Rediscovering Father Cox:
The Forgotten Legacy of a Pittsburgh Priest in the Great Depression

By Hannah Scott

Introduction
INSIDE THE historic Old Saint Patrick's Church in the Strip District of Pittsburgh, among the statues of various saints and blessed, a humble plaque bears the name and picture of Father James Cox, pastor of St. Patrick's from 1923 until his death in 1951. Few today in Pittsburgh remember Father Cox. Only a slim file on him exists in the diocesan archives. He goes unmentioned in most histories of America, even in general Catholic histories of this country. But, while the rest of the world has completely forgotten Father Cox, the plaque at St. Patrick's testifies to a priest who should not be forgotten. In what used to be the district of the working-class, he is remembered as the priest who staged a successful march on Washington, who ran for president, and who was perhaps one of the most influential individuals to apply the Church's social teachings to the problems of the American worker.

Father Cox and his times
The life of Father Cox cannot be separated from the times in which he lived. Beginning with the stock market crash in October 1929, the Great Depression was the worst time ever in the country. About 34 million people - 28 percent of America's men, women, and children - were unemployed, and were living on no income at all.1 In Pittsburgh, which was dominated by the steel industry, the stock market crash hit hard. The "steel industry was operating at 12 percent of capacity, and 31 percent of white and 48 percent of black Pittsburghers were unemployed."2 Poor people, without jobs, homes, or food, roamed America's streets. It was a time memorialized in Erwin Y. Harburg's song "Brother, Can You Spare a Dime?"

It was in this time that Father Cox made his appearance as a political and moral force. Born in Pittsburgh on March 7, 1886, the eldest child of James and Julia Cox, James Renshaw Cox grew up familiar with poverty. He held various jobs all through his school years to help support his parents and two younger siblings. He

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GATHERED FRAGMENTS
worked stints as a paperboy, department store clerk, and taxicab agent, among other trades. In between working hours, Cox attended Hatfield Street School and St. Mary's, and graduated from Holy Ghost College (now known as Duquesne University).

After graduating, Cox enrolled in St. Vincent's Seminary in Latrobe, Pennsylvania, and began studying to become a priest. However, one obstacle blocked Cox's ambitions: his eyesight. For several years, Cox had suffered eye problems, and was expected to eventually become blind. As blindness would prevent him from being ordained a priest, Cox prayed to Our Lady of Lourdes, and treated his eyes with water from Lourdes. His eyes were cured, and throughout the rest of his life, in thanksgiving, Cox would spread devotion to Our Lady of Lourdes with personal example— he encouraged and arranged annual pilgrimages to Lourdes, and adopted the custom of “begin [ning] and end [ing] every activity with a prayer of thanks to Our Lady of Lourdes.”

Father Cox was ordained on July 11, 1911, by Bishop Regis Canevin. He was first assigned to Epiphany Church in Pittsburgh, as assistant pastor. During his three years there, Father Cox made public his “enormous energy and varied interests.” He promoted everything from the arts and culture to boxing lessons; Harry Greb, the light heavyweight boxing champion from Pittsburgh, received his first boxing lessons from Epiphany's assistant priest.

Father Cox left Epiphany Church to enlist in World War I. Stationed in France from 1917 to 1919, he was the Chaplain of Base Hospital 27 from the University of Pittsburgh. After the war, he served in Pittsburgh as the Mercy Hospital chaplain for a few years, and then was appointed as the pastor of Old Saint Patrick's in 1923. Father Cox liked to point out with pride that he was the “youngest city priest of the oldest St. Patrick's Church.” In the Strip District, where St. Patrick's was located, loomed empty warehouses; his parishioners were handily to feed the hundreds of destitute people in his area. Local business owners offered help, and soon the Father Cox Relief Fund was underway, providing meals for thousands, and begging money from Pittsburgh's better-off over the radio. According to St. Patrick's records, from November 1930 to June 1936, Father Cox served 2,839,012 meals to the poor.

The March on Washington
To Father Cox, soup kitchens were not enough. Daily handouts would not end the Depression; the poor needed jobs. While the U.S. Catholic bishops had a long history of moral statements on the U.S. economy, at that time little had been done to put their principles into practice. After a series of fruitless meetings, Father Cox decided that a drastic message needed to be sent to the government. Borrowing the idea from a Communist march on Washington earlier in the same year, Father Cox organized a rally at Pitt Stadium, and instigated, in his own words, a peaceful "protest against unemployment conditions which exist without any reason in the United States today." He set the date for his peaceful march on Washington as Tuesday, January 5, 1932, and established three ground rules: "no alcohol - no weapons of any kind - and no grouch," Father
Cox expected about 2,500 men to attend the long, cold journey to Washington (he refused the few women who asked to join), and arranged transportation for a little over his estimate. But on the morning of January 5, to Father Cox’s surprise, the men waiting to march filled the streets “from Eleventh to Thirty-second street, on Liberty avenue, Spring way and Penn avenue.”

Every man – about 12,000 in all – who showed up in Pittsburgh was determined to go to Washington, and most were willing to walk all the way there if necessary. The cars and trucks that Father Cox had secured for transportation would not be enough for everyone, so the men took turns, alternating between walking and riding. Marchers later recalled the antics of Matthew Dunn, the blind assemblyman who distributed brand new dimes to each man. A costumed Uncle Sam joked with the marchers, both men doing their best to keep spirits high.

On the first day, heavy rains soaked the marchers, and when they arrived at dusk in Huntingdon, Pennsylvania, the men were wet, hungry, and exhausted. The people of Huntingdon provided the marchers with food. Methodist pastor Rev. Owen Poulson served every single man hot coffee and breakfast in the morning before the marchers set off.

The Jubilee Army, as the marchers came to be called, would experience this kindness from the people of Washington and Harrisburg as well. Gifford Pinchot, governor of Pennsylvania, opened up the Harrisburg Capitol restaurant for the marchers, and personally paid for anything that was ordered that night. In that moment, when he saw his marchers mingling with Gifford Pinchot and the other government officials, Father Cox felt “the artificial barriers which have grown up between people and their government are being swept away.” It was, he said, “a history-making occasion.”

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By the time the army arrived in Washington, their numbers had swelled to about 25,000. The marchers were met by a Mr. de Ford, who immediately handed Father Cox a menu for the men. The next day, the Army field kitchens, under the direction of Mr. de Ford, turned out breakfast and lunch for the hungry men.

On January 7, Father Cox’s Jubilee Army stood outside the Capitol building and sang patriotic songs, displaying American flags along with their “empty pockets turned inside out,” which the men called their “Hoover Flags.” Father Cox’s Resolution of the Jobless was presented to both the Senate and the House of Representatives. In his resolution, Father Cox outlined the demands he had for the government – five billion dollars for public works projects, and sufficient funding to be given to the unemployed and the farmers. The resolution was accepted unanimously by Congress and was placed in America’s archives.

Inside the White House, Father Cox, accompanied by thirteen men, was granted an audience with President Herbert Hoover. Father Cox explained that his men had marched to Washington to demand that something be done about America’s poor. He told Hoover bluntly that “the administration was acting like an ostrich that sticks its head in the sand, believing that if he cannot see the hunter pursuing him or the trouble that is nearby, that the hunter or the trouble does not exist.” But Father Cox’s speech had little effect. Hoover replied that although “the Federal Government is spending now half a billion a year above normal to give employment,” there was nothing else he could do. Nonetheless, he assured Father Cox that the government was “giving this question our undivided attention.” Father Cox waited until he returned to Pittsburgh to remark on the president’s response. “[O]ut of respect to the Chief Executive of the nation, [I] did not comment then, [but] I can say now that his plans for relief are utterly inadequate.”

Despite the lack of response from the government, Father Cox considered the march to be successful. He and his army had, he said, “shown that 25,000 Americans can make an orderly pilgrimage to their nation’s capital to express a reasonable dissatisfaction with existing conditions and to ask that those conditions be relieved.” He believed that his march on Washington had “started the men who can solve America’s plight to thinking along unselfish lines.”

The Run for President
In the weeks after the march, politicians and the media speculated on which national political party
Father Cox's march would benefit. Father Cox, fed up with the questions, publicized a new party — the Jobless Party. It was, he said, a party formed to represent not the "well-to-do, but Main Street." Father Cox himself would run as the party's nominee for President of the United States in the 1932 election.16

The Jobless Party identified itself with the insignia of the blue shirt — the sign of a working-class American, and the slogan "either my party or Communism," expressing the thought that if the demands of the people were not met, the country turned risking the working class to communism. Father Cox ran on a platform that called for government funding for public works projects, unemployment insurance, farmers' aid, pensions for the elderly, a thirty-hour work week and the right of workers to form unions.

Father Cox campaigned from Pittsburgh to San Francisco, traveling almost 8,000 miles and speaking to an estimated 57,000 Americans. His campaign, however, failed to generate widespread support and lacked the funds necessary to continue. In October, a month before the election, Father Cox announced that he was dropping out of the running. He urged his supporters to vote for Franklin Roosevelt, the Democratic candidate, in his bid to unseat the incumbent, President Hoover. Father Cox reasoned that Roosevelt had "pledged himself to the protection of the interests of the common man ... and the recreation of work," and most of the Jobless Party followers voted for Roosevelt in the election.17

The New Deal and the Legacy of Father Cox

"Father James Cox ... [led] Catholic clergy and laity into a new era of social activism and political mobilization. Cox's march on Washington ... and his subsequent campaign for the presidency, galvanize[d] the unemployed of Pennsylvania."18 In the first hundred days of his presidency, Roosevelt addressed the problem Father Cox, with his march on Washington and his campaign, had forced America to see — the unemployment of millions in America. In the New Deal, Roosevelt proposed legislation which established means for providing money for the elderly, and established the importance of the worker — companies could no longer treat employees as disposable because every company's existence depended on the workers. These ideas were expressed in the "Resolution of the Jobless," in which Father Cox had written that "the people of these United States are determined to reconsecrate this country to a true democracy, where every person, rich or poor, shall have an equal opportunity to work and to earn a decent livelihood, so that all may attain a standard of life which will assure individual contentment and a peaceful society."19

Father Cox's influence can be seen in the New Deal and in Roosevelt's famous first one hundred days as president. His example of a nonviolent march on Washington has been imitated in history, in civil rights protests and the March for Life. His presidential campaign was the first and only of its kind — no other priest in United States history has ever run for president.

Father Cox was the general of the battle he described as the "struggle to free civilization from the curse of poverty and unemployment; a battle that will end in final victory when every man has a job that will permit him not only to exist, but to enjoy a real American standard of living."20

3Father James R. Cox File (Cox File), Archives of the Diocese of Pittsburgh.
6"Father Cox and His Activities" (Cox File).
8Rev. James R. Cox, “Father Cox Reveals Drama of March to Washington” (Cox File).
10Cox, “March to Washington”
11Coode and Petraruolo, 222.
12Cox, “March to Washington.”
13Heineman 24.
14Cox File
15Cox, “March to Washington.”
16Coode and Petraruolo, 225.
17Heineman, 30.
18Heineman, 11.
19"Resolution of the Jobless," (Cox File).
20Ibid.
TO THE MEMBERSHIP of The Catholic Historical Society: Following inauguration of an internet website for The Catholic Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania at www.catholichistorywpa.org, the Board of Directors in Spring 2006 decided to undertake additional initiatives to further the collection of Catholic historical information in our area and to disseminate that rich history.

First, we have begun an aggressive expansion of the Archives of the CHS, located at Duquesne University’s Gumberg Library. (See Tom White’s article on page 26.) We are in the process of acquiring published parish histories as well as manuscript (unpublished) histories of parishes and institutions, and other western Pennsylvania Catholic history works. Please consider donating to CHS any histories of parishes, religious orders, institutions, or persons involved in Catholic history in western Pennsylvania (or beyond) that you may presently possess. When people move or elderly Catholics die, the question often arises: what to do with Catholic history books that the person has accumulated over the years. Donating such works to CHS will make them available to future generations.

Second, another part of our initiative involves Gathered Fragments. We are transitioning from a simple 4-sided newsletter to a more formal historical journal. That transformation has necessitated the consolidation of the formerly twice-a-year publication of Gathered Fragments into a single annual publication, with an enlarged format and additional content. Thus you receive today a Gathered Fragments which includes a greater variety of local Catholic historical information—articles, book reviews, notices, etc. The board of directors plans further changes to ultimately provide the membership with a true historical journal—which was the concept of our original founder, Msgr. Andrew A. Lambing, more than 100 years ago.

To achieve that ultimate objective, we are actively soliciting your participation in this ongoing effort. We are open to receive for consideration for publication the following:

(1) Articles dealing with any of the countless topics involving Catholic history in western Pennsylvania since the arrival of the French more than 250 years ago. These might involve the history of a parish, the biography of a priest, religious sister or brother, or prominent lay person who played a role in carrying on the faith in the hundreds of parishes and many religious institutions that have dotted our landscape. Not infrequently, these stories may entail turning oral history into print, to preserve them for the future.

(2) Book reviews of an increasing number of published works that bear upon persons, issues, and institutions affecting Catholic life in western Pennsylvania.

(3) Other brief notices highlighting local Catholic history—lacking the length of more formal articles, but important nonetheless to sensitize our readership to the richness of our area’s Catholic history.

These submissions may be directed to our CHS mailing address: P.O. Box 194, Pittsburgh, PA 15230-0194. If you wish to discuss possible subjects for research/writing/submission to CHS, please feel free to contact me at (412) 343-0860. This offer of consideration of submitted works for publication in Gathered Fragments is not restricted to our membership—so if you know of any “history buffs” who would be interested in submission of publishable topics involving western Pennsylvania Catholic history, please encourage those persons to get in touch with us and submit.

Finally, we are planning to add to the CHS Board of Directors, and are taking this opportunity to solicit your interest in considering that opportunity. If you would like to be considered for service—which entails your commitment to furthering the preservation of western Pennsylvania Catholic history—please contact me or any of our board members who would be very happy to discuss what’s involved. We would continued on page 31
Black Catholics in Pittsburgh: Endurance and Survival

Presentation for the Catholic Historical Society, April 30, 2006

By Greta Stokes Tucker

Black Catholics have had an arduous history in the Diocese of Pittsburgh. In many ways, the history of Black Catholics in the greater Pittsburgh region mirrors the history and struggles of the larger African American community and Black Catholics nationally. For in fact, both Black Catholics and Black Protestants, share the same history, have faced the same prejudices and discrimination, and have the same struggles. We are brothers and sisters in every way, overwhelmingly Christian, though we have chosen different religious paths. Therefore, as we reflect on the topic of Black Catholic endurance and survival in Pittsburgh, we must be cognizant that Black Catholics have a multifaceted history and experience, unique and particular within the larger experience of Black America and in the Catholic Church.

I have divided the presentation into three sections:

1. An overview of the history of Black Catholics in the Diocese of Pittsburgh and the placement of this history within a national context;
2. The National Black Catholic Lay Congresses;

Black Catholics in the Diocese of Pittsburgh

Through the initiative of Bishop Michael O'Connell, who later founded St. Francis Xavier church in Baltimore, the Chapel of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin for Negroes was founded in 1844 in the Diocese of Pittsburgh. The chapel was a rented building located in downtown Pittsburgh. The diocesan Archives and Record Center has limited information about this first attempt at the establishment of a pre-Civil War parish for Black Catholics. While initially successful, the congregation dwindled within a year due to the jealousy and rivalry of other ministers. There were those who claimed that the pastor, Fr. Robert Wilson, intended to sell the parishioners into slavery. The chapel, founded by Bishop O’Connor two decades before the Civil War and the end of slavery, was forced to close its doors and evangelization among Black Catholics ended.

Within a year of his ordination as bishop of Pittsburgh and the day after the blessing of the chapel, Bishop O’Connor left Pittsburgh to fulfill his dream of becoming a Jesuit. What was it about this pioneer, the bishop of a newly created diocese, that caused him to reach out to Blacks by establishing the first Black Church for them, and by assigning a pastor at a time when few bishops in the United States dared risk such a move? Did he have a special empathy towards Blacks? Did he abhor slavery and its consequences? What did he see as the central role of the church or in the salvation of Blacks? Would the outcome of this first attempt at pastoral care to Blacks have been different if he had remained in Pittsburgh? I will leave these questions to you and future historians.

The second attempt to evangelize among African Americans in Pittsburgh was in 1867 with the establishment of St. Joseph Church in the Hill District under Bishop Michael Domenec. Land was purchased and a building was erected that also served as a school staffed by the Sisters of Mercy. For nine years, the church struggled as a mission of St. Brigid Parish. However, debt, the poverty of its members and a national crisis—the 5-year economic depression caused by the failure of the Jay Cooke investment banks—plagued the church. Unable to financially sustain itself, the church closed in 1873.

Interestingly, St. Joseph Church was founded after the Second Plenary Council of Baltimore in 1866. Fr. Cyprian Davis in Black Catholics in the United States chronicles this important gathering of bishops in the United States. According to Davis, the bishops at the end of the Civil War were encouraged by Archbishop Martin Spalding of Baltimore to care for the spiritual
needs of the emancipated slaves. In a letter to Archbishop McCloskey of New York, Spalding said about the Second Plenary Council, “I think it precisely the most urgent duty of all to discuss the future status of the Negro. Four million of these unfortunate are thrown on our charity. . . . It is golden opportunity for reaping a harvest of souls, which neglected may not return.” What an ominous and prophetic warning that went unheeded.

The last topic on the Council’s agenda was the evangelization of Blacks. The fact that it was addressed at the close of the Council in an extraordinary session indicates that it was not a popular or easy topic. The final decision by the bishops gathered was that each bishop with Blacks in his diocese should decide if and how to evangelize them. There was to be no national directive or ecclesial person to coordinate these efforts. This lack of zeal and commitment, as compared to the evangelization efforts by Protestant churches, was to have a lasting legacy upon the Catholic Church in America, resulting in low numbers of Blacks coming into the Church. At the end of the Civil War, the Catholic Church in America had an opportunity to evangelize among the freed slaves, but chose to remain silent. In Pittsburgh, for whatever his reasons, Bishop Domenec reached out to Black Catholics, although those efforts failed.

Twenty-four years after the end of the Civil War, Black Catholics gathered for the first of several Black Catholic Lay Congresses. The first, held in Baltimore, January 1-4, 1889, was conceived by Daniel Rudd, a leading Black Catholic during that era. In his newspaper, American Catholic Tribune, Rudd expressed his belief that the Catholic Church was the greatest hope for American Blacks. Davis quotes Rudd who wrote, “There is an awakening among some people to the fact that the Catholic Church is not only a warm and true friend to the Colored people, but is absolutely impartial in recognizing them as the equals of all and any of the other nations and races of men before her altars. Whether priest or laymen they are equals, all within the fold.” Without having a theology degree, perhaps Rudd understood the theology and sacramentality of the Eucharist better than the ordained within the Church whose responsibility it was to preach and model this equality before the altar.

A delegation from Pittsburgh attended the 1889 Black Catholic Lay Congress, including Fr. Patrick McDermott, C.S.Sp., a member of the Holy Ghost Fathers (Spiritans) at Duquesne University. Fr. McDermott is listed as having addressed the congress. What is significant is that a year before the congress, Fr. McDermott met with Black Catholics in Pittsburgh to organize a mission and school for them in the diocese. This was the third attempt to form a community of Black Catholics. The new church, St. Benedict the Moor, still exists today. It was established in the Hill District of Pittsburgh on Heldman Street, and was blessed on July 28, 1889, seven months after the first Congress. Along with the Sisters of Mercy, Katharine Drexel, who lived at the Sisters’ convent in the Hill, assisted at the school and parish mission. Shortly after the dedication of St. Benedict the Moor Parish, Fr. McDermott left Pittsburgh to become the pastor at a newly formed mission for Black Catholics that had been given to the Holy Ghost Fathers in Philadelphia. While in Philadelphia, Fr. McDermott attended the third Black Catholic Congress convened in that city from January 5-7, 1892.

Finally, there was a place in the Diocese of Pittsburgh where Black Catholics could worship and evangelize. St. Benedict the Moor included a school. Then, like today, the school educated and shared the Catholic faith with children who were mostly not Catholic. For about a decade, between 1895 and 1906, the growth of the parish declined. One of the contributing factors was the high turnover of pastors assigned to the parish. There were six Holy Ghost pastors during this time, most of whom were temporarily assigned while recuperating from various illnesses and diseases contracted while on assignments in Africa with the Spiritan Order.

A second factor was financial instability. Fr. Francis Xavier Lichtenberger, pastor from 1904 to 1906, was able to raise funds that helped to revitalize the parish. This, however, was short lived when the newly appointed Bishop Regis Canevin closed the parish to White parishioners. He admonished the 200 parishioners to become financially self-sufficient. Given the poverty of the parishioners and most African Americans in Pittsburgh, this was an insurmountable task. The subtle and overt racism practiced in the Pittsburgh region at that time added to the financial difficulty of African Americans. Another factor was that most of the parishioners were scattered throughout the city of Pittsburgh.
From 1906 to 1918, the parish was placed under the supervision of the diocese and the parish began to grow. Only one pastor, Fr. Haggerty, was assigned during these twelve years that saw tremendous vitality and growth with a membership of 500. The parish was returned to the Holy Ghost Fathers. They assigned Fr. William Stadelman, who was the pastor for ten years until his death. During his tenure as pastor, Fr. Stadelman continued to focus on the spiritual growth of the parish, although the membership was still approximately 500 persons. A reason cited for the lack of membership growth was that many Black Catholics were forced to leave Pittsburgh in search of better employment.

Between 1902 and our contemporary period, several events have affected Black Catholics in Pittsburgh. These included the back and forth supervision of St. Benedict the Moor by the Holy Ghost Fathers and the Diocese of Pittsburgh; a rapid succession of pastors; the Great Depression; the Civil Rights Movement; parish financial instability; racism in the Church and society; the young leaving for better economic and social opportunities; and demographic changes in the Hill District brought about by the demolishing of the lower Hill for urban renewal. Yet the parish remains today, having been located in several buildings in the Hill District since 1889.

National Black Catholic Lay Congresses

A review of the five lay congresses for Black Catholics in the late 19th century and their resurgence in the later 20th century may offer some insights into the issues and concerns of Black Catholics in Pittsburgh. Between 1889 and 1894, five Congresses were convened. There were several initiatives that these Congresses focused on for Black Catholics, and that they called to the attention of the Church in the United States. One issue was the education of Black youth, both Catholics and non-Catholics. Education was seen as a vital resource of evangelization. Many in the Black community came into the Catholic Church through the Catholic school system. Black Catholics believed that religious education and a moral foundation would foster strong Catholic families and help to reshape the moral character of African Americans. They called for vocational and trade schools to provide skilled training, believing that both academic and vocational education were intrinsically tied to the economic security necessary for Blacks in order to have a better standard of living.

Racism was another issue that these five Congresses addressed. They discussed the prejudice and discrimination to which Blacks were subjected. This, they believed, hindered evangelization efforts among Blacks who did not see a difference between the racism in the Catholic Church and that of the general society. In addition, they felt that the Church was slow and often silent in vigorously denouncing racism. They raised concerns about the discrimination towards Black men and women seeking religious vocations, and the lack of financial resources for evangelization, education, and the spiritual care of Blacks.

Another area of racist discrimination cited was the housing industry whereby real estate agents selectively rented substandard properties to Blacks, or offered only poorly constructed homes in less desirable neighborhoods. As now, they spoke out against the unjust legal systems that gave young Black men longer prison sentences for minor offenses. Once released from prison, these men faced numerous problems in finding employment, housing, and stability in the community. Tied to the concerns and issues of the five early Congresses was the understanding that the dismal economic picture for

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Blacks was steeped in racism. They wanted the Church to encourage labor and trade unions, many of which had strong Catholic connections, to employ Blacks and to end the discrimination in membership to the unions.

In 1988, the Sixth Black Catholic Congress was the first convened in contemporary time. The purpose of the national gathering held in Washington, D.C. was to develop and ratify a national pastoral plan for Black Catholics and the Church. The result of this historical event that gained national and international attention was the publication of “Here I Am, Send Me: A Conference Response to the Evangelization of African Americans and The National Black Catholic Pastoral Plan.” The Pastoral Plan, approved by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops and published in 1989, focused on three broad areas important to Black Catholics in the United States: “the Catholic identity of African American Catholics; ministry and leadership with the African American Catholic community; and the responsibility of this community to reach out to the broader society.” According to the document, “Within these areas are such issues as culture, family, youth, spirituality, liturgy, ministry, lay leadership, parishes, education, social action, and community development.”

In reviewing the areas of focus raised at the Sixth National Black Catholic Congress, it is ironic that many of the Church and social issues expressed by Black Catholics in 1988 were the same as those expressed in the first five lay Black Catholic Congresses in the 1800’s: racial discrimination in the Church and society, financial stability, economic and social injustices, and the importance of Catholic education. Thirteen delegates from the Diocese of Pittsburgh attended Congress VI, ten Blacks and three Whites, including the diocesan bishop, Anthony Bevilacqua. They, along with other representatives from dioceses throughout the United States, chose and prioritized the agenda for Black Catholics and the late 20th century United States Catholic Church.

Several major topics and objectives were ratified by the delegates at the Sixth National Black Catholic Congress. One of the themes was Black Catholic history and culture under the theme of Catholic identity. Black Catholics were active in reclaiming their often overlooked and ignored history and roots, and in telling their own stories and history too often deliberately ignored. The use of cultural symbols to connect with their African past was significant. Other themes included the important role of Catholic education in breaking the cycle of poverty within Black communities and as a tool of evangelization; economic issues like housing, unemployment and homelessness that impact Blacks; and social justice issues, particularly institutional and personal racism.

Since that historical event, three additional National Black Catholic Congresses have been convened in five-year intervals with both Black and White clergy and laity from the Diocese of Pittsburgh attending. Following the 6th National Black Catholic Congress, a national office was created to coordinate the implementation of the National Black Catholic Pastoral Plan and its agendas throughout subsequent years. Congress IX, the most recent gathering, was held in Chicago in 2002. Approximately fifty Black and White Catholics from the Diocese of Pittsburgh attended, including about twenty youth. Black Catholics are preparing for Congress X in Buffalo, New York in 2007. Black and white Catholic laity and clergy in the Diocese of Pittsburgh have been active in the Congresses in our time by sponsoring Days of Reflection in preparation for the Congresses, sending delegations, participating in regional and national gatherings, and implementing Congress objectives within the diocese.

Black Catholics in Pittsburgh Today: Endurance and Survival

The post-Civil War pastoral and social needs and concerns of Black Catholics that echoed throughout the latter 1800’s continue to be expressed today, both nationally and in the Pittsburgh region. When we look at the history of Black Catholics in the United States and in Pittsburgh, we find a people that have not only endured, but also survived with their faith intact. Just as it became clear that emancipation from slavery did not bring about full acceptance and equality, not only in the South but also in other parts of the country, so too did Black Catholics come to realize that membership in the Catholic Church did not necessarily mean their full acceptance and equality.

Daniel Rudd, and many other Black Catholics in the decades following the slave emancipation, believed that the sacramental theology of the Catholic Church was the greatest hope for Blacks, for this theology said that all people were created by God and were one around the Eucharistic table. The Catholic Church, the Church
of immigrants, the poor, and marginalized would surely open its arms in welcome. The Catholic Church, whose Black saints from Northern Africa had already left an indelible mark upon the church, would certainly welcome these people of African descent. And, with each missed opportunity, a remnant of Black Catholics throughout the country remained faithful and stalwart in their faith, hope, and conviction that the Catholic Church would be what God had ordained it to be.

Black Catholics have always been a part of the Church in the United States. For over 160 years, Black Catholics have been in the Diocese of Pittsburgh. While I believe that Catholics of African descent will continue to be a part of the racial and cultural diversity in the diocese, the question nationally and locally is not merely, will Black Catholics remain in the Church? But rather, what kind of existence will they have? Will they continue to be a marginalized part of the Church? What will be their quality of life in the Church of Pittsburgh? Black Catholics have survived against many obstacles, but today they must do more than survive or exist on the benevolence of others. I suggest that there are five things Black Catholics in the Diocese of Pittsburgh and nationally must do:

Be responsible for shaping their own future:

This was one of the reasons for the convening of the Black Catholic Lay Congresses in the late 1800s and for their recent revival. Black Catholics must continue to speak and engage Catholic leadership about their place in the American Church. They must continue to foster the bonds of fellowship and community with one another and with the entire Catholic Church locally and nationally. They must have pride in themselves, know their history and strengths, and be willing to evangelize to their Black brothers and sisters hungry for the gospel. They must find new ways to financially maintain and support their parishes, schools, and programs. In addition, they must empower and develop Black Catholic leadership, particularly among Black Catholic youth.

Identify their own unique cultural gifts and spirituality, and share them with the larger church:

Black Catholics must continue to explore and articulate the unique gifts they bring to the Church. Within the liturgical guidelines of the Church, they must find ways to incorporate the cultural symbols and elements that help to express the deepest convictions of their faith and to evangelize within the larger Black community. According to Here I Am, Send Me: The National Black Catholic Pastoral Plan, “The cultural dimension of African Americans can enrich and enhance.” It is in their communal experience of worship that the cultural richness of the African American community has made and continues to make a remarkable contribution. . . . the liturgical celebration in the parishes of the African American community should be always ‘authentically black—truly Catholic.’

Be responsive to the larger Black community:

Black Catholics are not only brothers and sisters to other African Americans, but also to Africans and those of African descent throughout the world. They share the same history, spirituality, culture, and oftentimes, oppression and dreams. What affects the greater Black community also affects Black Catholics. When Blacks in Pittsburgh and Allegheny County were denied entry to swimming pools at Kennywood and other recreational places, denied employment opportunities, entry to trade unions, or decent affordable housing in certain neighborhoods, were they asked, “Are you Catholic?” No. In the system of racism and discrimination, Blacks were viewed and judged on the basis of race, the color of skin, not their religion.

Black Catholics have taken a religious path that differs from their Protestant brothers and sisters; yet, they are bound together racially, historically, culturally, biologically, socially, and in any other way that matters. In writing about the Fifth Black Lay Catholic Congress in the 19th century, Davis quotes Fredrick McGhee and Dr. William S. Lofton who deplored the fact that the Catholic Church is looked upon by most non-Catholic[s] of our race as distinctly White.” Unfortunately, this belief is still held today by many African Americans. With the small number of Black Catholics in the greater Pittsburgh region, this view is only magnified. Only by intentional efforts by the Church, supported by and in collaboration with Black Catholics, will African Americans come to see the Church as a Church for and of all God’s people who are welcomed with their gifts of racial, cultural, and ethnic diversity.

Be involved in social justice issues:

Black Catholics must exercise their moral voice in words and actions, not only on social justice issues that affect them di-
rectly, but also on those that affect the world in which they live. Often, Black Catholics, and Blacks in general, have been so engaged in basic survival that they have not been active in speaking and working on global or international issues. In addition, Blacks in America have often been told that they have no place at the table when it comes to global, political, and environmental issues. Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. was censured for expressing opposition to the Vietnam War. As long as he did not stray from national issues involving race, his voice was acceptable. In the 1980’s, Jesse Jackson was told to stick to community issues when he raised questions about our government’s position on international issues.

It is significant that the Principles of Action from the Ninth National Black Catholic Congress (2002) include Social Justice, Africa, and AIDS. Black Catholics in Pittsburgh must be involved in all aspects of social justice issues at the parish, diocesan and local community or neighborhood levels in order to be a credible voice within the larger Black community.

Be the keepers of their history:
The 1989 National Black Catholic Pastoral Plan said, “At the same time that African American Catholics are encouraged to discover their past, let them be encouraged to retell their story for the sake of the present. The role of history in evangelization is that it relates the story of faith in the midst of struggle, and the story of hope and perseverance in the midst of opposition . . . . African American Catholics must be encouraged to conserve their records and documents; without conservation and preservation of records today, there is no history to be written tomorrow . . . . The possession of one’s history is the first step in an appreciation of one’s culture.”

Black Catholics worship in parishes throughout the Diocese of Pittsburgh. While the majority belong to St. Benedict the Moor Parish in the Hill District neighborhood of Pittsburgh and St. Charles Lwanga in the Homewood-Lincoln-Larimer sections of Pittsburgh, others worship at various churches throughout the diocese. Black Catholics, together welcoming communities of faith. They must continue to be the voice of inclusion, justice, and reconciliation for themselves and anyone who is marginalized in the Church or society.

Black Catholics have endured in this country and in the American Catholic Church. They have had to bear up under the yoke of racism and indifference; put up with obstacles that threatened their faith and livelihood; tolerate discrimination; and suffer without yielding their faith and hope in this country and the Church. Black Catholics have endured and survived. However, they must no longer settle for endurance. Black Catholics are an integral part of the Mother Church, locally, nationally, and internationally. As Pope John Paul II said to an assembly of Black Catholics in New Orleans in 1987, “The Church needs you and you need the Church.”

Black Catholics must exercise their moral voice in words and actions on social justice issues that not only affect them directly, but also those that affect the world in which they live.

with those who worship with them and minister to them, should continue to address the challenges of the past. Today they compete for shrinking funds and ways to find their voice among new immigrants and cultural groups from Africa, Asia, and Central and South America who have similar and sometimes different challenges and agendas.

In conclusion, Black Catholics in Pittsburgh, and in the United States, must do more than survive if by survival we mean merely exist. Black Catholics must be active and vibrant in their faith in words and actions, and be

1Davis, Cyprian, Black Catholics in the United States (New York: Crossroads Publishing Company, 1995), 118.
2Ibid., 165.
Ibid, 3.
Ibid, 5.
Ibid.
1Davis, 193.
2Here I Am, Send Me, 3.
3Address by Pope John Paul II to Black Catholics.

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From Organist to Pastoral Musician
A History of Church Music in the Catholic Diocese of Pittsburgh
1843-2006

By Father James Chepponis

Father Chepponis’s April 22, 2007 lecture was based on A History of Church Music in the Catholic Diocese of Pittsburgh 1843-2006, which he, together with Doctor Fred Moleck and Sister Cynthia Serjak, RSM, compiled, wrote and edited. The book was published in celebration of the 25th Anniversary of the Pittsburgh Chapter of the National Association of Pastoral Musicians, September 15, 2006, and in commemoration of the Centennial of St. Paul Cathedral, October 24, 2006.

Summary, from the book's back cover
Since its establishment in 1843, the Catholic Diocese of Pittsburgh has a rich history of dedicated church music leadership, supported by the bishops of Pittsburgh. The organists and choirmasters at St. Paul Cathedral provided the first musical leadership. Official diocesan efforts began with the formation of a Music Commission, which reached its zenith under the direction of Father Carlo Rossini.

The changes in the liturgy promulgated by the Second Vatican Council’s 1963 Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy also brought changes to the role of the church musician. The often-mysterious choir loft organist was challenged to become a multi-skilled minister deeply involved in parish life. This process was guided by the leaders of the Diocesan Music Office, and gained momentum when the Pittsburgh Chapter of the National Association of Pastoral Musicians (NPM) was established in 1981.

As the Pittsburgh Chapter of NPM celebrates its twenty-fifth anniversary during the centennial year of St. Paul Cathedral in 2006, this book recalls the stories of those who gave the Church of Pittsburgh an immense gift as they led the transformation from organist to pastoral musician.

Background
As the Pittsburgh Chapter of the NPM prepared to celebrate its twenty-fifth anniversary in 2006, three members of this organization, Father James Chepponis, Doctor Fred Moleck, and Sister Cynthia Serjak, RSM decided to write a history. Initially, the project was only going to be a history detailing the twenty-five years of Pittsburgh’s NPM Chapter (1981-2006). As the authors worked, however, the project continued to expand! “We really should include a chapter about the infamous Father Carlo Rossini,” the authors said. So the book was to begin then with the year Father Rossini became Chairman of the Diocesan Music Commission, 1930. As the authors continued research, some information was found about the formation of the first Diocesan Music Commission in 1902. “We must include that information as well,” the authors said. Finally, the authors decided that we might as well begin the book with the year 1843, the year the Catholic Diocese of Pittsburgh was established. One of the driving factors in the expansion of the book was the fact that, up until this publication, no book chronicling the history of church music in the Pittsburgh Diocese existed.

Sources
A motivating factor in writing this book was the fact that we had primary sources available for an accurate retelling of this history. A number of fortunate events made this possible: first, copies of all the monthly newsletters of the Pittsburgh NPM Chapter were available in the Diocesan Office for Music Ministry; second, the last president of Pittsburgh’s Association of Catholic Church Musicians, which was a precursor of the NPM during the years 1961-1981, found in his basement a box of detailed meeting minutes from this era, and donated the material to the Diocesan Music Office; third, a number of separate individuals had written articles about the history of music in the Diocese and at St. Paul Cathedral.

Continued on page 27
Catholic Urban Legends Come to Pittsburgh

Msgr. Francis A. Glenn Lecture, October 14, 2007

By Robert P. Lockwood

My presentation will connect three historical personages. The first is Joe Barker, an anti-Catholic polemicist from 1845 to 1862 who managed to get elected Pittsburgh’s mayor, ordered the arrest of the first Catholic bishop of Pittsburgh, and possibly arranged to have the first Saint Paul Cathedral set on fire. The second is Michael O’Connor, the first bishop of Pittsburgh, who served in that role from 1843 to 1860. The third is “Mikey” from the old Life breakfast cereal commercials. “Let Mikey try it. He’ll eat anything!”

In the 1960s and 1970s, Pop Rocks were pretty popular. Kids would bite on one and a small amount of carbonization would be released, giving kids a tingling sensation in the mouth. Pop Rocks became famous as the source of a classic urban legend. It quickly traveled from playground to playground throughout the country that if you swallowed a bunch of Pop Rocks whole, then drank soda real fast, your stomach would explode. It was said that the child actor who starred as Mikey in that old Life breakfast cereal commercial died in just such a fashion after gorging on Pop Rocks and downing a six-pack of cola. Pop Rocks were allegedly pulled from the market after Mikey’s untimely demise.

As widespread as the stories of killer Pop Rocks were back in the 1970s and early 1980s, the candy never exploded when ingested. They are still around under a different name, and so is the actor who played Mikey. But the Pop Rocks story remains a classic urban legend and there are grown-ups today who will cite chapter and verse as God’s own truth of the killer candy.

Like fairy tales, urban legends are cautionary stories. But unlike fairy tales, they are always told as fact. E-mails buzz every day with a thousand urban legends and the Internet serves as both incubator and distributor of a hundred thousand more.

Just as ubiquitous as stories about Pop Rocks are what I call Catholic Urban Legends.

Here’s an example: Brave Galileo has been forced by the Inquisition to recant his teaching that the Earth in fact orbits the Sun. But as he exits the star chamber of the inquisitor judges, he exclaims bravely, sotto voce: Eppur si muove! — “And yet it moves!”

Kids are taught that in schools, columnists will cite it, game show hosts will have it as a question and answer. But it never happened. There is no contemporary record of any such quote and Galileo certainly never acknowledged or claimed to have said it, and he would live for nearly 10 more years. In fact, a French anticlerical propagandist wrote the first discernible public claim to any such quote attributed to Galileo nearly 125 years after his death. It was an invention, a bit of propaganda devised in the 18th Century battle between the so-called French Enlightenment and the Church.

Catholic urban legends abound in our world. Fabrications of history cited as universal truths, they are usually believed by the enlightened and the educated, becoming part of our cultural DNA in America, passed on from generation to generation, textbook to textbook, and viewed not as the product of bigotry, but as normative thinking. They have been repeated so often for so many years that they are accepted as basic truths.

The list of Catholic urban legends covers everything from the Inquisition, the Crusades, slavery, the papacy in general and Pius XII in particular. The Spanish Inquisition is said to have slaughtered and tortured hundreds of thousands of Protestant souls. However, in truth there were few if any Protestants at any time in Spain, let alone during the Inquisition period. The Crusades are presented as a vicious unprompted offensive launched by the Church on innocent middle-eastern Islam. Wrong. They began as an attempt to come to the aid of Constantinople that was under attack by aggressive Islamic armies.

Slavery? Slavery in the West was instituted and blessed by the papacy. Patently false, but patently believed.

The Papacy? A million legends of uniform corruption from the sixth century on leading up to Pius XII, the crypto-Nazi who turned a blind eye to the Holocaust. No serious historian would now consider either charge worth noting, but most people accept them as common, unquestioned fact.

This is not to say that the lessons of history or the interpretation of historical events are not open to debate and contrary opin-
ions. The Crusades and the events surrounding them are complicated and open to different interpretations. But Catholic urban legends are not varying interpretations of history. They are falsifications of history. They are mistakes in fact, or more likely a converting of legend and propaganda to fact, until the truths of the actual events are forgotten in the culture and the public mind.

Catholic urban legends share all the essential characteristics of all urban legends:

They are ubiquitous.
One of the difficulties in refuting them is that almost everyone believes them. Catholic urban legends are not the strange beliefs of one particular fundamentalist sect. They are part of the Western cultural inheritance shared by everyone, Catholics included. They are believed because everyone believes them.

They are presented as fact.
In the 1970s, you didn’t have to “prove” that Mikey died from exploding Pop Rocks. He just did – everybody knew that. The same is true of the Catholic urban legends surrounding Galileo, for example. People are not required to prove such assertions. They are simply accepted as actual fact.

They are based on real events.
Pop Rocks existed and “fizzed” when you bit into them. That didn’t mean they would explode in your stomach, but it did mean that you were talking about something real, not fantasy or fairy tales. Similarly, the trial of Galileo took place. There were Crusades and Inquisitions. Pius XII was pope during World War II. Catholic urban legends are usually rooted in real historical events.

They are populist cautionary tales.
The urban legend of Pop Rocks was meant to warn kids that unfeeling corporations would kill for profits unless somebody reins them in. Catholic urban legends, invented as part of post-Reformation theological propaganda, were utilized to create the impression of a corrupt, power-hungry church that was the enemy of freedom and the true meaning of the Scriptures. They are utilized today to dismiss Church positions out-of-hand. The Church is anti-science, as proven in the Galileo urban legend, and therefore its position on embryonic stem cell research can be readily dismissed without arguing the merits of that position.

So where did these Catholic urban legends come from and how did they get to Pittsburgh to become cannon fodder for Joe Barker?

Though open to varying historical interpretations itself, there is little doubt that the explosion in the printed word following Gutenberg’s invention of moveable type and the printing press in 1440 had much to do with the character of the Protestant Reformation in the 16th Century. The Reformation became a war of polemics with dueling pamphlets and books appealing for the hearts and minds of the growing business class that was often more literate than their high-born rulers. These city burgers, in Germany, Switzerland and England, would become the heart of the Reformation.

Luther and the other reformers knew that flowery theological debate would not move the masses. The rhetoric had to be steamy and immediate. It also needed a history. The vacuum in the Protestant position was history. Where was Christ for 1,500 years if he did not exist in the Church? Very early, an understanding of Church history grew out of the Reformation. It was simple: the Church existed in a pure form in the days of the Apostles and immediately thereafter. However, nearly from that inception, the pure Church was corrupted by Rome. It was this false pagan entity that corrupted early, pure Christianity and created the Catholic Church and the papacy. That pure Christianity was only rediscovered in the age of the Reformers.

One of the earliest histories that developed this theme was the Centuries of Magdeburg (1559). It was a pivotal historical work that established the essential Protestant historical canon: the corruption of the Church began after the death of the last Apostle. This corrupt Church emerged victorious under Emperor Constantine in the fourth century. That Church was, in effect, the pagan Roman Empire – the anti-Christ as described in Revelations – disguised in this hybrid, corrupt Christianity of Roman Catholicism. It would be the Centuries of Magdeburg – written by a team of scholars over the remaining decades of the century –
that created an understanding of Church history that would become common Protestant understanding, common English understanding, common American understanding, and the source for many of our Catholic urban legends.

The Centuries had good history within it. It was serious scholarship, but it was steeped in theological propaganda. It repeated tales of corruption as descriptive of the whole, creating the idea of the "Dark Ages" as a harrowing time in history when ignorance and superstition reigned in a Catholic Church-imposed theocracy.

Of course, the Centuries was not alone. Except for the Bible, it is hard to argue that any one book can create a culture. A wealth of material was produced during the Reformation years and those following. Much of it created a propaganda that would write the history of the period and create an image of the Catholic Church that would come to dominate Western thought, particularly in England. And, through England, America.

History, it is said, is written by the winners and in England the Reformation won. It is that understanding of Catholicism, built on Reformation polemics, which would create a thousand Catholic urban legends, and an understanding of Catholicism that would become culturally normative among what Winston Churchill called the English-speaking peoples.

Another important work was The Apologie of William of Oranage (1581), written by the French Huguenot Pierre Loyseleur de Villiers. This became hugely popular in England and helped to define the public image of the Inquisition. Meant as a propaganda tool in the Dutch Revolt against Spanish rule, the tract was less a defense of revolt than a Calvinist apologia. It was through works like the Apologie that the Inquisition became, in the popular culture, the brutal machinery that slaughtered millions of Protestants. This image of the Inquisition is perhaps the most persistent image of Catholicism, found in such later editions as Fox’s Book of Martyrs, Edgar Allen Poe’s The Pit and the Pendulum, D.W. Griffith’s Intolerance, and Dan Brown’s The Da Vinci Code.

The critical point for our story is the use of this anti-Catholic propaganda and its becoming a central part of English thinking in the sixteenth century, the eve of the colonization of America. The concept of a corrupt and scandal-ridden, oppressive Catholic Church at war with the natural rights of Englishmen in the centuries prior to the Reformation became part of common English understanding of their history and heritage. It has only been literally in our own day that the history of the Church in England has been recaptured from this Reformation propaganda. (The case has been made that this correction of historical understanding was only possible once England no longer cared.)

Under Queen Elizabeth I, the real fear of a Spanish invasion to overthrow her led to a government-sponsored propaganda campaign painting the Catholic Church as the violent, deceitful enemy of England, English liberty and the true faith. Anti-Catholic tracts and anti-Catholicism became primary religious, catechetical and historical reading in the second half of the 16th Century in England.

And then came the Gunpowder Plot to solidify this anti-Catholic understanding and turn it into the cultural DNA that would be inherited in America.

On November 5, 1605, a small group of fanatic Catholics planned to blow up the House of Parliament in London, killing the assembled leadership and assassinating King James I. Suffering under anti-Catholic persecution, English Catholics had hoped for relief from the new Stuart king and his allegedly Catholic wife. When it became clear that a wider toleration was not to be, what would be known to history as the "Gunpowder Plot" was hatched among a few desperate men.

The conspirators hoped that the ensuing destruction would lead to a Catholic uprising in England and an invasion from Europe. Instead, the conspiracy was discovered, the conspirators captured and later executed. The anti-Catholic laws in place prior to the Gunpowder Plot were cruel, but aimed and enforced primarily at priests, who were tortured and killed if found in England. The laity who remained quietly faithful to Rome were generally left in peace and the restrictions placed upon them lackadaisically enforced. But in the wake of the Gunpowder Plot, Antonia Fraser wrote in Faith and Treason:

"Catholics could no longer practice law, nor serve in the Army or Navy as officers. They could act as neither executor of a will, guardian to a minor, nor even possess a weapon except in cases of self-defense. Catholics could not receive a university degree, could not vote in local elections or in parliamentary elections. All this on the spiritual penalties by which Catholics were ordered to marry in the Anglican church, take their children there for baptism, and finally rest in its burial.
grounds... (A) profound prejudice against Papists... remained lurking in the popular conscience after 1605, ready to emerge from its depths at any hint of leniency towards them. For many Protestants, a declaration of February 1606 on the subject of the Plot by Sir Thomas Smith summed the matter up: ‘this bloody stain and mark will never be washed out of Popish religion.’ It was a stain that would be passed on to unborn generations. It was the alleged ‘foreign’ nature of Catholicism – ruled by an alien Pope based in Rome – which made it perennially vulnerable to attack. In 1651 Milton called Catholicism not so much a religion as ‘a (foreign) priestly despotism under the cloak of religion arrayed in the spoils of temporal power.’”


It was only 15 years after the unmasking of the Gunpowder Plot that the Puritans came to America to establish Plymouth Colony in 1620. They brought with them a hatred of Catholicism that was elementary to their very theology, and strongly inflamed by the populist anti-Catholicism engendered in the wake of the Gunpowder Plot. If Anglicans and Puritans could agree on nothing else, they could agree that “popery” was the one great intolerable evil. This anti-Catholicism, at the very birth of the nation, would become an integral part of American culture and thought, long after it had dissipated on the European continent and even in England itself.

Virtually every colony had some form of Catholic disabilities in their fundamental charters, denying them the right to hold office or to practice their faith. The Puritan model in New England was the most severe, but the Virginia model founded on the Established Church also tolerated no dissenters, such as the Pilgrims, but was equally forbidding of Catholics. Anti-Catholic disabilities were found in the legislation of every colony, including Rhode Island, which is generally seen as the “cradle of religious liberty.” A 1664 law in Rhode Island specifically excepted Catholics from the right to public office. Maryland, a safe haven for Catholics when established in 1634, by 1694 had forbidden public mass and established the general Catholic disabilities common under English law. William Penn attempted to begin his colony of Pennsylvania as a haven for freedom of religion, but within a short time laws were passed in the colony that forbade public mass and denied public office to Catholics.

As the divisions between England and the colonies grew more severe in the 18th century, anti-Catholicism grew even more intense in the colonies. The Quebec Act of 1774 roused anti-Catholic fever as it appeared to legalize a Catholic presence west of the Alleghenies. We have a “popish French government in our rears set up for the express purpose of destroying our liberties,” a popular pamphlet proclaimed. Or another: “We may live to see our churches converted to mass houses and our lands plundered for tythes for the support of a Popish clergy. The Inquisition may erect her standard in Pennsylvania, and the city of Philadelphia may yet experience the carnage of St. Bartholomew’s Day.” Or this popular couplet: “If Gallic papists have a right, To worship their own way, Then farewell to the liber-

ties, Of Poor America.”

During the Revolution itself, the new American government downplayed anti-Catholicism as it sought alliance and aid from England’s traditional Catholic enemies, France and Spain. Tory propaganda, however, was quick to play the anti-Catholic card and proclaimed that the Revolution meant that Boston’s “Old South Meeting House is fitted up for a Cathedral, and that several other meeting-houses are soon to be repaired for convents.”

The Catholic population after the Revolution numbered about 25,000 out of a population of nearly three million. While many of the legal disabilities ended after the ratification of the Constitution, the nearly invisible and primarily poor Catholic population did little to dissuade the new America of its inherited anti-Catholic prejudices. By the time there was a new America, anti-Catholicism was 160 years old in the American consciousness, and all the classic elements of this English heritage were in place.

What did this mean, this collective DNA of Catholic urban legends and Reformation propaganda? It meant that almost every American at the beginning of the 19th Century viewed Catholics as non-Christians who invest their faith in meaningless superstitions and thoughtless rituals that were a product of a pre-enlightened era, the “crosses and idle ceremonies of popery.” As a prominent Boston minister referred to John Carroll, the first bishop of the United States: “It seems strange that a man of sense should be so zealous in the cause of nonsense.”

It was universally believed that the Catholic Church, dominated by the pope and his hierarchical and priestly minions, was
inherently the sworn enemy of freedom and incapable of existing in a republic. Thus the need for “test acts” for public office, requiring that Catholics swear an oath that they would not have an allegiance to any “foreign power” (the pope). A common thread throughout 19th century populist thought in America was the danger that, on the orders of the pope, Catholics in America would rise up to violently overthrow the government and install “popish” rule.

Catholicism was identified as the religion of people deemed inferior by the White Anglo Saxon Protestant establishment, an alien presence within the United States with no understanding of or dedication to republican principles. Catholicism was seen as a faith contrary to true Americanism, essentially alien to the predominant Protestant culture. Benedict Arnold described a mass attended by leaders of Congress and wondered: “Do you know that the eye which guides this pen lately saw your mean and profligate Congress ... participating in the rites of a Church against whose anti-Chr... corruption your pious ancestors would bear witness with their blood?”

The Catholic priesthood was invariably linked to sexual deviancy, portraying priests as lascivious predators of the young and innocent. In America, anti-Catholic literature was so strewn with sexual deviancy that it was often referred to as “Puritan Pornography.”

With this common understanding of Catholicism, with a popular culture steeped in centuries of Catholic urban legends, America was ripe for the nativist explosion that would take place in the 1830s, 1840s and 1850s.

As early as the 1820s, a number of factors were merging to bring Catholic urban legends to the forefront of American thinking. The Catholic Church was growing larger and becoming more of a public, visible presence — threateningly so. At the same time, a strong Protestant revival was underway and anti-Catholic newspapers and books began to be widely distributed. Most important, a trickle of Catholic immigrants from Ireland and Germany was to become a tidal wave. In the past, the few immigrants to America had come from the good Irish Protestants from the North of Ireland. But Catholics from the South began to arrive in growing numbers on the Atlantic coast, and in the 1830s, 1840s, and 1850s they would arrive in overwhelming numbers.

Oddly enough, the Catholic Emancipation Act of 1828 in England, which restored a host of basic rights to Catholics barred virtually since the Gunpowder Plot, also added fuel to the fire of anti-Catholicism in America. Tracts and propaganda fighting the 1828 legislation sent England into one of its regular anti-Catholic binges, and America got the overflow of the propaganda. Books detailing convent horror stories became enormously popular in the United States in the 1830s, and most of these were imported from England. Works such as Female Convents and Secrets of the Nunnerys Exposed established the common elements of anti-Catholic literature: lecherous priests, secret tunnels between seminaries and convents, and the babies who resulted from these unholy unions slaughtered and buried in the basements.

The first distinctly American work to gain widespread popular attention was Rebecca Reed’s Six Months in a Convent, published in 1835. Reed claimed to have been a nun who escaped from an Ursuline convent in Charlestown. (The Mother Superior explained that Reed had not been a nun, but an employee who had been dismissed.) Yet her “inside story” would sell nearly 200,000 copies within a month of publication, and remained in print for well over a century.

Reed’s public telling of her story prior to its publication was part of the vicious anti-Catholic propaganda current in Boston that led directly to the burning of the Ursuline convent by a mob on August 11, 1834 — one of the first overt acts of violence aimed at a Catholic institution. The mob believed that a woman was being held in the convent against her will, and when the Mother Superior confronted the crowd with the threat that the bishop had armed Irishmen at his disposal to protect the convent, they responded by burning the convent to the ground.

Reed’s book, however, would be overwhelmed by the success of the most famous work of anti-Catholic literature ever distributed in America. Awful Disclosures of the Hotel Dieu Nunnery of Montreal, or as it was more popularly known then and now, The Awful Disclosures of Maria Monk, was first published in 1836. It would sell hundreds of thousands of copies in its early years and has continued to be published ever since.

Born in Canada, Monk claimed in her Awful Disclosures that she was raised a good Protestant girl and entered the convent school at the Hotel Dieu in Montreal for her education, then de-
cided to convert to Catholicism and become a nun. According to Maria’s version, after making her vows she was forcefully introduced to her main responsibilities as a nun: serving the perverse sexual needs of Catholic priests. She alleged that babies that resulted from these unholy unions were killed. She said that she had discovered a gruesome cemetery in the convent’s basement where the tiny bodies were buried, along with the young nuns who refused to take part in the orgies.

Monk claimed that a “Father Phelan” had caused her pregnancy and, fearing the murder of her child, she fled the convent. That was where the first edition of the *Awful Disclosures* ended. In the second edition, the tale continued with attempted suicide, pursuit and, finally, her arrival in the United States. Pregnant and near starvation, she claimed to have been found by hunters at the outskirts of New York. She told her terrible story to a Protestant clergyman who encouraged her to write it down. Sounds like a made-for-TV movie or an ABC News Special.

The reality of the story was a bit different. Monk had taken off from the Catholic asylum to which her grandmother had committed her. She had help from her former lover, who was the likely father of her child. In New York, she hooked up with a few Protestant clergymen who saw the opportunity to make a strong anti-Catholic statement, as well as a few bucks. Those ministers approached the publishing house of Harper Brothers with Monk’s story. The Harper brothers set up a dummy corporation to actually publish the book, unwilling to have its reputation sullied with a salacious tale not for polite ears.

The book was released in January 1836. The *Awful Disclosures* was an immediate sensation. It received rave reviews in the contemporary Protestant press and was cited as the first accurate depiction of convent life. The small Catholic community protested that it was a hoax. As the controversy grew, two Protestant clergymen went to Canada to inspect the Hotel Dieu convent. When they reported that the convent was nothing like Monk’s description, they were accused of being Jesuits in disguise.

Monk disappeared in August 1837 only to resurface in Philadelphia, claiming to have been kidnapped by priests. It was discovered that she had actually taken off under an assumed name with another man. While this indiscretion seemed to discredit her story, there were many Americans still willing to accept her “awful disclosures” as truth. In 1837 she published another book claiming that pregnant nuns from the United States and Canada lived on an island in the St. Lawrence River.

Maria died in jail in 1849 after being arrested for pickpocketing at a bawdy house. There has never been a period when the *Awful Disclosures* has not been in print in the United States.

Monk’s tale combined many of the traditional aspects of Catholic urban legends, particularly the perversity of Catholic priests, with fears of the “alien” nature of the Catholic religion, its corrupting influence on the purity of the American experiment, the Church’s tyranny over its members, the Catholic immigrants flooding our shores, and the Church’s singular desire for power.

At the same time that Maria Monk was making her public entrance, Lyman Beecher, the father of Harriet Beecher Stowe, would publish *The Plea for the West*, in which he claimed that there was a Catholic conspiracy engendered by European monarchies to take over the Mississippi valley through mass European immigration. Samuel F. Morse, inventor of the first successful telegraph in the United States, shared this belief, claiming that Catholic royalty was flooding America with immigrants who would soon become an internal army under the pope’s direction. It is said that Morse was not particularly an avid Protestant, but when he was in Rome a papal guard knocked off his hat when he refused to remove it as a religious procession passed by. Thus a lifelong animosity was born.

Immigration, the growth of the Catholic community, over 200 hundred years of unvarnished anti-Catholic propaganda, the widespread distribution of anti-Catholic newspapers, books and pamphlets, Protestant revivalism, even the lay trusteeism dispute in the Church in America which seemed to pit “American” parishioners trying to protect their churches from the foreign influence of a bishop – all this combined into an anti-Catholic nativist movement that was already powerful socially, and would become powerful politically. The fear of an immigrant Catholic takeover of America that must be resisted at all costs to preserve American freedoms and the Protestant faith was ubiquitous.

This was the America that welcomed Bishop Michael O’Connor, an Irish immigrant himself by way of a successful career in Rome, as the first bishop
of Pittsburgh in 1843. Only a few months later, anti-Catholic riots broke out in Philadelphia, casting a huge shadow over O’Connor’s episcopacy.

Catholics saw it as the “school question,” Protestants saw it as a nefarious plot by Catholics to ban the Bible and destroy public schools. Public schools were in their infancy in the 1830s, and many functioned through various forms of funding arranged through states or municipalities. But whatever form of funding supported them, these public schools were generically Protestant. Daily bible readings from the King James bible, anti-Catholic textbooks, and a general indoctrination in basic Protestant tenets were the norm.

Not surprisingly, Catholic leaders took exception to the curriculum imposed on Catholic immigrants. Meeting formally together for the first time, the bishops of the United States had in 1829 collectively proposed that a separate Catholic school system be established, while warning of the dangers of exposing children to “corrupt translations of the Bible.” Not the type of language to mollify Protestant critics.

Immigrants were starting to gauge their strength at the ballot box, another source of grave nativist dismay that would lead to a fundamental goal of the nativist political movement: a 25-year “waiting period” for citizenship and access to voting. Further, movements were underway to support Catholic education through a share in the funding that went to the common schools, the forebears of the public school system. Children leaving class, the local administrator ordered an end to Bible reading entirely.

Enraged Protestants organized around the American Republican Party, an early nativist organization that became popular in Pittsburgh, to field candidates in Philadelphia who would restore the Bible to the schools and fight back the rising tide of immigration. When they tried to hold a rally in Kensington in May of 1844, a three-day riot ensued with Catholic churches burned and immigrant houses destroyed. Further rioting and bloodshed took place in July.

The issues of school funding and school Bible reading would become another battlefield experienced in virtually every Northern state up to the Civil War. And the arguments were rooted in Catholic urban legends and anti-Catholic polemics. When Pennsylvania debated whether Catholic schools should receive any public funds, the Philadelphia Sun eloquently argued: “Are American Protestants to be taxed for the purpose of nourishing Romish vipers?”

The first issue of the Pittsburgh Catholic, dated March 16, 1844, a little less than two months before the Philadelphia riots, described the atmosphere then commonplace in Allegheny County and elsewhere: “Pittsburgh appears to be a field on which the enemies of our faith take special delight to display their powers... We have been represented as enemies of God, and traitors to our country. The foulest crimes... are stated to be our most cherished dogmas... We are accused of making religion a veil for the most foul corruption and an engine of the most deadly teach-

Most Reverend Michael O’Connor
First Bishop of Pittsburgh

The battle was first joined in New York in 1841 when Governor William H. Seward proposed that the privately run city school system devote a portion of the funding it received from the state to Catholic schools. This caused a major political furor with little accomplished except a marked rise in tension.

In Philadelphia, Bishop Francis Kenrick, mentor to Bishop O’Connor in Pittsburgh, tried the same idea with a twist: if Catholic schools cannot be funded, at least let the Catholic immigrant children have Bible readings from the Douay translation in the common schools. The Philadelphia school board rejected that idea, but said that Catholic children could leave the room when the King James translation was being read. When a teacher in the Irish neighborhood of Kensington complained of the disruption caused by the
Catholic urban legends had come to Pittsburgh.

Bishop O’Connor asked for peace from the Cathedral pulpit after news of the Philadelphia riots reached the city, but promised to lead them if any churches or their homes were attacked. Bishop John Hughes in New York, known as “Dagger John,” was more forceful. He informed local authorities that if one Catholic Church was attacked, “the city would become a second Moscow,” referring to a Moscow burned to the ground before Napoleon. The threats of violence tapered off in New York.

In Pittsburgh in July, a nativist march was planned, but cancelled by authorities after the riots that had taken place in Philadelphia. The marchers assembled outside the city, then congregated later at the Cathedral, but no violence erupted.

Pennsylvania would become a hotbed of the Know Nothing Party, the virulently anti-Catholic nativist party that would have a million adherents nationwide by 1854. By 1855, they held the governorship and a majority in the legislature.

Pittsburgh itself already had a sizeable Catholic population through the immigrant labor community that the city desperately needed for its growing industry and commerce. Estimates run as high as 20 percent of the population of Pittsburgh and neighboring Allegheny in the 1840s was Catholic, and it continued to climb. In 1845 immigrants numbered approximately 125,000. By 1850, the number had climbed to nearly 400,000, and Catholic immigrants outnumbered any other classification. By 1855, in Chicago, Detroit, and Milwaukee, immigrants outnumbered the native born. In a very short period the same was true in New York, Buffalo, Cleveland and Cincinnati.

This high rate of Catholic immigration fueled the nativist movement and led directly to the formation of the Know-Nothing Party. The Nativists made it clear in their literature that they distrusted immigrants because they were Catholic, rather than trusting Catholics because they were immigrants. All their literature posited the threat of a papal takeover of America and the incompatibility of Catholicism with republican virtues as their reasons for opposing immigrants. They welcomed Jews and generally left non-Catholic immigrants, such as Protestant Germans, alone. The hatred was religious-based and aimed squarely at Catholics.

All these factors played a role during Bishop O’Connor’s years as bishop. The *Pittsburgh Catholic* engaged in endless debates with both political Know Nothingism and the social and religious bigotry that permeated the area with an endless parade of anti-Catholic rallies, newspapers, tracts, books and organized conversion efforts aimed solely at Catholics. With a powerful Presbyterian community that had its own newspaper, the *Presbyterian Advocate*, Catholic urban legends were a part of daily life. When a Catholic church was opened to serve the Catholic black community, Protestant clergy spread the rumor that the pastor was proslavery and the church was a front for rounding up former slaves to be returned to the South. The church was forced to shut down within a year. In 1846, when it was announced that a Catholic hospital would be opened to serve the poor, the response was that it was a Catholic plot to capture Protestant souls for Rome on their deathbeds. The *Presbyterian Advocate* argued in 1847, as the hospital was about to open, that the Sisters of Mercy who would run it were engaged in prostitution. Catholic urban legends, indeed.

In 1844, City Council ordered a grading of the hill leading up to Saint Paul Cathedral. Many Catholics believed that the grading was done with the intent of making the cathedral dangerous and nearly impossible to enter. When a second grading was announced in 1847, the *Pittsburgh Catholic* believed that it was motivated purely by "hostility to our church.”

Joe Barker first began to gain public notice in Pittsburgh in 1845. A minor political office holder, he gained fame as a street-preacher targeting Catholicism, and struck a popular chord. Politically organized nativism was on the rise in Pittsburgh while religious and social anti-Catholicism was fueled through the rallies held by the local branch of the Protestant Reformation Society, innumerable tracts distributed by Protestant mission societies, and the rising temperance movements which targeted the Catholic immigrant as the cause of the ever-growing problem of alcohol in American urban society.

According to Father Henry Szarmnicki’s biography, Bishop O’Connor was a favorite target of Barker’s rhetoric. He called him “Micky” or “Irish Micky.” Barker and his supporters would gather in the market place and often the police were called in to handle the inevitable troubles that would arise from his oratory. In September of 1849, the mayor had enough and had Barker arrested, charging him and his fellow-
travelers for obstructing traffic and using lewd and indecent language. (The Presbyterian Advocate responded that his intemperate language came directly from Catholic books that he cited.) Barker was fined and slapped in jail for 12 months.

But the political chaos of the times that would generate the Know Nothing Party, contribute to the death of the Whig Party, and lead inexorably to civil war had its own say in Barker’s imprisonment. His nativist supporters rallied around him and convinced the majority of Pittsburgh citizens that Barker’s freedom had been taken away from him by a conniving and corrupt Catholic Church and, most assuredly, a new Inquisition in Pittsburgh was just around the corner. Convicted that Barker’s arrest proved that the Church was dominating politicians, the citizenry of Pittsburgh in 1850 elected Joe Barker mayor while he was still in jail.

Father Szarnicki wrote: “On the evening of the election, the victorious nativists formed a torch parade, forced Barker’s release from jail, raised him up on the shoulders of two men, and marched him to the mayor’s office. En route, the shouts and cries turned to howls and jeers as pauses were made before the Church of St. Philomena and the residence of Bishop O’Connor. After the revelers had their play, Barker was returned to jail pending a pardon from the governor.”

Barker’s term as mayor was a disaster, as could be expected. In one of his first acts as mayor, he ordered the arrest of Bishop O’Connor over faulty plumbing at Mercy Hospital. Barker served as judge of the case and found the bishop guilty. Refusing the bishop’s appeal, he gave him the choice between jail time and a $20 fine.

More seriously, Barker’s term as mayor gave free rein to nativists who no longer had to fear a police force hired by the mayor. As Father Szarnicki wrote, “boldly, they expressed their anti-Catholicism through cross burnings, petty thievery, window breaking, and threats of arson to Catholic edifices. On several occasions priests were maliciously accosted on the city thoroughfares. One Sunday morning a ‘preacher’ entered the cathedral and from the pulpit began to deliver an anti-papal harangue. Provocations of this kind were the order of the day, and to many it seemed that Pittsburgh was headed towards a riotous situation such as that in Philadelphia six years later.”

In one of his first acts as mayor, he ordered the arrest of Bishop O’Connor over faulty plumbing at Mercy Hospital.

Bishop O’Connor believed that to be true, and expressed the fear directly in a letter to the Paris mission society that had provided financial support to the new diocese. Guards were often kept overnight in churches to deter attacks and priests began to avoid wearing their clerical garb in public. Anti-Catholic rallies were often held with the mayor delivering his usual fare. A plot was revealed to the bishop claiming that arson was planned for Catholic churches and Mercy Hospital. “Our situation in these matters is truly frightful,” Bishop O’Connor wrote. “Under an appearance of liberty they labor to produce a state of things in which I am sure they would propose nothing less than to throw us out of the city as soon as they obtain a pretext.”

In 1850, the congregation decided to replace Saint Paul Cathedral, which by then stood 15 feet above the ground of the graded streets and could only be reached by wooden stairs. But before anything could be accomplished, on May 6, 1851 the Cathedral was burnt to the ground. The official investigation said the fire was caused by a spark from the chimney of the bishop’s residence. Bishop O’Connor believed that nativist arsonists had torched the church, but didn’t press the issue out of fear of the riots that could result.

Barker was out of office quickly, though in 1854 he would again be in the news when he accused Bishop O’Connor of taking sexual advantage of a young woman. The nativist movement that Barker represented was growing stronger in Pittsburgh and throughout Pennsylvania. In 1853, when Bishop O’Connor was serving as Bishop of the newly-created diocese of Erie, he accompanied Archbishop Gaetano Bedini, Papal Visitor to the United States, on a visit to Pittsburgh. The purpose of Archbishop Bedini’s visit to the United States was to explore the possibility of a nunciature in Washington and to review the state of affairs of the Church in the United States.

His visit was a disaster. Stirred by attacks on him by Alessandro Gavazzi, a former priest who claimed that as Governor of Bologna he had overseen the exe-
cution of Italian patriots (the charges were false), Archbishop Bedini was hounded by nativists throughout the Midwest. In Pittsburgh a group of nativists attacked his carriage, blew cigar smoke in his face, and engaged in a shoving match that roughed up Bishop O'Connor. After riots greeted the Archbishop in Cincinnati, he was smuggled out of the country incognito.

Any attempt to secure funds for Catholic schools was attacked as undermining the Protestant public schools. When Bishop O'Connor complained of Catholic taxpayers being forced to subsidize schools that were essentially sectarian, the plan was viewed as a thinly-disguised effort for Catholics to gain control of public education and to increase poverty at the expense of the Protestant faith. O'Connor was branded a tool of a foreign agent – the pope.

The Know Nothing Party peaked in 1855 in Pennsylvania and elsewhere, then essentially collapsed from its own ineffectiveness. It was not that it did not have a visceral appeal, but it simply proved incapable of governing. It could pass convent inspection laws in Massachusetts and garner support for Bible-reading in the public schools, but it failed in the rudimentary responsibilities of government and was generally tossed out of office after one term. In Pennsylvania, it managed to pass the Price Act, which forbade bishops from holding property, but it died as a political organization in the national election that brought Abraham Lincoln to the presidency.

Though he was returned quickly to the See of Pittsburgh, Bishop O'Connor was worn down by the nativist attacks. He spent less and less time in his diocese, and in 1855, as his health began to fail, he hoped to retire to the Jesuit order. He was eventually able to do so in 1860. Barker was run over by a train in 1862.

**Conclusion**

The world of Catholic urban legends did not disappear with the decline of the Know Nothing Party, the departure of Bishop O'Connor or Barker's death for that matter. Much of the post-Civil War political leadership in the country was made up of Know Nothings, converted to leadership of the new Republican Party. Most of Ulysses S. Grant's administration was made up of Know Nothings or Know Nothing sympathizers, including Grant himself. Various political movements, such as the American Protective Association in the late 19th Century and the revitalized Ku Klux Klan in the 20th Century, espoused a full anti-Catholic agenda and warned of Catholic aims to take over the public school system and for the pope to take over America. Despite its ever-growing Catholic population, Pittsburgh would not be immune to the survival and revival of Catholic urban legends.

Stripped of their theological trappings, Catholic urban legends, particularly fear of alleged Catholic power, would be central to the debates over legalized abortion, euthanasia, embryonic stem cell research and immigration reform. The Catholic urban legends that prop up anti-Catholicism are just as vibrant today as the propaganda from the 19th Century.

Example: In a column in the February 10, 2006 Pittsburgh Tribune-Review, Donald Collins regurgitated almost line-for-line nativist fears of foreign bishops usurping the U. S. Constitution. Collins' alleged issue was the position taken by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops on immigration reform. But rather than deal with that, he wrote of a dark litany about "Rome and these bishops" being hard at work for decades manipulating and shaping successfully U.S. public policy in regard to abortion, contraception, the separation of Church and State, and virtually every other issue.

Their latest victory, he wrote, was manipulating the appointment of a block of five Catholic judges on the Supreme Court. Collins claimed that the behind-the-scenes power exercised by the bishops came from their 1975 clandestine Pastoral Plan for Pro-Life Activities, which created "a national political machine controlled by the bishops" that "has taken over the Republican Party."

Collins restates classic nativism when he writes that Catholics embrace their beliefs "not because it represents the truth but because it represents temporal power of the most useful kind." Catholic action in defense of human life, according to Collins, has nothing to do with belief in the sacredness of human life, but is merely an exercise in "flock control," a calculated and cynical power grab over women and the "American body politic."

These are all arguments that could have come straight out of an 1854 Know Nothing pamphlet. And they were published in Pittsburgh in February 2006. Just a little reminder that Catholic urban legends are alive and well today.

Robert P. Lockwood is Director of the Department for Communications for the Diocese of Pittsburgh and General Manager of the Pittsburgh Catholic Publishing Associates.
This City’s Church in the News

By Mike Aquilina

IN MEDIEVAL CITIES, the cathedral dominated civic life and the city skyline. According to the historian of architecture Richard Ingersoll, “Almost every city in the medieval west is dominated by the cathedral . . . . The cathedral came to represent the city, and in some cases . . . it was the city.” 1 If there was news to report in the medieval city, it likely involved the cathedral somehow.

It has not been so in the American experience. Most U.S. cities arose at a time when Catholics were a small minority, and America’s established institutions assimilated Catholic immigrants only with difficulty. As late as 1927, when Catholics comprised the largest religious body in Pittsburgh, a Chamber of Commerce publicity book hardly noted their existence in its chapter on “Religious Life in Pittsburgh.” 2 Instead of cathedrals, other institutions have dominated American cityscapes: first courthouses, then factories, then office buildings.

Much, however, has changed for Pittsburgh Catholics since 1927; and it is arguable that Pittsburgh and its cathedral have—as much as possible in this secularist age—acquired some vestige of the medieval ideal. If St. Paul Cathedral is not the focus of local news, it is at least a locus of the news, and on a fairly regular basis.

There are many reasons for this. Foremost, perhaps, is the fact that Catholics make up such a large portion of the market for local media. A close second is the fact that Catholics make up a significant number of local newsmakers—politicians, athletes, poets, executives, and even churchmen—and the Cathedral belongs to all of them. A third reason is that St. Paul Cathedral, very much after the model of its medieval ancestors, has found its own ways to exercise a profound influence on the wider culture.

It can be instructive to identify the news stories that capture the attention of the city—and then watch for the ways the Cathedral will often emerge as an element in the story. In 1995, Pittsburgh firefighters mourned three comrades who fell in the line of duty. In 2003, two more died while fighting a fire at Ebenezer Baptist Church in the Hill District. Both times, the story captivated the electronic and print media and moved the hearts of citizens. Both times, the story found its resolution—and the mourners their consolation—in the final front-page story: a funeral Mass for all the fallen. Though the firefighters came from many scattered parishes, they were buried from the Cathedral, because the Cathedral is the city’s church.

It is for the funerals of Pittsburgh’s heroes that the Cathedral most often appears in the news. The epilogue to a great life, for Catholics in Pittsburgh (and anywhere else), is the commendation of the soul to God. Thus, for the memorable figures in Pittsburgh politics—Mayor Richard Caliguiri in 1987, Commissioner Tom Forster in 2000—the paper trail of newspaper clippings often ends with the Mass of Christian Burial. This happens not because the Cathedral is their parish, but because they were Catholic and so the Cathedral is their church.

Even without the presence of celebrities, Catholic liturgy can enliven news coverage, and so the Cathedral provides the media with a regular cycle of colorful events. Every year, the bishop ordains men to be “priests forever.” He does so in a stunning ceremonial, with dramatic texts suitable for sound bytes and gestures that are perfect photo ops—the laying on of hands, the prostrations, the con-celebration of the Mass. Every so many years, the Church of Pittsburgh will provide another bishop for the Catholic Church, sometimes beginning his episcopal years as a local auxiliary, but then moving on to a see of his own, at other times a man who will continue to serve Pittsburgh—and return to St. Paul’s—till the end of his earthly days. Whenever Pittsburgh produces a new bishop, it is news for the Church and for the city.

The Cathedral’s size and beauty have enabled it to accommodate large crowds of Eastern Rite Catholics as they have celebrated and consecrated bishops. In 1956, Bishop John Dearden preached at the consecration of Auxiliary bishop Stephen Kocisko.
of the Byzantine Catholic Diocese of Pittsburgh. In 1988, the millennium of Christianity in Ukraine was observed with a spectacular liturgy at St. Paul’s.

St. Paul Cathedral has even served as the site for the installation of bishops of the Episcopal Church. When Trinity Episcopal Cathedral, Downtown, suffered extensive damage from a fire in 1968, Bishop John Wright offered the use of St. Paul’s for the consecration of Episcopal Bishop Robert Appleyard. The parish opened its doors again when Robert Duncan was consecrated the Episcopal Church’s coadjutor bishop in 1996.

Most of the visitors to the Cathedral, however, are Roman Catholic and most pass through unnoticed. But some are celebrities, and they do tend to draw the reporters and photographers. Cardinals are frequent guests for high-profile liturgies. In the 1920s, Bishop Regis Canevin played host to the great philosopher-archbishop of Malines, Belgium, Cardinal Desire Mercier, who offered Mass at the Cathedral. Through the years, others appeared and offered Mass: the great television prelate and best-selling author, Archbishop Fulton Sheen; the New York archbishop who was called “the American Pope,” Cardinal Francis Spellman; and hierarchs from as far away as Bombay and Beijing.

In 1969 a little-known “prince of the Church,” from the obscurity of communist Poland, visited Pittsburgh and almost passed unnoticed. Cardinal Karol Wojtyla offered Mass in Polish at the Cathedral. But the local media did not get around to covering the event until almost a decade later, in 1978, when Cardinal Wojtyla was elected as Pope and took the name John Paul II.

A more well-known Cold Warrior was Cardinal Josef Mindszenty, the primate of Hungary. The communists arrested him in 1948 (a year after his first visit to Pittsburgh) and subjected him to unrelenting torture for forty days; he was not allowed to sleep for twenty-nine consecutive days, after which he made trancelike public statements in support of the regime. The broken Mindszenty became, for all the world, an icon of the Church persecuted by Marxism. He was continually harrassed for twenty-three years, but remained steadfast in the faith and in opposition to the Hungarian communists, until Pope Paul VI asked him to leave Hungary in 1971. His visit to Pittsburgh in 1974 was one of the Cathedral’s few V.I.P. appearances that generated controversy as well as photo opportunities. He told reporters, in no uncertain terms, that he did not choose to leave Hungary: “I did not resign.” The papers saw this as a sign of the Vatican’s attempt, under Paul VI, at rapprochement with the Eastern Bloc—a policy that Mindszenty vigorously opposed. “As long as communism sticks to atheism and godlessness,” he told the Pittsburgh Press, “I cannot change my opinion.”

Only God knows how many visitors to the Cathedral are saints in heaven, but Catholics on earth know with certainty of at least one. Mother Teresa of Calcutta, who visited St. Paul’s in 1972 and 1979, was beatified—declared “Blessed”—in 2003 by Pope John Paul II, who had preceded her by just three years as a worshipper in Pittsburgh. On a Wednesday in 1979, the beloved nun from India attended Bishop Vincent Leonard’s noon Mass at the Cathedral and then delivered an address. Father John Kozar, who is now director of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith in New York City, was then a parochial vicar at St. Paul’s. He served as her “bodyguard and host,” according to the Pittsburgh Catholic. She declined an offer for a second collection, “but when baskets were placed at the doors the response was overwhelming.”

That response was a show of hospitality from the people, from Pittsburgh, and from the Cathedral, which is Pittsburgh’s church. The symbolic association of city and cathedral harks back to the medieval order of church and state, but there is a difference in this city. Here, the union of throne and altar has come about not because of any legislative decree, but rather because of a consensus of hearts. It is clear from the documentary record that such was not the case in the first quarter of the twentieth century. But St. Paul Cathedral is indisputably Pittsburgh’s church today, and the proof is in the news.

When, for example, radical labor groups wanted to show their
rage against the ebb tide of industry from the area, they staged their great demonstration not on the south shore of the Monongahela, but in the heart of Oakland. One newspaper headline summed it up: "Target: St. Paul's Cathedral." Organizers said they chose the Cathedral because it was the home parish of U.S. Steel Chairman David Roderick. But it turned out that neither Roderick nor his wife was Catholic. No doubt, St. Paul's was chosen because St. Paul's was symbolic of many things: the city, the Church, the people of the diocese.

As the seat of the bishop's authority, the Cathedral is "home church" to all the Catholics in the diocese, regardless of parish or ethnic boundaries. Any Catholics may receive the sacraments in the Cathedral as long as they are otherwise eligible. Because of the beauty of the setting, Cathedral weddings are much in demand, and (so the newspapers report), couples camp out overnight in order to arrive early on the first day of booking season.

The Cathedral represents catholicity—universalism—and so it represents home to a family of families. This quality, too, provides many occasions for news coverage. Lawyers come home to the Cathedral every year for their Red Mass. When the Italian friar Padre Pio was named a saint, where did his many Pittsburgh devotees gather to celebrate? The Cathedral, of course. The priests of the diocese gather there for the annual celebration of their vocation, at the Chrism Mass on Holy Thursday. In Lent every year, soon-to-be Catholics arrive by the thousands and throng the Cathedral for a milestone on their pilgrimage of conversion: the rite of election.

Catholics care about their Cathedral. Pittsburghers care about their church. And the savvy news media know this and acknowledge it by their close coverage of goings-on at the corner of Fifth and Craig. If masonry falls from the Cathedral because of the rumbling of construction crews across Fifth Avenue . . . it's news. If dozens of engaged couples camp out on the pavement the night before the Cathedral opens its wedding-booking season . . . it's news. If the Cathedral commissions a new work of art, moves a statue, or renovates its chapels . . . it's news. If the Cathedral hosts its first Tridentine Latin Mass in thirty-five years . . . it's news.

Even when there's absolutely no news to report from the Cathedral, it's news. In 2003, when rumors were rife that Pittsburgh's esteemed bishop, Donald Wuerl, would be transferred to Boston, reporters appeared at the Cathedral in the early-morning hours and stalked the man's every move. For days, whenever he emerged from a sacristy or a car, he met cameras and questions with the same clear denials, which were promptly aired and inked. Diocesan director of communications Robert Lockwood told the Post-Gazette: "The bishop has been displaying a remarkable sense of humor about this, making jokes and getting quite a kick out of the media frenzy."

Pittsburgh's Cathedral is what editors call an "evergreen" story. It is always news. But this is itself a relatively new phenomenon. The Cathedral is, in a sense, symbolic of the changed status of Catholics in the region. Gone are the days when the city Chamber of Commerce could safely ignore its largest religious body. Gone are the days when the local media needn't notice the stunning spires in Oakland's skyline.

And that Oakland location is itself symbolic of the status of Pittsburgh's church. When construction of the present cathedral began, many Catholics wondered why Bishop Phelan had chosen a site so far out of the way. But Andrew Carnegie had already built his palatial Institute just a few blocks away; and the elite Pittsburgh Athletic Association had just raised its tony quarters in the same neighborhood. Today we can see the wisdom of Bishop Phelan's choice. St. Paul's stands right in the intellectual heart of Pittsburgh, surrounded by the city's most prestigious institutions—universities, concert halls, museums, libraries, and research centers. Perhaps even more than the original downtown site, the Oakland site tells the world that the Catholic Church is an essential part of Pittsburgh culture.

And the local media—in spite of occasional eruptions of anti-Catholicism—cannot help but notice. The Cathedral makes for good news.


Mike Aquilina is vice-president of the St. Paul Center for Biblical Theology, based in Steubenville, Ohio. He is past editor of The Pittsburgh Catholic and author of many books.
The Catholic Historical Society Collections
Are Open to Researchers
By Thomas White

The records, papers, books and artifacts that have been collected through the years by the Catholic Historical Society are available and open to researchers and those interested in the history of Catholicism in Western Pennsylvania. The 45 cubic feet of collections are housed in the University Archives and Special Collections area on the first floor of the Gum-berg Library at Duquesne University. The materials document the development of the Roman Catholic Church in our region from 1815 to the present and include parish histories, photographs, personal correspondence, family papers, newspaper articles, anniversaries, a variety of artifacts, and hundreds of books. The Pittsburgh Catholic is also available in the library on microfilm. Starting in the spring of 2008 the early years of the newspaper will be available and searchable online at the library’s website.

Other collections of interest at Duquesne include the Cardinal John J. Wright Collection and the University Archives. The Wright collection includes the Cardinal’s addresses, papers, sermons, writings, and personal library, with substantial material from Vatican Council II. The University Archives chronicles the history of Western Pennsylvania’s first Catholic university.

The Catholic Historical Society also welcomes donations of records, photographs and other materials that document Catholic history. Those wishing to donate to the collections should contact the University Archivist at Duquesne.

Using the Collections
The University Archives and Catholic Historical Society Collections are open to the public. Reference and research requests may also be made by phone or by e-mail to the University Archivist (see below).

Documents, books and other materials housed in the University Archives and Special Collections are rare or unique and do not circulate. Collections are to be used only in the designated reading area. Patrons are required to use pencils while working with collections. Photocopying is permitted at the discretion of the University Archivist. Photocopies will be made by a member of the Archives staff or by patrons authorized to take materials to an appropriate copy machine in the library. They will be required to leave a form of identification with the staff until the material is returned.

The University Archivist reserves the right to limit the use of fragile, deteriorating, or rare material which may be further damaged by handling. However, every attempt will be made to make collections available.

The collections are located on the first floor of the library, and operating hours are Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m to 4:30 p.m. and by appointment.

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FAREWELL, FATHER JIM GARVEY

The Board of Directors bids fond farewell to Fr. Jim Garvey who has been actively involved with the Catholic Historical Society of Western Pa. for more than 17 years. Father Garvey was ordained to the priesthood in 1976 and served as parochial vicar and pastor in a number of parishes in the Diocese of Pittsburgh. He was also the Coordinator of Programs for the Homeless and the Director of St. Joseph's House of Hospitality. Currently Fr. Jim is the Senior Parochial Vicar at St. Margaret Mary Parish, Moon Township.

Fr. Jim was elected for two terms as President, and two terms as Secretary to the Board of the Catholic Historical Society. Twice he was asked to give the Annual Lambing Lecture to the membership. For several years he edited and frequently contributed articles to this publication: Gathered Fragments. He also wrote the histories of many parishes in the Diocese of Pittsburgh: St. Joseph (Manchester, North Side), St. Francis de Sales (McKees Rocks), Immaculate Conception (Carnegie), Epiphany Parish (downtown), the first two St. Paul Cathedrals (located at the corner of Fifth and Grant Streets, downtown), and St. Margaret Mary Parish (Moon Twp). Father Jim also took many of the photographs which appeared in these books.

In addition to these histories, he wrote a memoir about street cars, had several poems published, and contributed a number of articles to the Pittsburgh Catholic. He worked with the Centennial Committee and wrote a chapter for the recently published book marking the one hundredth anniversary of St. Paul Cathedral Parish in Oakland. Fr. Jim was always willing to lend copies of books and historical materials from his personal library to those who were researching and writing articles about history in Western Pennsylvania and especially in the Diocese of Pittsburgh. He actively collected the histories of parishes and Catholic institutions, and donated them and some artifacts to the Diocesan Archives, the Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania, and the Pennsylvania Department at the Oakland branch of the Carnegie Library, Pittsburgh.

Fr. Jim encouraged others to write histories marking significant anniversaries (25, 50 and 100 years) in the lives of their parishes. He also edited the writings of others, especially those which focused on local history. We will miss his leadership, the accurate and detailed minutes Fr. Jim wrote for Board Meetings, and his thoughtful and creative efforts to promote local Catholic history. Thank you Fr. Garvey. May God bless you.

Continued from page 12

during the sesquicentennial year of the Pittsburgh Diocese, 1992, and the articles were included in the NPM newsletters at that time; and fourth, some interesting information, limited in scope, was on file in the Diocesan Archives and Records Center from the time of Father Rossini. Finally, in the mid-1980s, the Bishop's Office was cleaning out their files and had a box of correspondence and materials dating from the early 1900s. The Bishop's Office at that time contacted the Diocesan Music Office, and asked if the Music Office wanted the material. If not, the material would be thrown in the trash. Fortunately, the Diocesan Music Coordinator accepted the material, which included priceless gems such as an original carbon copy from 1902 establishing the first Diocesan Music Commission and a copy of a hand-written 1908 letter from Bishop Canevin to the Vatican Secretary of State requesting that he ask the Pope if women were allowed to sing in church choirs. The actual letter from the Vatican Secretary (answered in the negative!) is included in this material from the Bishop's Office as well - material that could have met its fate in the trash bin.

Father Cheponis, an accomplished composer and musician, is Director of the Diocesan Office for Music and pastor of Saint John Capistran Parish.
BOOK REVIEWS

About Ordinary Folks Who Said We Can: & They Did — Focus on Renewal: the McKees Rocks, Pennsylvania Story
By Paulette G. Honegowsky
Bloomington, IN, Author House, 2004. 197 pages

This book is about the growth and development of a community-based organization which was begun by Father Donald C. Fisher in the Stowe Township, McKees Rocks communities, and first funded by the Diocese of Pittsburgh as the Focus on Renewal Center. Over the past three and a half decades, under the direction of both Father Fisher and Father Regis Ryan, funds were obtained from many sources, and the organization grew into the F.O.R. Sto-Rox Neighborhood Corporation. The corporation has worked to involve citizens of the Sto-Rox communities in grass roots efforts to provide much-needed social and medical/dental services for low income families, senior citizens, and school students. Today it operates a family health center, credit union, local transportation system, adult learning center, and community library, and is currently working on opening an arts and cultural center.

The author was associated with the work of the F.O.R. Center for many years. This book provides an interesting perspective on a community-based group bringing about long-term changes in a community with less than cooperative elected officials who did not share the vision, and who often worked against the goals articulated by the people they were elected to serve.

Father Jim Garvey

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The Sisters of Charity of Seton Hill — Volume Two: 1945-2002
Edited by Francis de Sales Joyce, S.C.
Published by The Sisters of Charity of Seton Hill, Greensburg, PA. 504 pages

The chapter headings of this comprehensive later history (1945-2002) of the Sisters of Charity of Seton Hill provide insight into the spirit of this congregation. Drawn from the words of Mother Aloysia Lowe who came from Cincinnati to Altoona (1870) and then to Greensburg to form the local religious community, one saying in particular sets the stage for this book. “But then, you know,” Mother Aloysia observes, “we ought to like any place we are sent.” This history is about faith-filled women being sent to and being received by schools, religious education centers, health care institutions, pastoral and social ministries and other diversified fields.

As Volume II opens, the sisters’ field of ministry was limited to the Dioceses of Altoona, Pittsburgh and Tucson. It would eventually push past these borders to include other dioceses and archdioceses both here in the United States and beyond (South Korea, Israel, and China). Photos and meticulous chronologies and appendices add to the value of this history. To order, send a check for $18 ($15 + $3 postage) to History Book, Sisters of Charity, 463 Mt. Thor Road, Greensburg, PA 15601. The check should be made out to the “Sisters of Charity.”

Kerry Crawford

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Harry, Tom, and Father Rice: Accusation and Betrayal in America’s Cold War
By John P. Hoerr
Pittsburgh, PA, University of Pittsburgh Press, 2005. 311 pages ($29.95)

This latest work on Pittsburgh’s “Labor Priest” was authored by a veteran labor journalist who previously issued the much-acclaimed 1988 book And the Wolf Finally Came, a dramatic account of the decline of the steel industry, especially in Pittsburgh. The author focuses on three individuals in his latest work: his uncle and U.S. Congressman Harry Davenport, his uncle’s principal union supporter Tom Quinn, and Msgr. Charles Owen Rice, whose lives intertwined in a clash over Communists in the labor movement. Rice is treated harshly for his efforts to rid unions of Communist “fellow-travelers,” which included cooperation with government investigators as the notorious House Un-American Activities Committee pursued Communist Party connections.

John Bates
The Saint Vincent Basilica, Latrobe, Pennsylvania: One Hundred Years
By Brian D. Boose, Nathan M. Cochran, Philip M. Kanfush, and Omer U. Kline

This lavish publication commemorates the 100th anniversary of the consecration of the church of St. Vincent, the heart of the first Benedictine establishment in the Americas. Hundreds of photographs capture the church’s grandeur; many glass plate negatives were restored to produce a number of photographs which are published for the first time. This work pulls together previously published histories of the parish and the church, which was designated a minor basilica 50 years after its consecration. Accompanying the book is a color fold-out brochure of the basilica, which features a map.

Anthony Joseph

From Organist to Pastoral Musician: A History of Church Music in the Catholic Diocese of Pittsburgh 1843-2006
By Rev. James Chepponis, Dr. Fred Moleck, and Sr. Cynthia Serjak, R.S.M.
Published by The Catholic Diocese of Pittsburgh, 2006.

The recent publication From Organist to Pastoral Musician is a delightful record of the great musical treasury of our diocese. It is filled with colorful and poignant vignettes, making one both aware and appreciative of our rich heritage and leadership in church music.

Having been active in the church music scene here since 1989, I have come to know and befriend some of the “old timers” including Paul Koch and Harold Unverferth. Their stories are all in this book. The legend of the tyranny of Carlo Rossini had come to me early in my ministry, but it wasn’t until I read the book that I discovered that the money realized from Father Rossini’s publications went to the construction and continuation of a boys orphanage in Osimo, Italy. The oral stories circulating about Father Thomas Coakley at Sacred Heart Church reached as far as upstate New York, where as a teen organist I heard about his magnificent church and Skinner organ (larger than that of the cathedral). Its etching in stone came to me from a family friend, Barbara Hatch Beaudy, who attended Mass there during Father Coakley’s tenure while she was in college.

We often look to the distant past and reminisce, but often ignore the more recent past. Sometimes we forget that 10 minutes ago is as far away as the Roman Empire. Fortunately here, our recent past in diocesan music is greatly detailed and not overlooked. I was especially glad to see that the efforts of Father Thomas Jackson and Father Charles Knoll were not forgotten. Too, the work and music of Rick Gibala, Father James Chepponis, and James Noakes are mentioned, although maybe not quite as emphatically as should be. Father Chepponis is a brilliant, prolific composer (just listen to and sing his “Magnificat,” “Life Giving Bread, Saving Cup,” and “We Gather As Friends”). Likewise, I was so pleased to see the recent talents of James Noakes cited. I attended Mass just to hear his virtuosic playing and hear the mellifluous strains of his cathedral choir before I had my own church job.

If you haven’t read this book, by all means go out, buy it, and read it. And by all means attend diocesan and cathedral liturgies at St. Paul Cathedral. You can rest assured that the music is glorious and will continue to flourish under the direction of “crackerjacks” Donald Fellows and Father Chep-
ponis, who make those services both prayerful and powerfully up-lifting.

J.R. Daniels
Director of Music Ministries,
Ss. Simon & Jude Church
Daily Mass Organist
(Third String),
St. Paul Cathedral

The Great Life: Essays on Doctrine and Holiness in Honor of Father Ronald Lawler, O.F.M. Cap.
Edited by Michael Aquilina and Kenneth Ogorek with a foreword by Bishop Donald W. Wuerl, S.T.D.

Fr. Ronald Lawler (1926-2003) touched many lives during his years on earth. He was a priest, teacher, author, theologian, catechist, spiritual advisor, mentor, and friend. Fr. Lawler lived "The Great Life" of faith and holiness and always encouraged others to join him in this experience.

This book is a collection of essays written by individuals who knew Fr. Lawler and are seeking not only to honor Fr. Lawler but to continue his outreach to others. They challenge readers to understand and to live Catholic doctrine. Many of the authors grapple with issues facing people today and every reader should be able to find some essay that is directly pertinent to his or her life today. The book begins with an Introduction and Preface, followed by seventeen essays, and ending with a general reflection on Fr. Lawler.

Bishop Donald Wuerl's Introduction and Michael Aquilina's Preface provide the reader with background information on Fr. Lawler. The main concept that emerges from both writings is that Lawler was a teacher seeking to pass on his faith. Wuerl's recollections of Lawler stress the need for a catechetical renewal today, a continuation of the focus of Fr. Lawler's life. Aquilina provides a biographical sketch of Lawler, whose life was wrapped in educating others. Both authors set the stage for the essays to come.

The first three essays are a bird's eye view of the faith, the church and catechesis. After reading Wuerl's and Aquilina's essays, the reader can't help but feel that these first three essays are a direct extension of Fr. Lawler himself. Archbishops Charles Chaput's focus is the church as mother and teacher and not as a religious corporation. Archbishop Sean O'Malley looks at the difficult task in today's secular culture of passing on the Faith. Finally, Fr. Thomas Weinandy focuses on the nature of Christian doctrine, with emphasis on catechetical importance with some specific examples of the Liturgy of the Eucharist and Transubstantiation.

The following eight essays deal with more specific issues facing Catholics, such as sacraments, politics, and daily life. The first, Katrina Zeno's essay on Confirmation, is an extensive look at the catechesis of Confirmation, including a curriculum based on the theology of the body. Vocations are discussed in both Russell Shaw's and Scott Hahn's essays. Shaw explains why "there is no vocation shortage in the Catholic Church" but rather a "shortage of vocational discernment," delving into the various levels of the concept of vocation. Hahn's focus is on the continuing education of priests. Hahn parallels the role of a father with his children with the role of the priest and his parish.

The next two essays deal with issues that are more political. Janet and J. Brian Benestad's and Robert P. George's essays deal with social teaching and political candidates, respectively. The Benestads provide an extensive examination of human dignity in relation to issues such as bioethics, and the reader will have a better understanding of Catholic social teaching through this informed view of dignity. George's essay delves into the political arena, focusing on the role of moral issues in the vocation of public service.

The final three essays under the umbrella of specific issues are on homeschooling, human sexuality, and Natural Family Planning. Gerard V. Bradley provides an analysis on homeschooling, exploring the role of Catholic schools in relation to homeschooling and defining when homeschooling would be beneficial. The essay by William E. May argues that "the Church's teaching on human sexuality and sexual ethics, far from enslaving persons, liberates them and enables them to become fully themselves." The next essay naturally falls in line with May's, with Evelyn and John Billings providing an historical analysis of the Billings Ovulation Method.

The next two essays involve a look at catechesis today. Fr. Augustine J. DiNoia's essay is an extensive study of the relationship between the Catechism of the Catholic Church and the General Directory of Catechesis, showing that the catechism provides the subject matter while the Directory
provides the vehicle for the catechism to “proceed” and the organization behind that. Fr. Kris Stubna relates in his essay the importance of catechism to evangelization, i.e., evangelization hinges on knowledge of the faith.

Finally, in the final four essays we return to Fr. Ronald Lawler. Patrick G. D. Riley details the evolution and a brief assessment of Fr. Lawler’s *The Teaching of Christ: A Catholic Catechism for Adults*. William Saunders writes a personal testimony to the impact of Fr. Lawler on his life. In the next essay, we hear directly from Fr. Lawler himself, in “Has Christ Only One Church.” Robert Lockwood wraps the whole book together with an acknowledgement of the impact of Fr. Lawler on the lives of all he encountered, both young and old.

*Kathy Washy*

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**BOOK NOTES**


Look for reviews of these books in the next issue of *Gathered Fragments*.

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