside her own family.

Much more than a local interest is attached to this act of Miss Drexel, owing to the fact that she is one of the three sisters who inherit a fortune of something like \$17,000,000, which is said to have increased to about \$21,000,000 since their father's death. . . .

The way in which it was left also has an important bearing. In case either of the three daughters should marry and have an heir, the heir inherits the whole fortune after the daughters' deaths. If neither should leave an heir, the entire fortune goes to the Catholic Church.

. . . Miss Kate Drexel, who entered the convent yesterday, has quite a large fortune independently inherited from her mother, who died before her father, but should she remain in the order her income from her interest in her father's estate and probably her share of the principal, amounting to \$6,000,000 or \$7,000,000, will be

RELINQUISHED TO THE CHURCH.

On Monday morning last Miss Drexel bade farewell to family and friends. . . . The story of the breaking up of this distinguished Philadelphia family is in some respects a most pathetic one.

Mr. and Mrs. Morrell [the youngest Drexel daughter], after their marriage started on their bridal tour and up to the time they returned, a week or two ago, had traveled ten thousand miles.

It was a part of the programme that they should on their return go to Europe, joining Mrs. Morrill's uncle, A. J. Drexel, in his annual Summer trip to Carlsbad. Miss Lizzie Drexel had not contemplated going, but upon the determination of Miss Kate Drexel becoming known the sister determined to go, not desiring to be left alone at San Michael, near Torresdale, the extensive country place where all

THREE OF THE SISTERS

had spent most of their lives So the country place was closed and the family town house was closed and Mrs. Morrell also shut up the new country place and residence on Rittenhouse Square, both purchased since her wedding.

There was something very pathetic about this closing up and separation of sisters so long inseparable. . . . The old servants showed great grief and appeared to look upon it as a complete breaking up of the family.

Miss Kate Drexel, now a postulate of the Sisters of Mercy, is about

THIRTY YEARS OF AGE.

She is in appearance perhaps the most attractive of the three sisters, although not quite so tall as the other two. She has a good complexion, a sweet expression and was noted for her smile. Her eyes are blue or blue-gray and one of her greatest charms is a wealth of uncommonly beautiful brown hair, much more than ordinary. It is said to reach far below her waist.

One of the sad thoughts in connection with her withdrawal to some of her relatives was that she should sacrifice this part of her personality and "woman's glory," but according to usage she will not have to sacrifice her hair until she takes her final vows.

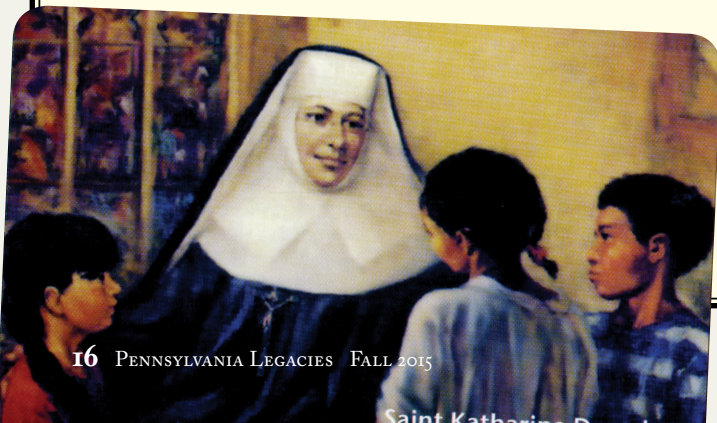
The vows she will take should she continue in her determination will be three, "poverty, chastity and obedience." . . . The vows or obligations are very solemn and are made before the altar, crucifix in hand, and a part of the ceremony in this order consists of the novice appearing in a complete wedding outfit and having a ring put upon her finger, and made "a bride of Christ."

This is before she assumes the black habit and veil which involves a funeral service. In some of the orders of sisterhoods the novice prostrates herself at the entrance to the church and allows the members of the order to step over her body in token of humility. . . .

She will be put to many "tests," . . . and the conventual life will be very different from that which she has been leading. The habit of the Sisters of Mercy is the most picturesque and dignified of all the orders of the Catholic sisterhood and religious ladies. They wear trains and a deep collar that entirely covers the breast and small, close-fitting caps that come under the chin. . . . ■

Unidentified newspaper clipping, May 1889. Courtesy of the Archives of the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament, Bensalem, PA.

Saint Katharine Drexel. From prayer card printed by Saint Katharine Drexel Mission and Shrine, Bensalem, PA, ca. 2000.



the western and southern areas of the United States, however. Some were assigned to ministries within the city of Philadelphia. In 1908, for instance, sisters began teaching at St. Peter Claver School in Philadelphia; one year later they began teaching at Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament School on North Broad Street in Philadelphia. (Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament School closed in 1967 and the parish in 1972; in 1985, St. Peter Claver parish was closed by the Archdiocese of Philadelphia.)

At times, the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament found that their concern for African Americans living in the City of Brotherly Love was not supported by other Catholics. In 1926, Katharine and her (biological) sister Louise wrote to St. Joseph's Hospital in Philadelphia concerning the money it would receive from their father's estate. They hoped that the funds would be used to provide free hospital stays for the city's African American population. Hospital administrators eventually replied that they would not honor the women's request. Drexel herself struggled with the issue of whether or not to admit African American women to the congregation. Drexel biographer Lou Baldwin explains that the congregation's original decision to deny admittance to women of color was based on several reasons. First, Drexel and other community members did not want African American religious congregations to experience a decrease in applications; in fact, the sisters often recommended that interested women of color apply to the Oblate Sisters of Providence, an African American congregation based in Baltimore. In addition, Drexel worried that although young white women might find themselves drawn to working with Native Americans and African Americans, they were not willing to live in community with members of other races. If white women refused to enter the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament, the congregation would fail. Writing to Drexel in 1899, Monsignor Joseph Stephen carried this worry one step further, telling her that "a tiny, unprotected convent housing women of different races risked life-threatening assault," especially in the southern states.

Katharine Drexel died in 1955 at the age of 96, and was canonized in 2000. Today, the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament continue to

minister in Philadelphia, serving in the parishes of St. Martin de Porres and St. Barbara, as well as Our Mother of Sorrows/St. Ignatius Loyola School, which is the only remaining mission established by Katharine Drexel in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia.

Continuing to Serve

Several months ago, Sister Mary Scullion was interviewed for *Urban Trinity: The Story of Catholic Philadelphia*, a three-part documentary film produced by History Making Productions. Given a chance to reflect on the work of sisters and nuns today, Sister Mary noted that there are women religious all over the city, in rich and poor neighborhoods, connecting the rich with the poor to work toward liberation from anything that oppresses the human spirit, dignity, and truth. Despite decreased numbers and dramatic changes in church and society, women religious continue to do the work they believe that God has called them to do for centuries. Some, such as Sister Mary and Project H.O.M.E., are well known, while others are familiar names only to those with whom they live and work in the inner-city neighborhoods of Philadelphia, parochial schools in the city and its suburbs, or former orphanages that now serve as residential centers for children in emotional and physical distress. Although it is difficult to predict exactly where and how one will find sisters and nuns in the Philadelphia of the future, it is clear that they will continue to serve in ways that reflect the needs of both Catholics and non-Catholics in Philadelphia and its environs. ■

Maggie McGuinness is professor of religion at La Salle University, Philadelphia. She is co-editor (with James T. Fisher) of *The Catholic Studies Reader* (2011), and the author of *Neighbors and Missionaries: A History of the Sisters of Our Lady of Christian Doctrine* (2012) and *Called to Serve: A History of Nuns in America* (2013). She is the former editor of *American Catholic Studies*.

Holy Providence House, mother house of the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament, Bensalem, PA, 1933. Philadelphia Record Photograph Collection.





Racial Equality, Catholicism, and the Third Colored Catholic Congress

BY GARY B. AGEE

On January 5, 1892, delegates to the Colored Catholic Congress gathered in Philadelphia's St. Peter Claver Church for a mass that opened their third annual meeting, held at nearby Philopatrian Hall. Though relations between the delegates and the Catholic Church's overwhelmingly white hierarchy were cordial throughout the planning process for the congress, some delegates were becoming increasingly critical of the church's efforts on behalf of African Americans. These criticisms would be voiced over the course of this important, three-day meeting and for generations after this important gathering.

St. Peter Claver Church is located at the corner of 12th and Lombard Streets. The St. Peter Claver parish served as a spiritual home for black Catholics in the city from its founding in 1886 until the parish was dissolved in 1985 and the church, now the St. Peter Claver Center for Evangelization, closed in 2014 (See Window on the Collections for a brief history of this parish). Prior to the establishment of St. Peter Claver Church, black Catholics worshipped in Philadelphia's white parishes. Often, however, they were not treated hospitably. Forced to sit in the balcony, they were sometimes served communion after white members. Cognizant of the disconnect between the teachings of the church on the one hand, and the prejudice they were routinely experiencing on the other, black Catholics came together to establish a parish in the city, founding the St. Peter Claver Union in 1886, which met originally at Holy Trinity Church and then in members' homes. St. Peter Claver Church subsequently moved to 12th and Lombard

Streets after two wealthy benefactors with a heart for the African American apostolate came forward to purchase the building, which had formerly been the site of the Fourth Presbyterian Church. The facility was blessed on January 3, 1892, only two days before the Colored Catholic Congress convened.

The Colored Catholic Congress was founded by Daniel A. Rudd, who, despite being born into slavery in Kentucky in 1854, became a force for the evangelization of blacks in last two decades of the 19th century. After years of study in Springfield, Ohio, Rudd worked as a journalist, immersing himself in the civil rights battles of his day. In 1886, he and physician James T. Whitson established the *American Catholic Tribune*. This black Catholic weekly newspaper was a successful journalistic enterprise that ranked among the leading race papers of its era.



(LEFT) Augustus Tolton, first recognized African American Catholic priest. From William J. Simmons, *Men of Mark: Eminent, Progressive and Rising* (Cleveland, OH, 1887). (RIGHT) Delegates to the Third Colored Catholic Congress outside St. Peter Claver Church, Philadelphia, Jan. 5, 1892. Frontispiece of *Three Catholic Afro-American Congresses* (Cincinnati, OH, 1893). Courtesy of the Library Company of Philadelphia.



Mr. Rudd
Editor Catholic Tribune
WATSON Colored Catholic Cincinnati.

Another more controversial goal of the congress's founding...was was to address the racial discrimination routinely faced by African Americans both inside and outside the institutional church

In 1888, Rudd began advocating for a congress of African American Catholics. The visionary leader hoped to accomplish a number of objectives through this body. Rudd hoped to bring black Catholics together so that they might get to know one another. He believed that, once inspired, black delegates would become a force for evangelism among African Americans. Another more controversial goal of the congress's founding, which appears to have been discouraged at times by church leaders, was to address the racial discrimination routinely faced by African Americans both inside and outside the institutional church.

Rudd was content to allow a cadre of talented delegates from around the country to take a leading role in planning the third congress. Philadelphia's own Peter Jerome Augustin, the son of the late Peter and Mary Francis Augustin, successful caterers in the city, was instrumental in gaining approval to host the gathering in Philadelphia. This he was able to do only after congress leaders assured Archbishop Patrick J. Ryan that the meetings would be "conducted on the lines and the spirit of the former two meetings," which were decorous affairs and did not embarrass the Catholic church. Despite this assurance by delegates, there were calls in the black press to put forward an agenda in Philadelphia that would include addressing the grievances of African Americans. In the *American Catholic Tribune*, Daniel Rudd argued that the agenda for the upcoming meeting should move beyond spiritual matters; the congress should "see that avenues now barred against [African American Catholics] be thrown open." It was no doubt these kinds of sentiments that prompted a contributor to the usually supportive *Church News* to warn blacks against too aggressively pursuing racial justice at the upcoming meeting in Philadelphia. The contributor to this Washington, DC, publication wrote, "The congress may be tempted to deal with the question of civil rights. However much the members may feel aggrieved, they will run a great risk injuring their cause if they do not practice the greatest prudence."

On the first day of the meeting, Reverend Augustus Tolton, the first openly acknowledged priest of African American heritage to be ordained in the United States, celebrated Mass and gave an

opening speech. He praised the individuals who had courageously defended his right to pursue education and, eventually, ordination. Tolton's moving account testified to the fact that there were individuals within the church who supported blacks. At the same time, his address revealed that some white Catholics opposed sending their children to school with persons of color.

Archbishop Patrick J. Ryan was then called on to speak. He felt the need to tamp down the expectations of those assembled. Ryan urged the delegates to be patient. "The Church is the spouse of Christ," he declared; "She acts slowly and by degrees, so the Church has acted in the liberation of slaves, in their exaltation and equality to other men, by preparing her children for the liberty

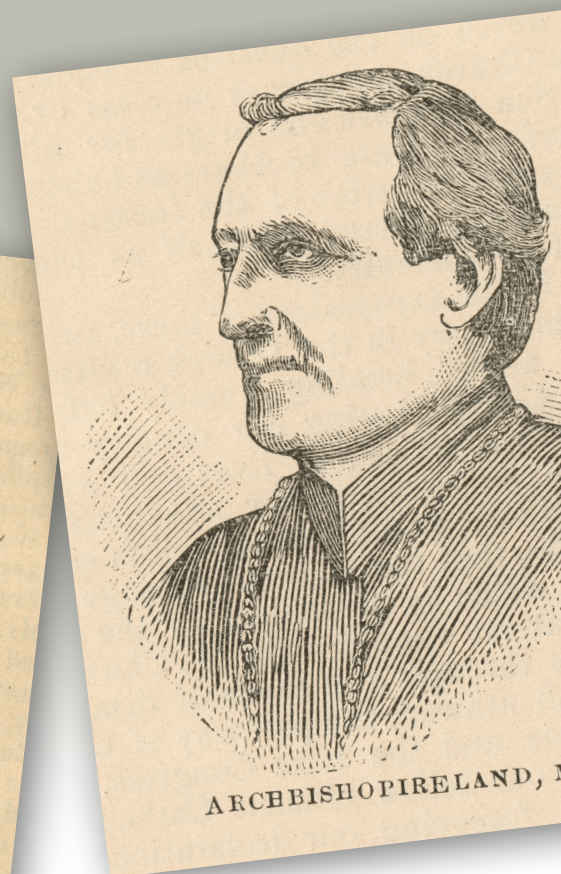
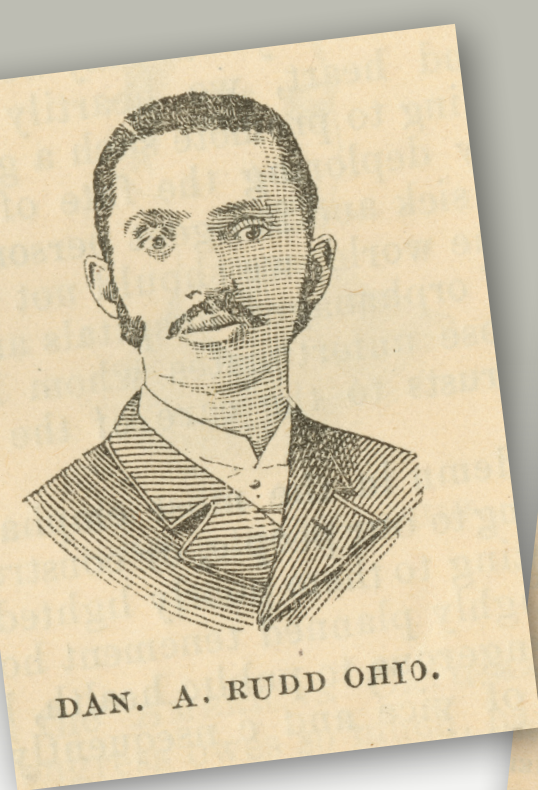
they were about to enjoy." He warned: "It is not by violent measure that you hold equality, politically and religiously. Other equalities must take time to effect. Leave them to God. Expect not too much to be performed. It must be gradual."

Ryan's address revealed a split in American Catholic opinion on the question of the recognition of the social equality of African Americans and the extent to which a color line in church and society should be drawn. Some believed that God had divided the races, placing them on continents apart from one another; still others believed that any real integration would occur only after blacks were able over time to "develop" as a race. On the other hand, some church leaders such as Archbishop John Ireland of St. Paul pushed for the immediate removal of the color line in all relations, thus making interracial marriage a possibility. Only

weeks prior to the congress held in Philadelphia he had spoken to a group of Catholic knights at St. Augustine Parish, an African American Church located in Washington, DC, and Ireland had urged the Knights of St. Augustine to aggressively pursue their rights. He declared: "It will only be a short while until you have overcome. . . . [Y]ou are worthy of recognition from all Catholics, and when you go to the Congress at [Philadelphia] [t]ell the Catholic world what you want, and demand it."

If Archbishop Ryan's opening comments on the first day of the congress were meant to forestall criticism of the Catholic Church, the prelate must have been disappointed. As the speakers continued to





(LEFT) Daniel A. Rudd, editor of the *American Catholic Tribune* and organizer of the Colored Catholic Congresses, (MIDDLE) P. J. Augustine, Philadelphia restaurateur and delegate to the Colored Catholic Congresses, (RIGHT) Archbishop John Ireland of St. Paul, MN, and (OPPOSITE) Proceeding of the Third Colored Catholic Congress. From *Three Catholic Afro-American Congresses* (Cincinnati, OH, 1893). Courtesy of the Library Company of Philadelphia.

address the assembly, it became clear that despite the church's rhetoric concerning the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man, delegates believed that race prejudice continued to negatively impact blacks in the church.

Two primary issues were taken up at the third congress. The first was the lack of educational opportunities afforded to blacks, particularly vocational training. Though all Catholics as a matter of devotion were urged to educate their offspring in Catholic schools, African Americans often found the doors of these same Catholic institutions barred to them. Charles Butler, a delegate from Washington, DC, sought to address the issue of education by offering the following resolution to the assembly gathered in Philadelphia: "we do call the attention of the Catholics of America to the unjust discrimination made against colored children by reason of their color, with the hope that a healthy sentiment may be aroused in the interest of a class of their fellow citizens, who, by reason of prejudice of color, have been deprived of those educational advantages which are so freely extended to people of every race and clime."

Throughout the course of the congressional proceedings, speakers also rose in support of opening avenues for the industrial education of blacks. Though the importance of the establishment of churches for the specific use of African Americans was acknowledged, some in the assembly believed that the most pressing need was the establishment of industrial schools. William E. Easton of Texas

urged the church to take the lead on this important initiative: "Let the Catholic Church direct its forces toward the industrial and mechanical training of colored youth in the South, that the work so well begun, will be completed." In support of this initiative a letter from Archbishop John Ireland was read in which he stated: "my ideas are very decided that no distinction should be made as to color of pupils in parish schools. No such distinction ever has been made in our schools. No such distinction ever shall be made."

Daniel Rudd also addressed the assembly. The founder of the congress movement took aim not only at the lack of educational opportunities afforded African Americans, but also at the discrimination they faced when trying to secure jobs. In a lecture titled "Our Young Men," the usually tempered Rudd was uncharacteristically direct in calling attention to the plight of members of his race. First, he pointed out that African Americans who chose to pursue education beyond the age of 12 were forced to do so in non-Catholic schools—this, he explained, they did to the peril of their souls. Even more unsettling for white church officials gathered for the congress may have been a resolution sponsored by Robert N. Wood. In this proposed initiative, the delegate from New York audaciously called for a committee to investigate instances of discrimination against colored children by Catholic schools and institutions. The motion carried.

A second major issue raised in this meeting of the congress was the development of a permanent organization that would oversee the congress and organize future initiatives. The plan was ambitious

THIRD COLORED CATHOLIC CONGRESS

HELD IN

PHILADELPHIA, PENN., JAN. 5, 6, AND 7, 1892.

FIRST DAY'S SESSION.

ASSEMBLING OF COLORED CATHOLIC DELEGATES.

Address by Archbishop Ryan — The Session in
Philopatrian Hall—Lecture by Father Tolton.

Before opening the Third Congress of Colored Catholics of the United States, the delegates Tuesday morning assembled at the rooms of the St. Peter Claver's Union, and proceeded thence to St. Peter Claver's Church, where, at half-past 10 o'clock, Solemn High Mass was celebrated.

Rev. Augustus Tolton, a Colored priest, was the Celebrant. Rev. John Burke, of the Church of St. Benedict the Moor, New York city, was Deacon, and Rev. John Griffin, C. S. Sp., of Pittsburg, was Sub-deacon, Rev. Thomas O'Keefe was Master of Ceremonies. Within the Sanctuary were also Archbishop Ryan, Bishop Curtis, of Wilmington; Rev. Joseph Oster, C. S. Sp., of Pittsburg, and Rev. James Nolan, Rector of the church.

The Needs of the Negro

Discussions at the Sessions of the Catholic Congress

INDIGNITY TO A DELEGATE

An Ex-Diplomat Refused Admission to a Barber Shop—Robert L. Ruffin's Interesting Paper on the Place of the Race in History and the Attitude of the Catholic Church Toward Slavery—Reception to Delegates.

The second day's session of the Colored Catholic Congress, in Philopatrian Hall, yesterday was notable for the discussions on live questions, the number of papers that were read and the important resolutions that were submitted for adoption.

The proceedings opened at 10.30 with brief devotional exercises, after which Frederick L. McGhee presented a report of St. Peter Claver's Union, of St. Paul, Minn., favoring a permanent organization of the 200,000 colored Catholics of this country. There are, he said, 150 to 200 Catholic societies, and they must take the initiative, and point out to the people that there is no institution in the world that can do so much for the negro race as the grand old Mother Church. In order to do something there must be permanent organization. In the present congress there are represented forty societies and at least 2,000 colored Catholics. Mr. McGhee then suggested that the congress be created into a national one, with an Executive Board of eleven members, and that it be empowered to issue certificates of membership. It was resolved that the matter be referred to a special committee of nine, who were subsequently named by the chair.

Mr. McGhee presented a memorial outlining the plan of forming a permanent organization. . . .

FRATERNAL VISITORS.

President Spencer then introduced Rev. Dr. W. H. Hurd and Rev. Mr. Jones, of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, and George W. Bell, State Senator-elect of the Eastern district of Arkansas, each of whom made a short address. After the opening of the afternoon session, Robert L. Ruffin, of Boston, read an exhaustive and very interesting paper in reply to a recent article in the *Christian Recorder*, a non-Catholic paper, asking "Wherein do the Catholics show superior race virtue as favorable to the negro?"

Mr. Ruffin began by referring to the negro as found in ancient history and the ruined monuments that bear witness of his genius in his native Africa.

Civilization and he from the beginning have been found marching down the highway of time together. His dusky face peers out from the sacred page of the Holy Writ. Eight millions of the negro race are to-day part and parcel of the bone and sinew of this great republic.

The most important problem now forcing itself upon the attention of thinking men is, What shall be done religiously for this vast army of colored American citizens?

THE CHURCH'S ATTITUDE.

It cannot be denied that from the very beginning the attitude of the Catholic Church towards the man with the dark skin has been one of love.

The position of the Church on the question of slavery is only to her praise. It lifted humanity to a higher moral plane in everything and having done that men would recognize the universal brotherhood of God and the universal brotherhood of man, which would make slavery impossible. To have attacked it at its dawning would have been inexpedient.

As soon, however, as the Church had gained a sufficiently strong foothold in the world, her position on the slave question was plainly declared, and that position was this: No man has a right to hold another man as a slave.

The Catholic Church has antagonized slavery, not by indefinite sentiment, but by actual legislation in her councils, beginning with that of Elvira in A. D. 305.

The attitude of the Catholic Church towards the negro in the South before and since the war was spoken of, and the efforts that have been made through schools and colleges and ecclesiastical institutions of various sorts. Outside of the Catholic Church the colored man has no ecclesiastical standing and is tolerated at arm's length. In the language of an eminent Catholic, "There is not so much as a spider's thread of prejudice between the colored man and the highest office in the gift of the Church, even though he should some day aspire to occupy the Papal chair at Rome."

At the conclusion of the reading of the paper a rising vote of thanks was tendered to Mr. Ruffin and the manuscript ordered to be printed in full in one of the daily papers.

A DELEGATE INSULTED.

An Ex-Diplomat Refused Admission to a Barber Shop.

Dr. John E. Thompson, who was Minister to Hayti under President Cleveland, advocated race pride.

He declared yesterday was the first time in his life that he was refused admission to a barber shop and that, too, by a man of his own race who worked in the shop at Fifteenth and Lombard streets, and who closed the door in his face and said the shop was exclusively for white people. "I represented," said Mr. Thompson, "under the administration of Grover Cleveland, one of the greatest men who lives to-day, a man who knows no race or religion, sixty-eight millions of people in a foreign country, and when I come to Philadelphia I am denied admission into a white man's barber shop." . . . ■

Philadelphia Times, Jan. 7, 1892.

The overall tenor of the congress gathering held in Philadelphia likely caused some anxiety among church leaders as African Americans became more vocal in their criticisms of the church.

and called for levying a tax on all affiliated organization members. In addition, a building and loan association was proposed that would establish a fund that could be used to erect churches and schools for the use of African Americans.

During the meeting, delegates took the time to recognize champions of their cause within the church. For example, John H. Smith proposed a resolution praising the “generosity and labor” of Philadelphia’s Sister Katharine Drexel. Besides Katharine and her sisters’ decision to direct much of the Drexel family fortune to missions work, this pious woman had established a religious order in 1891, the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament for Indians and Colored People.

The overall tenor of the congress gathering held in Philadelphia likely caused some anxiety among church leaders as African Americans became more vocal in their criticisms of the church. In a letter produced for public consumption at the close of the meeting, the delegates offered the following inspiring vision, perhaps as elusive today as it was then: “let us continue to be patient and faithful, praying to God our Father to hasten the time when the Church without discrimination as to race, color or nationality, will be more closely united, not only by the bonds of common faith, but that she may be able through her Catholic sincerity, to establish forever that most sacred unity of Christian brotherhood among her children, thus enabling us all, the clergy and the laity to repeat the words of the Royal Prophet, ‘Behold how good and how pleasant a thing it is for brethren to dwell together in unity.’”

In the aftermath of the assembly, black Catholics in Philadelphia were eager to carry forward the work of the congress. To this end, a number of leading black Catholics from Philadelphia came together to publish a newspaper. Among them were editors Sam B. Hart and Thomas W. Swann and reporters Arthur Arnott, Martin J. Lehman, Stephen Davis, and George Washington. The *Journal*, as the newspaper was titled, reported the news from a black Catholic

perspective. In the pages of the newspaper prominent black Catholics from the city were eulogized, including Mary Jackson, a pious woman of color and resident of Lombard Street who operated the Ladies’ Ice Cream Salon, a longtime fixture in the city. The editors also included clippings from the doings of prominent Catholic leaders such as Daniel Rudd and Reverend Charles Uncles, a recently ordained African American priest. The newspaper

unabashedly claimed that the “Catholic Church was the only true liberator of the Negro.” It was, however, the Catholicism of Archbishop John Ireland and other supporters of the complete removal of the color line that these increasingly vocal black Catholic leaders seem to have been promoting. Prominently displayed on the editorial page of the newspaper in a number of *Journal* issues were the words of Archbishop Ireland: “They who exercise prejudice against their colored brethren contradict the principles of justice and charity of the Father of Mercy, who lives on the altar. No institution that closes its doors on the colored orphan is worthy of the name of charitable or religious.”

In retrospect, these words offered an indictment against those Catholics who did not live up to the egalitarian message of the church. Church officials permitted only two more meetings of the congress. Some have attributed the uneasiness of the church hierarchy to permit these assemblies to the increasingly radical nature of the gatherings.

Whatever the reason, it would be decades before the church fully appreciated the prophetic character of the uncomfortable truths expressed by leaders of the Colored Catholic Congress Movement gathered in Philadelphia in the winter of 1892. ■



Gary Agee currently serves as associate professor of church history at Anderson University's School of Theology. He is also lead pastor at the Beechwood Church of God near Gratis, Ohio. This article is drawn from his recent book, A Cry for Justice: Daniel Rudd and His Life in Black Catholicism, Journalism, and Activism, 1854–1933 (2011).



"It Was Our Parish, After All":

Immigrants and the Catholic Church

BY ROBERT M. ZECKER

In April 2014 the parishioners of Monongahela's St. Anthony's faced a dilemma that had become all too common. Looking at near-empty pews and heavy costs associated with aging church buildings, the diocese of Pittsburgh decided that St. Anthony's, which had been founded in 1904 by Italian immigrants, had to close. Not all parishioners, though, took the news with simple resignation. When the 100-year-old church's last weekend arrived, parishioners organized a sit-in and overnight vigil to protest the diocese's decision. When the diocese turned off the electricity after the final Mass and refused to allow protesters to have food brought in, the final protesters left. Though they appealed to the Vatican, the diocese's decision was upheld.

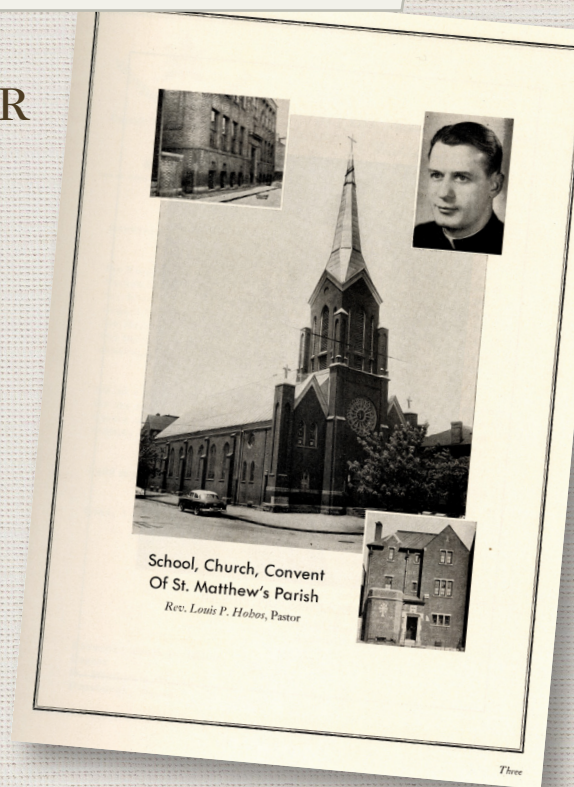
The faithful of St. Anthony's have not been alone. Wilmerding Catholics can recall a time when Ss. Peter and Paul Parish sponsored twice-weekly Ukrainian language classes and when so many parishioners jammed the church at its 1929 dedication that the souvenir photograph showed parishioners spilling out onto the lawn. Faced with repair costs of more than \$75,000 and a reality that already by the 1960s second-generation parishioners no longer understood Ukrainian and left for Roman Rite churches closer to home, the church was shuttered in 2013.

One of the most celebrated of such cases was the demise of St. Nicholas Croatian Catholic Church in the Troy Hill

neighborhood of Pittsburgh. St. Nicholas had its roots in the first Croatian Catholic parish in the United States, established in 1894. The original parish moved to nearby Millvale in 1900 and a second parish was authorized in Troy Hill, where the parish erected a church in 1901. When this Pittsburgh church was targeted to make way for a highway widening, parishioners and preservationists began a campaign to save, at least, the murals and stained-glass windows donated by and commemorating Croatian immigrant communities from around the country. Plans to turn the church into a Croatian heritage center came to naught, and the building was demolished in 2013. Fortunately, St. Nicholas Croatian Catholic Church in Millvale, Pennsylvania, with its own stunning murals painted in the 1930s and '40s by Croatian artist Maxo Vanka, survives and continues to serve as a center of Croatian heritage.

Were closings of ethnic parishes the inevitable result of Slavic and Italian Americans' assimilation? Even defenders of such churches noted the decline of dedicated parishioners. Did the financial reality of dwindling worshipers and weekly collections come into conflict with parishioners' sentimental attachments to ethnic parishes of their youth?

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, millions of Catholics came to America. For most southern and eastern European migrants, the passage was often only



(LEFT) Interior of Holy Ghost Eastern Byzantine Rite Catholic Church, Philadelphia. From *75th Anniversary, Holy Ghost Byzantine Church* (Philadelphia, 1966). Holy Ghost Byzantine Church Records. (ABOVE) St. Matthew Church, Pittsburgh. From *Golden Jubilee of St. Matthew's Church, South Side, Pittsburgh, Pa.* (Zlaté Jubileum Kostola sv. Matúša, South Side, Pittsburgh, Pa.) (Pittsburgh, 1950). St. Matthew Church (Pittsburgh, PA) Collection.



Catholics Consider Closing 2 Churches

By PAULA HERBUT
Of The Bulletin Staff

The two Roman Catholic Slovak ethnic churches in Philadelphia are under study for possible closing by the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Philadelphia.

"The need is being studied to see whether they should be consolidated or closed," the Rev. Leo McKenzie, director of communications with the archdiocese, said in confirming a now year-long study. He added that "maybe neither will be closed."

If closed, the two will become part of an increasing trend of closing "national" or ethnic parishes in an era of a decreasing number of priests.

The two parishes are St. Agnes Slovak Church at 4th and Brown Sts. in the Northern Liberties section of Philadelphia, which has begun fighting against possible closing, and St. John Nepomucene Slovak Church at 9th and Wharton Sts. in South Philadelphia.

St. Agnes has a membership of 206 families and is financially secure, said Mrs. Eleanor Krkoska, spokesperson for the parishioners fighting for the church and the president of the church's Women's Sodality.

"I could understand it if we were a burden to them (the archdiocese)," she said. "But if we're self-sufficient, I can't understand why they would want to close it."

"It's not only our place of worship, but also it is our cultural heritage center as well," she said.

Parishioners of the church sent a five-member delegation to meet the chancellor of the archdiocese last month asking that the church be kept open, members of the parish said.

Today, they have scheduled a "peaceful demonstration" outside of the cardinal's residence on City Ave. to "beg,

solicit, his consideration to keep our church open," Mrs. Krkoska said.

In one of the letters to Cardinal Krol, the parishioners listed 29 names of people of Slovak heritage now in territorial parishes who have said they will return to St. Agnes if the church is kept open, she said.

Parishioners at the church come from Philadelphia and the suburbs. Many, like Mrs. Krkoska, grew up in the church, she said, the children of immigrants. "We're trying to impress upon them (the Archdiocese) how much we care," she said.

Father McKenzie said that Cardinal Krol, who was the child of immigrant parents and who grew up in national Polish parishes, was sensitive to the emotions of the parishioners.

But the national parishes, which were set up during immigration years and draw their parishioners from ethnic groups rather from geographical boundaries, "were started to help the people adjust to the country (America)," Father McKenzie said. "It becomes a question of whether to maintain it (a national church) when the original purpose has ended."

One problem the archdiocese is facing is the diminishing number of priests over the past decade while the total number of churches has remained more constant.

There are 1,627 priests in the five-county archdiocese this year, compared to 1,748 in 1967. There are 310 churches, including 17 missions with no full-time priest, compared to 312 churches, including 13 missions, in 1967. ■

Philadelphia Evening Bulletin, Apr. 16, 1977, M. Mark Stolarik Papers.

St. Agnes-St. John Nepomucene Roman Catholic Church, formerly St. Agnes Catholic Church, 2008. Photograph by Louis Meehan.
Historical Society of Pennsylvania PhilaPlace Collection.

intended as a temporary sojourn abroad; whether intending to stay permanently or only looking to put in a few years to earn enough for a farm back home, however, the migrants inevitably missed the kind of church they could call their own. Ethnic parishes often had their roots in immigrant initiative, and served for decades as more than spiritual homes. Parishes built through efforts of laypeople served as social centers, educational facilities, and sources of economic and emotional support as southern and eastern European immigrants acculturated to America.

At first, Slavs often worshiped at German parishes, since many Slovak and Polish migrants from Germany and Austria-Hungary were somewhat familiar with German language and rituals. But their welcome was often grudging. Slovak newcomers to Philadelphia, for example, were directed to say Mass in the basement of a German parish. As one man recollected, his fellow Slovaks "didn't want to go to the German church, St. Aloysius, or the Irish church, which was St. Gabriel . . . [I]t was a crime not to go to your own ethnic church."

To atone for this crime, Philadelphia Slovaks established a lay society in order to found a parish. Representatives from several scattered Slovak communities served on the committee that raised funds to purchase an old Presbyterian church. The selection of the church site in 1902 required compromise, as migrants from eastern Slovakia lived either in far South Philadelphia or in a distant northern enclave, Nicetown, while western Slovaks had primarily settled in Northern Liberties. The parish, St. John Nepomucene, which served Slovaks from far-flung parts of Philadelphia (as well as from two disparate Slovak regions), ended up located in nobody's neighborhood, at Little Italy's Ninth and Wharton.

Elsewhere, trustees at Pittsburgh's Slovak St. Matthew's made large loans to the parish to help erect ornate edifices and get the church on its feet. When they weren't paid back, the Pittsburgh

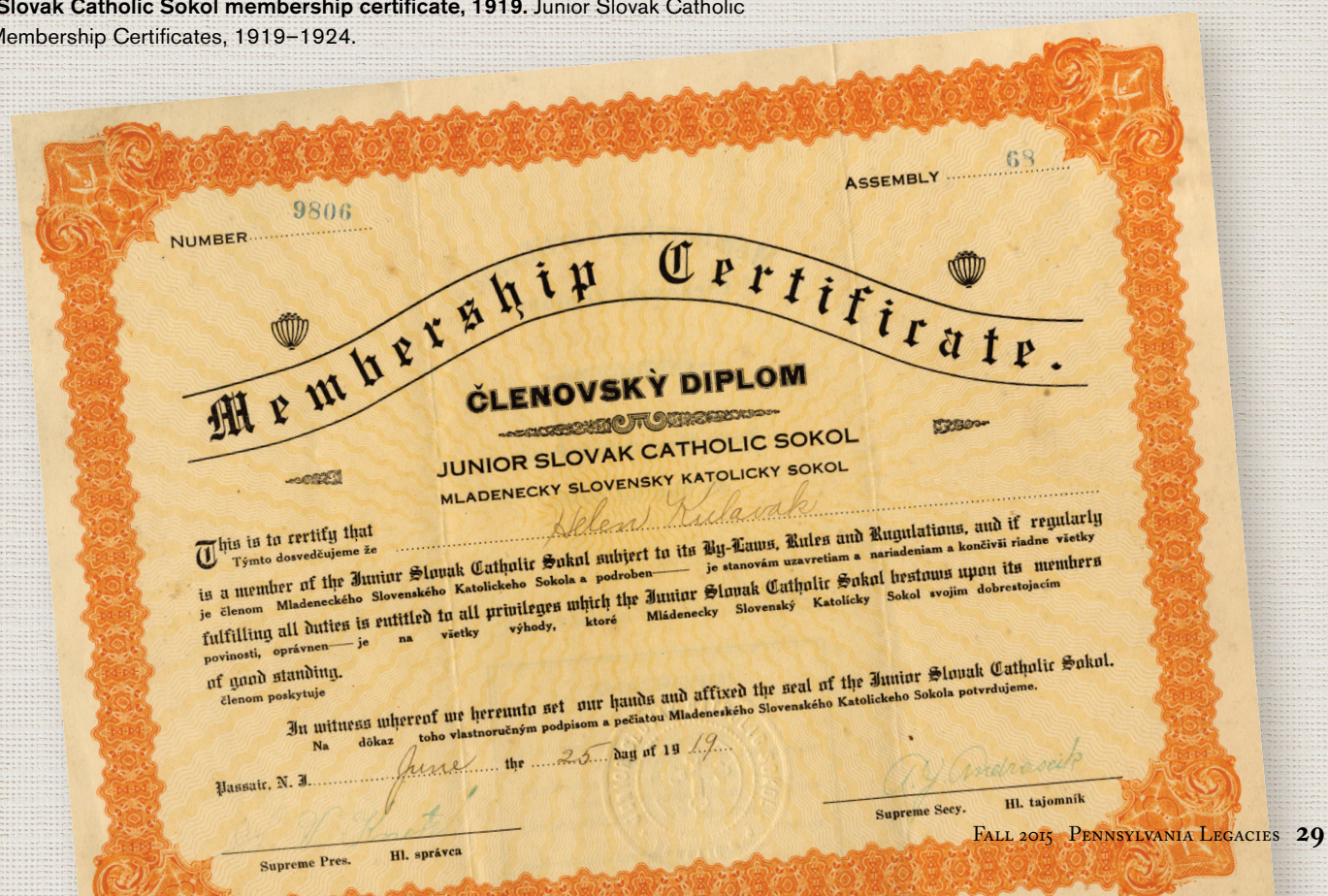
trustees hired a lawyer and took the church to court in 1909. The issue was still unresolved in 1911, so three trustees resumed efforts to get their loans repaid. St. Matthew's pastor, Father Uhlyriak, complained to the bishop, seeking dismissal of the trustees. The bishop agreed the trustees were violating diocesan regulations and summarily dismissed them. In such battles we see the prefiguration of later contests over who controlled these ethnic churches.

In Johnstown, the Slovak Catholic church was built with a loan taken out by parishioners, and the Byzantine Catholic church relied on parishioners' weekly contributions for church operating expenses as well as an annual assessment per family of \$20 above the usual collections to build a school. Similarly, the city's Ukrainian Catholic Church wrestled with a \$16,000 debt into the 1920s. Some cash-strapped Johnstownners, finding these obligations onerous, paid dues in produce from their gardens.

The immigrant faithful followed narrow paths of chain migration from distinct regions of Poland, Italy, and Slovakia to discrete towns and even neighborhoods. In Philadelphia, St. John Nepomucene attendees overwhelmingly came from a few Slovak localities. Migrants from Lubišov, Hankovce, Ladičov, and nearby villages in Zemplín, a far eastern province, predominated. But from the far western province of Trenčín, another chain migration sent Slovak worshipers from Dolný and Horný Hričov and nearby villages to St. John's as well.

At St. John's, as at other immigrant churches, ethnic fellowship was put to the test. Westerners and easterners spoke dialects sometimes regarded as mutually unintelligible, and westerners from Hričov were suspected of lording it over their country cousins. One former St. John's collector recalled, "In as far as their work habits and everything else, they were as different as night and day. The Nicetown people, which was coming from Zemplín, they were agricultural people. . . . Yet the [Hričov] group. They were more

Junior Slovak Catholic Sokol membership certificate, 1919. Junior Slovak Catholic Sokol Membership Certificates, 1919–1924.



Dedication to the parish was reinforced by the status one derived from serving the church. Slavic immigrants derided as “Hunkies” during the workweek were transformed on Sunday into trustees and fraternal society presidents.

or less artisans. . . . [They] had the feeling they were sort of on a higher plane. . . . When they seen one another, they wouldn't jump around and hug one another. They might shake hands. But doggone it, they didn't jump around and play ring around the rosy.” Similar interethnic tensions existed in Johnstown, where some Slovaks resented the “German Slovaks,” who were said to consider “themselves something better,” and who sometimes retained allegiance to German St. Mary's, even after Slovak St. Stephen's was founded.

Only five years after the founding of St. John Nepomucene, the Hričov faithful founded their own parish, St. Agnes, in Northern Liberties in 1907. Most of the parishioners who worshiped there were from Hričov and other Trenčín villages, whereas Zemplín natives from Nicetown and beyond continued to make a journey of 12 miles or more to a parish that was “theirs.” In this old world localism, Philadelphians were not alone. Slovaks from different parts of Zemplín went to separate parts of Pittsburgh and worshiped with their “own kind” in Allegheny City and the South Side, while natives of Šariš province favored the South Side. Likewise, Poles settled in the Strip District of Pittsburgh by the 1880s, while others settled in the South Side, Herron Hill, and in Lawrenceville. Enduring localism contributed to the sense among parishioners that the church “belonged” to the faithful families originating in a few close-knit villages.

This pattern prevailed even in smaller settlements. In the western Pennsylvania town of Leechburg, natives of Nova Bystrica, Trenčín, predominated. Of 225 members enrolled in the Leechburg National Slovak Society lodge between 1894 and 1911, only 18 gave a hometown outside of Trenčín. The anthracite town of Old Forge was settled predominantly by natives of Sulín, Hajtovka, Malý Lipník, and Plavnica, adjacent towns in the eastern Piastane region. The parishes that were built in these smaller towns were in large measure localized, extended kin-based communities.

Dedication to the parish was reinforced by the status one derived from serving the church. Slavic immigrants derided as “Hunkies” during the workweek were transformed on Sunday into trustees

and fraternal society presidents. Laborers and small shopkeepers of Philadelphia's Holy Ghost Byzantine Catholic Church gained status among their co-ethnics largely through service to church and fraternal club. “Sunday was the only day out,” Michael K. recalled. “The only time these people got dressed up was when they went to church on Sunday.” At St. John Nepomucene, regional dues collectors were also almost exclusively drawn from men who worked at heavy industry jobs as “unskilled” laborers. One such collector,

Michael Lichvar, was listed in the city directory as “laborer, factory,” but at St. John's was designated “Pán” (Mister) Lichvar—a notable, a somebody. The psychic rewards that came through earning such internal status markers likely deepened commitment to one's church.

Slavic immigrants, particularly, drew on Old World traditions of lay governance of church communities. In Galicia and other regions of Europe, collectors and trustees helped run multivillage Roman Catholic, Byzantine, and Orthodox churches; in America, regional collectors and trustees were similarly appointed. Such a regional lay trusteeship group in 1895 drew up the petition that invited Father Coloman Gasparik to Pittsburgh to serve as priest of the new Slovak church of St. Elizabeth's. Gasparik stayed and served until his death in 1939. Similarly, in Philadelphia, St. Agnes lay officials in 1921 petitioned the archbishop

to remove a disliked priest, and Father John York came in as the replacement, staying 42 years.

Trustees faced a daunting task, for unlike in Austria-Hungary, parishes could not rely on government support, and parishioners were the source of revenue on which start-up churches relied. Priests' salaries and other expenses were largely met by members' contributions. This call for financial contributions sometimes caused tensions with priests. As historian June Granatir Alexander remarks, “One of the harshest criticisms leveled against Slovak priests resulted from fees assessed for some religious services, especially for hearing yearly confessions.” One Slovak parishioner, irate at the travel and administrative costs associated with making his yearly confession in Pittsburgh, indignantly told a priest, “I



did not want to buy salvation.” Other parishioners from St. Agnes who recalled the venerable Father York as “like a father to all the people,” resisted when he demanded rent from groups such as the Catholic Sokol lodge meeting at St. Agnes Hall. As one parishioner reasoned, “Why should we pay rent? It was our parish, after all. . . . [W]e built the parish, it belonged to us.”

Such run-ins aside, most newcomers remained dedicated church members, for in an era when nativists stigmatized non-Nordics as “mongrels,” the parish was a vital and vibrant social support network. Polish, Italian, and Slovak churches, with their schools, halls, and gymnasiums, were centers where ethnic Catholics enjoyed theater groups, bands and choirs, sports teams, and special celebrations and festivals on ethnic holidays. Sokols (Polish and Slovak gymnastics groups) also introduced immigrants and their children to basketball, baseball, and bowling teams sponsored by the church. In Johnstown, one of the only times native-born residents embraced Slavs as “our Johnstownners” was when they triumphed athletically.

Already, though, by the 1940s many ethnic parishes faced declining enrollments. In explaining the decline of his parish and its theater, music, and sports clubs, a Bethlehem Slovak argued “two things killed it—television and the car.” As members suburbanized, and the second generation assimilated, a trip back to an older city parish that offered a homily in an only half-remembered Polish or Slovak seemed not worth the effort. Deindustrialization in communities such as Bethlehem made it harder to commit to churches in places increasingly deemed dangerous and remote.

The alienation of second-generation Slavic Americans sometimes was compounded by immigrant pioneers’ reluctance

to relinquish leadership positions. In Johnstown, it was not until after World War II that eastern European ethnic parishes and clubs would allow second-generation members to assume offices. This may have hastened the decline of ethnic parishes among the “locked out” second generation. As some of the gains of a middle-class life in suburbia were opened up to Slavic Americans courtesy of the New Deal and unionization, the ethnic church was traded in for a territorial parish in one’s new neighborhood.

Perhaps understandably, diocesan officials faced with mounting expenses and dwindling attendance at older ethnic churches imposed parish consolidation and then closing as the only way to spread scarce resources. For attendees, though, the closing of a parish they had built with money, service, and commitment was a traumatic blow. As early as 1979, the Philadelphia Archdiocese ordered the consolidation of St. Agnes and St. John Nepomucene, reversing the severance of 1907. At first St. Agnes was slated for closing, but the parish faithful petitioned the archbishop and made the case they were the more viable church. The archbishop reversed himself, and St. John Nepomucene was shut and soon bulldozed. Regrettably, Catholics have faced such difficult choices in the intervening years all too frequently. ■

Bob Zecker is associate professor of history at St. Francis Xavier University in Nova Scotia, Canada, where he teaches courses in US history with specialties in race, immigration, and ethnicity in America. He is the author of three books, most recently Race and America’s Immigrant Press: How the Slovaks Were Taught to Think Like White People (2011).

(LEFT INSET) Slovak Catholic Sokol Gymnastic-Athletic Exhibition poster. Balch Institute Ethnic Posters Collection. **(BELOW)** Father York with children in front of St. Agnes Roman Catholic Church, Philadelphia, ca. 1920. St. Agnes Roman Catholic Church Photographs.



TEACHERS' PAGE

The Vatican and Social Change: The Pope Visits Philadelphia

BY ALICIA PARKS

Introduction

Catholicism has a long and noteworthy history in Philadelphia, from the first recorded Mass celebrated in 1707, to the 200 parishes established between 1844 and 1924, and the founding of our nation's first seminary. It is estimated that currently 35 percent of the population of greater Philadelphia are Catholic, making Catholicism the single largest religious denomination in the area. Now, as the location of the 2015 World Meeting of Families, all eyes are on Philadelphia as it welcomes Pope Francis. Francis's visit provides a chance to look back at the first papal visit to the city, in 1979, by John Paul II, and then to compare that earlier visit to Francis's in 2015.

Rather than considering these papal visits as solely reflecting the beliefs or opinions of one religious group, it is useful to examine them through the lens of community history. The popes, and the discussion surrounding them and their visits, engage Catholics and non-Catholics alike. How does the visit of a pope affect all of the people who live in a place? Or, perhaps more importantly, how do the views expressed in the writings and speeches around the time of the papal visits reflect community concerns or spur community action?

Pope John Paul II was born Karol Jozef Wojtyła in Wadowice, Poland. He lived in Poland during Nazi occupation and was ordained a priest after World War II, in 1946. He made history by becoming the first non-Italian Pope in over 400 years. Over one million Philadelphians greeted him as he spoke in Logan Square on October 3, 1979. His visit garnered both praise, for his ideas that concerned helping the poor and human equality, as well as

frustration, for his stance on issues such as contraception and female seminarians.

Pope Francis, born Jorge Mario Bergoglio in Buenos Aires, Argentina, also made history as the first non-European pope. While his message is similar to that of Pope John Paul II, he has stated that he believes the church has become too focused on issues such as abortion and gay rights, going so far as to say, "If someone is gay and he searches for the Lord and has good will, who am I to judge?" Both popes were named Person of the Year by *Time* magazine, John Paul II in 1994 and Francis in 2013. Francis has also been named one of the World's Greatest Leaders by *Fortune* magazine.

In this lesson, students will consider how the statements of the two popes have drawn public attention to and influenced opinions on pressing social concerns. John Paul II, in the 1970s, espoused a message of peace, humility, simplicity, and selflessness that resonated with many at a time when technology was rapidly increasing in the average American's daily life, values of individual fulfillment seemed to supplant those of social responsibility, and the Cold War was still an ongoing struggle. His writings spoke of helping the poor, preserving the environment for future generations, and avoiding materialism. In the summer of 2015, Francis released his encyclical, *Laudato Si'*, which calls for humanity to recognize and change its environmental impact. Many of his ideas mirror those of John Paul II, and Francis even quotes his predecessor, writing, "Every effort to protect and improve our world entails profound changes in 'lifestyles, models of production and consumption, and the established structures of power which today govern societies.'"

This lesson asks students to complete an inquiry-based analysis of news articles from the popes' visits, examining them within the context of global issues such as the human rights, poverty, the environment, and

materialism. When looking at the articles surrounding both papal visits, students should think about the point of view of the authors, the ideas presented by the popes, and the interpretation of those ideas. Engage students by asking questions throughout such as, "How does this interpretation fit the larger context of history both then and now, and how was it influential?" These articles offer an opportunity to discuss a diversity of opinions within the community and to tie political and social history to literacy standards.

Big Idea

- World history continues to influence Pennsylvanians, citizens of the United States, and individuals throughout the world today.

Essential Questions

- How can the story of a person on another continent, past or present, influence your life?

Concepts:

- History demonstrates the diverse cultural heritage of many peoples throughout the world.
- Textual evidence, material artifacts, the built environment, and historic sites are central to understanding world history.

Competencies

- Analyze a primary source for accuracy and bias, and then connect it to a time and place in world history.

Objectives

- Students will be able to:
- Analyze multiple sources on a topic and conclude the point of view of the author.

- Understand how ideas and opinions can change over time.

Primary Sources

Articles from Pope John Paul II's visit:

- "The Last Papal Visit to Philadelphia: John Paul II in 1979," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, Oct. 4, 1979 (http://www.philly.com/philly/news/pope/The_last_papal_visit_to_Philadelphia_John_Paul_II_in_1979.html)
- "City Greet Pope John Paul II," *Daily Pennsylvanian*, Oct. 4, 1979 (http://www.library.upenn.edu/docs/kislak/dp/1979/1979_10_04.pdf)
- Pope John Paul II's Homily from Logan Square, Oct. 3, 1979 (<http://www.fjp2.com/us/john-paul-ii/online-library/homilies/349-mass-at-the-logan-circle-in-philadelphia>)

Articles remembering Pope John Paul II's visit:

- Cardinal Rigali, "Thirtieth Anniversary of Pope John Paul II's Visit to Philadelphia," 2009 (<http://catholicphilly.com/2009/10/archbishop-chaput/weekly-message/thirtieth-anniversary-of-pope-john-paul-iis-visit-to-philadelphia/>)
- "Reflecting on Pope John Paul II's Visit to Philadelphia in 1979" (http://www.buckscountycouriertimes.com/tabs/papalvisit/reflecting-on-pope-john-paul-ii-s-visit-to-philly/article_fe69c2c4-ecbd-58d4-8182-90ae732bfef5.html)
- "Philly Will be the Safest Place in the World" *Our Sunday Visitor* (<https://www.osv.com/OSVNewsweekly/InFocus/Article/TabId/721/ArtMID/13629/ArticleID/17235/Philly-%E2%80%98will-be-the-safest-place-in-the-world%E2%80%99.aspx>)

Articles on Pope Francis:

- Pope Francis, *Laudato Si*, readers' guide (<http://ncronline.org/blogs/faith-and-justice/readers-guide-laudato-si>).
- For the most up to date information on Pope Francis's visit, check Philly.com, ncronline.org, or catholicphilly.com and search Pope Francis.



Instructional Procedures

Begin the inquiry with a connecting question that will get students thinking about the primary sources in connection to their own lives. Sample questions could be: What role does religion play in your life? What do you consider to be your culture? Do the religious views of others ever influence your actions or beliefs? Then, to set the context of the 1970s, have students read a book such as *Silent Spring* by Rachel Carson. Although it is written in the 1960s, it was an important influence in the fight against the use of chemicals in the natural world. In addition, check out websites such as atomicbombmuseum.org, www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/primary-resources/lbj-union64/, and EarthDay.org to set the pope's visit into the context of increasing environmental awareness, concerns about poverty, and the continuing effects of the Cold War.

Introduce Pope John Paul II by providing a brief overview of his life then ask students to read Pope John Paul II's homily from when he visited Philadelphia in 1979. Ask students to write down the main ideas of the the pope was trying to convey and how they fit in with what they know about the 1970s. Next, have students read two primary sources from those listed and write down the main ideas from each. Have students answer the following questions: What was the author's point of view? What did the articles say were the main ideas of the pope's message? Was the article positive or negative? Students can then compare and contrast the local and national articles as well as compare the articles to what the pope actually said in his homily. Do you think the articles understood the pope's message? Why or why not?

To understand the bigger picture, students should then place these events in the

context of world events. Why was the message important at the time and how did it relate to issues such as the human rights, poverty, the environment, and consumer culture? Discuss how the 1970s was a time of increased environmental awareness and political participation.

Take the conversation into the present day and discuss if the issues addressed by Pope John Paul II are still of concern today. Did it create any change in the actions of Philadelphians or Americans? As a further discussion, compare and contrast the visit in 1979 to the visit in 2015. What can we learn from this history? Can one person change community attitudes?

Assessment

Have students write about whether or not they believe Pope John Paul II and/or Pope Francis influenced Pennsylvanians. Make sure they emphasize why or why not, citing evidence from the sources and their own research.

Alicia Parks is the Wells Fargo Education Manager at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

PA Standards

Grade Level: High School

Duration: 60 minutes

PA Standards: 8.4.4B, 8.4.6.B, 8.4.8.B

Common Core Standards for Reading

Historical Text: CC.8.5.9-12.F, CC.8.5.9-12.I

The material referenced in this lesson and additional resources are available on our website at <http://hsp.org/education/unit-plans/the-vatican-and-social-change-the-pope-visits-philadelphia>.

TEACHERS' TURN

Bringing Religion into the Classroom

BY AMY COHEN

Many teachers shy away from teaching about religion. Controversies over the division of church and state, the personal nature of spiritual belief, and the complexity of speaking objectively about a subjective realm all tend to steer teachers away from broaching topics connected to religion.

In Pennsylvania, however, diversity of religious experience and openness to different belief systems is our signature founding principal. It is particularly important that teachers here use the classroom as a place to learn about religion's historical and ongoing role in the lives of Pennsylvanians. The 2015 World Meeting of Families in Philadelphia gives us a "teachable moment" to explore Catholicism in our state's history.

By focusing on Catholics, our understanding of state and national history is broadened rather than narrowed. Catholic history opens a window onto racial-, ethnic-, class-, and gender-based conflicts and compromises that have long characterized participants in William Penn's "Holy Experiment."

What follows are discussion questions, classroom activities, and suggested online resources to help you and your students make the most of this issue of *Legacies*.

Conflict and Community in Philadelphia's Catholic Church

- As students read "Conflict and Community," have them keep track of historical controversies within Pennsylvania's Catholic Church by filling in a graphic organizer like the one below. Note that the introduction to the article focuses on conflict between Irish Catholics and Irish Protestants, but most of the article is about intrareligious issues.

- The closing paragraphs of the article center on current conflicts within the Pennsylvania Catholic Church. Have students note these issues as they have done for historical controversies. Then, have them add any national or international points of contention within the Catholic Church (e.g. questions about female priests, openly gay congregants, etc.) based on either research or background knowledge.
- Compare the two graphic organizers. What types of conflicts have diminished

and which have become more pronounced? Was Catholicism more or less divided than other religious denominations in the past? What about today?

Sisters and Saints: The Catholic Faces of Philadelphia

- During the mid-1880s, family friend Bishop James O'Connor tried to

Ethnic Tensions	Church Governance	Religious Practice

	Ethnic Tensions	Church Governance	Religious Practice
Pennsylvania			
National/ International			

convince Katharine Drexel that she could do more good through donating generously to charitable causes than by becoming a part of religious life. Clearly, Drexel accomplished a great deal; she was canonized as a saint, and her legacy continues through the ongoing work of the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament and in the many schools that she founded. Do you think that Bishop O'Connor was wrong in giving this advice to Katherine Drexel in particular or do you think that this was bad advice in general for a devout, wealthy young woman?

If you live in the Philadelphia region, you can visit the National Shrine of St. Katharine Drexel in Bensalem. For more information go to <http://www.katharinedrexel.org>.

- In spite of founding a congregation dedicated to helping Native Americans and African Americans, Katharine Drexel refused to allow black women to join the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament. She feared that white women, even those ready to devote their lives to helping oppressed people of color, would be unwilling to share a residence with African Americans. Given that she founded the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament during the period known as the *nadir* (low point) of American race relations, was this decision wise, or was it just another example of pervasive racism?

For more information, an interactive timeline, archival photos, etc., go to <http://www.katharinedrexel.org>.

- Sister Mary Scullion can be labeled a celebrity. She regularly encounters rich, famous, and powerful people, she has won numerous prestigious awards, and she was even listed as one of the “100 Most Influential People in the World” by *Time* magazine in 2009. Most women religious throughout history, however, remain anonymous. Indeed, we don't even know the names of the Sisters of Charity who died along with the cholera-stricken railroad workers they were attempting to serve. Is there nobility in obscurity, or can

a politically engaged and well-connected sister accomplish even more? Is there any potential downside to a sister becoming well known?

To learn more about the Sisters of Charity and to see a reenactment of their work with cholera victims, view Urban Trinity: The Story of Catholic Philadelphia at <http://urbantrinityfilm.com>. You can find interview footage of Sister Mary Scullion at the same website.

Racial Equality, Catholicism, and the Third Colored Catholic Congress

- During the 1892 meeting of the Colored Catholic Congress in Philadelphia, one of the issues discussed was a lack of educational opportunities, particularly in vocational training, which severely curtailed prospects for employment among African Americans. How would the delegates to the 1892 meeting view the current educational and employment landscape? What has improved, stayed the same, or grown worse in the past 120 years? Overall, would they be impressed by the gains or disheartened by the lack of progress?

To learn more about current concerns and activities among African American Catholics, visit the website of the National Black Catholic Congress <http://nbccongress.org>.

- Rev. Augustus Tolton celebrated Mass and gave a speech on the first day of the 1892 Colored Catholic Congress. Tolton spoke about being born into slavery in Missouri and fleeing to Illinois at age seven, along with his mother. In both Catholic elementary school and while studying to be a priest, members of the Catholic clergy stood by Tolton when white students threatened to leave school due to his presence. There is currently a movement to push for Tolton's candidacy for sainthood. To learn more about this fascinating church leader, go to: <http://www.toltoncanonization.org>. Based

on what you've learned, should Tolton become the first African American saint?

There are numerous parallels between the lives of Rev. Augustus Tolton and Rev. Richard Allen, born nearly 100 years earlier. Once students have had an opportunity to learn about Tolton, show them the seven-minute film, Richard Allen: Apostle of Freedom (available at <http://www.historyofphilly.com>), and then create a Venn diagram comparing the two religious leaders.

“It Was Our Parish, After All”: Immigrants and the Catholic Church

- In the article, Michael K. is quoted as saying of members of the Slavic Holy Ghost Byzantine Catholic Church to Philadelphia, “The only time these people got dressed up was when they went to church on Sunday.” In what other ways did participation in church life lend dignity to the lives of immigrants to Pennsylvania?

For a story of the first Italian national parish in the United States, Philadelphia's St. Mary Magdalen de Pazzi, go to <http://www.urbantrinityfilm.com>.

- In describing the decline of participation in church activities, a Slovak in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, declares, “two things killed it—television and the car.” Explain this quotation. According to the author, what is another possible reason that second-generation Americans were less active in the church than their parents and grandparents?

To read an analysis of current decline in participation in the Catholic Church, go to <http://www.pewforum.org/2013/03/13/strong-catholic-identity-at-a-four-decade-low-in-us/>.

Amy Cohen is a former middle and high school social studies teacher and is currently the director of education for History Making Productions.

GENERATIONS

Finding Your Catholic Roots in Pennsylvania

BY CHRISTINE FRIEND

We all have unique family histories, stories of many generations. Those with deep Catholic roots in Pennsylvania are fortunate that so many early sacramental registers survive, including several that date from colonial times. The Catholic Church has long documented its members' life milestones through these records, which are a treasure trove for those seeking to know their ancestors' stories, especially since the vital records kept by each county in Pennsylvania vary widely in scope. For example, vital records for the city of Philadelphia begin with the year 1860, so church records are often the only source for earlier genealogical records. Church records may in some cases be used as legal documents when civil registries do not exist. Early Pennsylvania was home to small country mission churches where a priest visited monthly as well as to large urban parishes where thousands worshipped. Records from these parishes, especially baptismal and marriage registers, are a valuable source of information to genealogical researchers.

Pennsylvania's First Parishes

The first Catholic church established in Pennsylvania was St. Joseph's (now called Old St. Joseph's), founded in Philadelphia in 1733 by the Jesuit priest Joseph Gheaton. Unfortunately, Gheaton's early registers do not survive. The earliest surviving sacramental registers for a Philadelphia Catholic church begin with the year 1758, when Father Ferdinand Steinmeyer, known as Father Farmer, arrived at St. Joseph's. These registers reflect his travels throughout southeastern Pennsylvania to communities at Conewago, Goshenhoppen, and Lancaster.

Goshenhoppen, in Berks County, Pennsylvania, was not the first Catholic parish in Pennsylvania, but its registers are the oldest still extant, beginning with the year 1741. In the late 1700s, many Catholics from southeastern Pennsylvania traveled west across the state into remote Westmoreland County. The early Catholic mission, Sportsman's Hall, later became St. Vincent's Abbey in Latrobe. These early Catholic settlements were established well before any diocese existed in Pennsylvania. Philadelphia became a diocese in 1808, having jurisdiction over all of Pennsylvania, Delaware, and the western and southern parts of New Jersey. In 1843, the Diocese of Pittsburgh was established, with jurisdiction over all of western Pennsylvania.

There are now eight separate dioceses that cover the state of Pennsylvania. Only three dioceses—Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, and Harrisburg—have a central repository for sacramental records. The policy of the other dioceses directs genealogical researchers to contact the individual parishes.

How to Access Records

Sacramental registers address a person's status within the church, and are therefore considered to be confidential. These records are not open to the public; research is conducted by an archivist or parish staff member. The most important piece of information to provide when requesting research from a central repository of records is a family's place of residence. Often, researchers mistakenly believe that a family belonged to a certain parish for generations, only to discover that the parish did not exist

when their ancestors got married. Knowing the street address, political division or ward number, or section of the city where a family lived will help to place the family in the correct parish. This is especially true for larger metropolitan areas such as Philadelphia and Pittsburgh. Sources used to establish a family's place of residence include census records, city directories, and obituaries, which can be accessed using the subscription-based websites www.Ancestry.com and www.genealogybank.com or the free site www.familysearch.org.

Sacramental registers are arranged by individual parish. There are no diocesan-wide indices, and sometimes an individual register may not have an index. Most early registers are handwritten in Latin. In instances where the records are held by the individual parish, researchers should contact the parish directly to learn its genealogical research policy. Baptismal and marriage registers are closed to genealogical researchers for a certain period of time. Typically, records older than 70 years are considered genealogical, and information can be released without restriction. Any sacramental or orphanage



record relating to an adoption is subject to the privacy rules of Pennsylvania State Law 23 Pa.C.S. 2905. Death or burial records are not considered confidential and can be searched or released without restriction.

The types of records generated by the Catholic Church and the information to be found in each include:

Baptismal Registers

A baptismal record generally contains the child's name, names of the parents, date of birth and date of baptism, the names of sponsors, and the priest's name. Sometimes these records also include parents' places of birth, occupations, ages, and street address.

Marriage Registers

A typical marriage record contains the date of the marriage and names of the contracting parties, witnesses, and presiding priest. Parents' names and places of origin are also sometimes noted.

First Communion and Confirmation Records

These types of records are not of much value to genealogists. Usually they simply list the names of individuals who received the sacrament on a particular date.

Orphanage Records

These records usually include the child's name, date of birth, date of admission, date of discharge, and where or to whom the child was discharged. Other information may include parents' names, date and place of baptism, reason for placement, siblings' names, and, in some cases, a photo of the child.

Death and Burial Records

Death registers list the name of the deceased and the date of death and/or burial. Sometimes the individual's age, residence, or cause of death is noted. If the entry is for a child, the father's name is often listed.

Parish Histories

Parishes often celebrated anniversaries by publishing parish histories. These do not generally contain genealogical information, but they paint vivid pictures of neighborhoods and communities, their traditions and customs.

National/Ethnic Parishes

Ethnic groups in a particular area are reflected in the number of national parishes. A national parish afforded the parishioners an opportunity to have confession heard in their native language. Members of immigrant ethnic groups tended to settle in the same area, where they could offer assistance to each other and worship together. Even when dispersed, immigrants often worshipped together at a national parish rather than at a neighborhood one. Every effort was made to assign to these parishes a priest who spoke the language of the parishioners.

Some ethnicities represented in national parishes across Pennsylvania include German, Italian, Polish, Lithuanian, Slovak, Croatian, and Hungarian. Marriage records from German and Italian national parishes often contain valuable details such as age, occupation, parents' names, and specific place of origin. The Irish, on the other hand, tended to provide just the bare facts. On the rare occasions when a place of origin is listed, it simply states "Hibernia."

Published Records

Some of the earliest Pennsylvania sacramental registers have been published in chronological form in the *Records of the American Catholic Historical Society of Philadelphia*. This periodical can be found in hard copy at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania and at most Catholic university libraries. Many of the older volumes that contain the published sacramental records have been digitized by the Hathi Trust and can be accessed through any search engine.

These same early records have been published in alphabetical form in the two volumes of *Catholic Trails West: The Founding of Catholic Families in Pennsylvania*, by Edmund Adams and Barbara Brady O'Keefe. The early Pennsylvania settlements whose registers have been published include Old St. Joseph's in Philadelphia, as well as parishes in Conewago, Goshenhoppen, Lancaster, Loretto, and Latrobe.

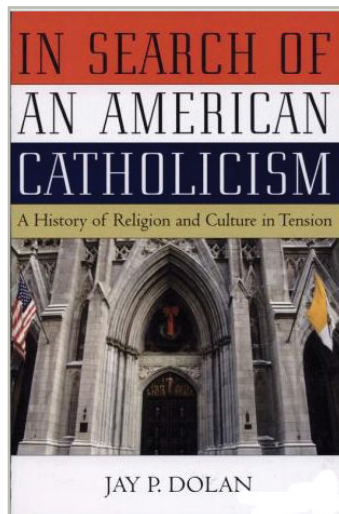
It is an exciting time to be involved in genealogical research because so much material is now available online. The hard work and perseverance of today's genealogical researchers will help to preserve family histories of Pennsylvania Catholics. ■

Chris Friend is assistant archivist at the Philadelphia Archdiocesan Historical Research Center, located at St. Charles Seminary. She specializes in Philadelphia-area Catholic genealogy and lectures at area historical and genealogical societies.



BOOK REVIEWS

BY RACHEL MOLOSHOK



In Search of an American Catholicism: A History of Religion and Culture in Tension

By Jay P. Dolan
New York: Oxford University Press, 2002

In this accessible history of the development of an American Catholic identity, author Jay P. Dolan looks at “how certain values associated with American culture have shaped Catholicism over the course of the past two hundred years” (9). Throughout, Dolan explores how American Catholics have held and sometimes struggled to reconcile dual identities as both Catholics and Americans. The American Revolution introduced democracy as the defining element of American culture and planted the seeds of a distinctly American version of Catholicism. American Catholicism was also shaped by backlash later in the 19th century against the rise of the public schools and of anti-Catholic nativist movements. During the late 19th and early 20th centuries, marked by waves of massive immigration to the United States as well as the flourishing of European devotional Catholicism, Americans, including American Catholics, grappled with difficult questions of national, cultural, and religious identity, church and state, religious freedom, and gender. During the contentious 20th century, as these debates continued to rage, there also emerged a “public Catholicism that sought to influence the shape and values of American society” (10).

Rome and the New Republic: Conflict and Community in Philadelphia Catholicism between the Revolution and the Civil War

By Dale B. Light
Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1996

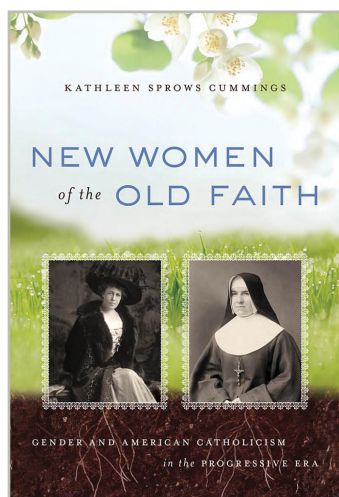
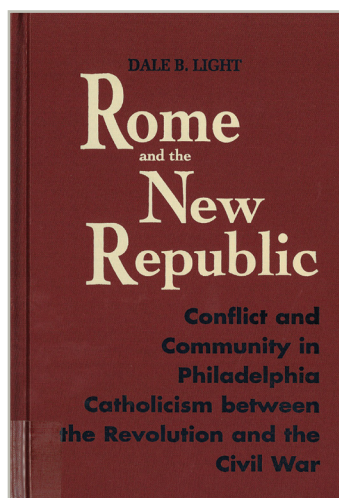
During the period from the American Revolution to the onset of the Civil War, Philadelphia's Catholic community grew exponentially but also struggled to define its character and its future. In *Rome and the New Republic*, author Dale B. Light traces the contentious development of this significant community. The period up to about 1815 saw a breakdown in the small, “traditional” Catholic community, defined by hierarchy, deference, and paternalism, as democracy, egalitarianism, and a

healthy dose of defiance of authority became the defining characteristics of Americans in the new republic. In the period between 1815 and 1830, in particular, this growing Catholic community was gripped by factionalism between laypeople and church leaders who advocated for different visions of what the overarching structure of the Catholic community should be. In the decades leading up to the Civil War, as Rome—and, indeed, Western society—was undergoing great changes of its own, a new Catholic consensus emerged, one that reflected the directives of the Roman restoration movement as well as the emerging class structures of early American industrial society.

New Women of the Old Faith: Gender and American Catholicism in the Progressive Era

By Kathleen Sprows Cummings
Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009

The Progressive Era was marked not just by the emergence of the “New Woman” who pursued higher education, professional occupation, and the right to vote, but by Catholics’ struggle to define their place in American culture. In *New Women of the Old Faith*, Kathleen Sprows Cummings explores the questions of religious and gender identity faced by American Catholic women of the period by focusing on the experiences of four Catholic women: Margaret Buchanan Sullivan, a Chicago journalist who defended “True Womanhood” from the threat posed by the “New Woman”; Sister Julia McGroarty, who negotiated with supportive and unsupportive bishops to found Trinity College for Women in Washington, DC; Sister Assisium McEvoy, a Philadelphia educator who worked tirelessly to consolidate and expand the parochial school system; and Katherine Eleanor Conway, a Boston editor who prominently opposed the suffrage movement. All four rejected the “New Woman,” but their actions and activism—advocating publicly for causes and working on behalf of other women—were associated with the ideals of New Womanhood. Nonetheless, especially in an age of widespread anti-Catholic prejudice—and at a time when American Catholic women had greater opportunities to pursue higher education and meaningful work within the church



than on the outside—they felt far greater loyalty to the church and to their fellow Catholics than to the cause of American women in general. As Cummings reminds us, “if Catholic identity was often marshaled in support of traditional gender roles, so too could it serve as a vehicle through which women contested and negotiated the parameters of their experience” (4).

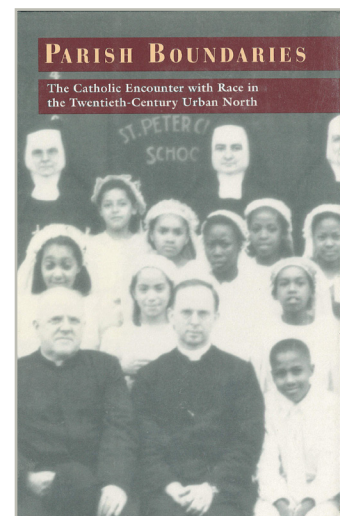
Parish Boundaries: The Catholic Encounter with Race in the Twentieth-Century Urban North

By John T. McGreevy

Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996

In this examination of race, place, and community among northern urban Catholics, John T. McGreevy explores the history of Catholic parishes in major cities of the northern United States, including Philadelphia, in the 20th century. McGreevy’s study primarily focuses on the 1920s through 1960s, a period

when African Americans moved into northern urban neighborhoods in great numbers. Urban Catholics were less likely to join the wave of “white flight” out of the cities due to their strong sense of community and loyalty to their parishes. In the urban North, as in the Jim Crow South, neighborhoods and institutions—including Catholic parishes, schools, seminaries, and religious orders—were sharply segregated along racial lines. Many residents of white ethnic parishes saw encroachment upon “their” territory, whether in the form of black congregants taking communion alongside them or black families moving into houses on their street, as a threat to be countered vehemently, sometimes even violently. At the same time, liberal Catholics championed the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s, and the Second Vatican Council condemned racism. The stage was set for bitter divisions between liberal and “traditional” Catholics over questions of race—another strong narrative thread in this book.



LEG@CIES

INTERESTING PLACES TO EXPLORE ON THE WEB

Father Augustus Tolton: Cause for Canonization

<http://www.toltoncanonization.org>

This website, created in order to argue for the sainthood of Rev. Augustus Tolton, provides a wealth of information on the first African American Catholic priest ordained in the United States and the historical context surrounding his extraordinary achievements. In addition to detailed biographical essays and timelines, the site includes videos and links to historic primary source materials, including 19th-century photographs and newspaper articles documenting Tolton's life and works.

Philadelphia Archdiocesan Historical Research Center (PAHRC)

<http://www.pahrc.net>

Interested in researching Catholic family members, churches, or communities? PAHRC.net is a great place to start. The website of the Philadelphia Archdiocesan Historical Research Center provides useful tips for conducting genealogical research, access to an extensive online database and list of collections and finding aids, and information on visiting the center, located in Wynnewood, PA, and working with its research staff. The site's blog also sheds light on interesting stories that can be explored through documents and artifacts in the center's archives.

American Catholic History Classroom

<http://cuomeka.wrlc.org/>

The American Catholic History Classroom, maintained by the Catholic University of America's American Catholic History Research Center and University Archives, is a continuously updated portal that currently houses 21 exhibits on significant chapters and controversies in American Catholic history, many with primary source documents, timelines, tools and suggestions for using exhibits in the classroom, and links or suggestions for further reading. Exhibit topics explore multifaceted issues and controversies surrounding race, labor, politics (including presidential elections), industrialization, social and charitable services, gender, immigration, education, and freedom of religion, often touching on significant historical figures such as Mother Jones, Charles Coughlin, and Cesar Chavez.

Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament and National Shrine of Saint Katharine Drexel

<http://www.katharinedrexel.org>

The official website of the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament and the National Shrine of Saint Katharine Drexel, located in Bensalem, PA, contains biographies of Katharine Drexel and her family, an interactive timeline, an artifacts gallery, a 27-minute video, and information on the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament and their work in the present day. The site also features biographies of Rev. Augustus Tolton, the first African American Catholic priest in the United States, and St. Kateri Tekakwitha, the first Native American recognized as a saint by the Catholic Church.

RM

Religious Intolerance: A Historical Repeat?

BY SAM KATZ WITH ERIN SHIPLEY

Working on the film series *Urban Trinity: The Story of Catholic Philadelphia* has provided an exciting adventure for our team of historians, writers, and film production cast and crew at History Making Productions. To create this documentary, timed to coincide with Pope Francis's historic visit to Philadelphia to attend the World Meeting of Families, we excavated stories that were largely unknown to many of us, revealing fascinating and new insights into Philadelphia and its people.

Urban Trinity presents a story of the struggles of a vast array of immigrant groups whose common denominator was their religion: Catholicism. A recurring theme in these narratives is the powerful and venomous hatred and bigotry they encountered, often not just on religious but on ethnic or racial grounds.

While we've been making this film, we've witnessed the contemporary rise of Islamophobia in America and other western nations. Could there be some interesting parallels between the American anti-Catholicism of the 19th and early 20th centuries, when Know-Nothings and other xenophobic groups stoked passions of fear and threat from the rising tide of Catholic immigrants, and the anti-Muslim fervor that grips a sizable segment of the American public today?

That many American Muslims, like American Catholics of the 19th century, desire to contribute to their country—the United States—is mostly overlooked or marginalized in public conversation. Protests of newly established mosques or Muslim cultural centers in American cities and paranoia about secret plots to establish “Sharia law” in the United States sound similar to the sentiments that some Protestants, regarding a growing “horde” beholden to a pope and fearing the undermining of Protestant culture and influence, openly expressed about Catholics and their institutions less than a century ago.



In following the Philadelphia Catholic story, there are some parallels between modern American Islamophobia and historical American anti-Catholicism. Anti-Catholic sentiments had deep roots, dating back to the Reformation. In early national Philadelphia and elsewhere, many native-born Protestants feared that Catholic immigrants would not be good republican citizens. After all, their first loyalty was to the pope in Rome. By the mid 19th century, during times of economic instability, that distrust deepened as waves of poor Irish Catholics competed with native-born whites and African Americans to get and do work few others were willing to do.

In June of 1832, the *John Stamp* docked in Philadelphia, having completed its two-month journey from Derry in northern Ireland. Dozens of young, provincial Irishmen who disembarked from that ship found work digging the railroad for a contractor named Philip Duffy, performing the backbreaking task of leveling the heavy, rocky soil at mile 59 of the Philadelphia and Columbia Railroad near Malvern. When a cholera epidemic struck Philadelphia and reached mile 59 that summer, the locals shut their doors to the men. With only four brave Sisters of

Charity to care for them, all of the Irish railroad workers perished. But recent historical and archaeological research conducted at “Duffy’s Cut” is conclusive that not all of the bodies buried there died from cholera. In fact, forensic evidence strongly suggests that several of the men and one woman died violently.

Anti-Catholic and anti-immigrant fervor intensified in 1840s Philadelphia when Bishop Francis Patrick Kenrick publicly objected to the reading of the King James Bible in the presence of Catholic children in the public schools. The Catholic Church disapproved of the King James translation, and Kendrick asked that children be allowed to use the Catholic (Douay Rheims) Bible as a matter of liberty of conscience. Radical Protestant Nativists in Philadelphia trumpeted Kenrick’s opinion to gain support for their anti-Catholic and anti-Irish views. Nativists rallied to keep their Bible in schools; and on May 6, 1844, those rallies turned into violent riots. Over the course of the summer, numerous fatalities and dozens of injuries had occurred in the city and its neighboring districts. Catholic churches, homes, and businesses were burned to the ground.

Kenrick had sought acceptance and understanding. He wanted Catholic children



History Making Productions' reenactment of the consecration of Bishop (now Saint) John Neumann and History Making Productions' reenactment of a Catholic sister instructing students at a parochial school in *Urban Trinity: The Story of Catholic Philadelphia*. Courtesy of History Making Productions.

in school with Protestant students. But the violence and vitriol forced him to conclude that making public schools friendly to Catholic children was futile. Instead, he turned inward and focused on building schools run by and for Catholics. His successor, Bishop (now Saint) John Neumann, developed the first and largest parochial school system in the United States. Neumann invited men and women religious to Philadelphia to teach in these schools. With the backing of the bishop, religious orders founded Catholic institutions—hospitals, orphanages, nursing homes, clubs, and societies—across the Philadelphia region. Philadelphia Catholics built a cocoon, where everything from healthcare and childcare to sports and recreation existed within the world of the parish.

Catholic Philadelphians slowly fought and earned their way into the city's social and political infrastructure, taking low-level jobs and working their way up through patience

and networking. Political bosses such as the infamous William "Squire Bill" McMullen controlled voting districts and carved out a place for Catholics in Philadelphia politics, often with an iron fist. The demographics of Philadelphia Catholics changed over time—from largely Irish and German to Italian, Polish, and other eastern European nationalities, to Hispanic, Asian, and African in more recent years. Catholics proved their loyalty and patriotism, fighting

in the two world wars. They took advantage of mid-20th-century programs such as the G.I. Bill, which helped bring higher education and home ownership within their reach and facilitated the final step into the American mainstream. Over time, American Catholics came to be seen as American first and Catholic second. Today, it is easy to forget that such fear and hatred had been directed towards this important segment of our society.

The founder and proprietor of Pennsylvania, William Penn, envisioned a place where diverse religions could be practiced freely. As the commonwealth grew more crowded, however, that lofty aspiration was tested by less admirable human attitudes and behaviors. In time—after decades of hatred and bigotry, but also of persistence and hard work—a religious group once deemed disloyal and threatening was embraced as fully American. *Urban Trinity: The Story of Catholic Philadelphia* traces that story from distress, violence, and exclusion to acceptance, triumph, and eminence.

That's food for thought. ■

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The first two episodes of *Urban Trinity: The Story of Catholic Philadelphia* (History Making Productions, 2015) will be broadcast on 6ABC/WPVI-TV on Tuesday, September 22, at 7:00 p.m. The third and final episode will air on Sunday, September 27, at midnight. This film series will be distributed to large and growing broadband, educational, and theater audiences following the broadcasts.

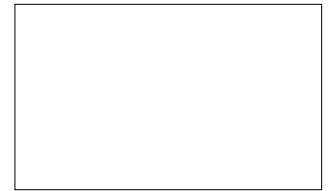


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Watercolor painting of interior of church by Pennsylvania Slovak artist Stephen J. Sroba. Stephen Sroba Paintings.

