

American Catholic Studies Newsletter



**Center for the Study
of American Catholicism**

**Volume 5, Number 1
Spring 1979**

American Catholic Historical Association Meeting

The American Catholic Historical Association held its spring meeting at the University of Notre Dame on April 6-7, 1979. Papers given in the area of American Catholic studies were: "Bishop Loras and Frontier Ethnic Catholics in mid-19th Century Iowa," Thomas Auge; "New Immigrants in the Diocese of Hartford, 1880-1920," Dolores Liptak, R.S.M.; "Archbishop Lucey of San Antonio and the Spanish-speaking, 1940-1960," Saul Bronder; "Archbishop Ireland and the Parochial School Language Controversy," LaVern J. Rippley; "From Lay Autonomy to Hierarchic Control: An Aspect of the American Federation of Catholic Societies," Alfred J. Ede; "Expediency or Conviction? The American Catholic Acceptance of the First Amendment," Bernard Noone, F.S.C.; "Problems in the Education of American Catholic Religious Teachers," M. Jane Coogan, B.V.M.; "Pre-Vatican II Renewal Trends: Sister Madeleva Wolff and Women's Higher Education," Karen Kennelly, C.S.J.; "Renewal Efforts of American Religious Since Vatican II," Cassian J. Yuhaus; and "The Impact of the 19th Century American Nun," Mary Ewens, O.P.

A general session focusing on "Two Perspectives on Tradition and Change in Recent American Catholicism" was chaired by Philip Gleason with James Hitchcock and David O'Brien as speakers. The two-day conference ended on Saturday with the topic "Catholic Archives: Needs and Recent Developments," with participation by James E. O'Neill, chairperson, James M. O'Toole, Evangeline Thomas, S.S.J., and Wendy Clauson Schlereth.

American Catholic Historical Association 1980 Meeting

The spring 1980 meeting of the American Catholic Historical Association will be held at Marquette University on Friday afternoon and Saturday, April 11 and 12, 1980. The program chairman is John Patrick Donnelly, S.J. of Marquette University. The program committee invites you to submit a proposal for a paper or for a complete session of the conference by Nov. 1, 1979. Address enquiries about participation, transportation, or lodging to John Patrick Donnelly, S.J., Department of History, Marquette University, Milwaukee, WI 53233.

The Native American Christian Community

R. Pierce Beaver has edited an invaluable directory of Native American Christian churches. It is the most up-to-date, comprehensive directory of its kind, containing a wealth of information on Catholic, Protestant, and Orthodox Indian communities. It is available from MARC-World Vision International, 919 West Huntington Drive, Monrovia, CA 91016.

LCWR Awarded NEH Grant

The Leadership Conference of Women Religious has been awarded a \$98,954 grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities to do a survey of archival materials in the repositories of congregations of women religious in the U.S. This survey will be conducted over the course of the next year and a half. The findings will then be edited in the Guide which will be made available sometime in 1981. The director of this project is Sr. Evangeline Thomas, S.S.J., Medaille Center, Salina, KS 67401.

Award-Winning Manuscript

The winner of the 1978 competition series, Notre Dame Studies in American Catholicism, sponsored by the Center for the Study of American Catholicism for the best book-length manuscript in American Catholic studies is Anthony J. Kuzniewski, S.J. Kuzniewski's award-winning manuscript, Faith and Fatherland: The Polish Church War in Wisconsin 1896-1918, is a pioneering study in the history of the Polish Catholic community in the U.S. Based on extensive research in archives and newspapers of the Polish American community, it narrates the struggle of the Wisconsin Polish to maintain allegiance to their faith and culture in a German and Irish church. Focusing their attention on the appointment of a Polish bishop, they challenged church authorities to respect the diversity of cultures in an immigrant church. Kuzniewski's book documents this struggle and the tensions it aroused among the Polish and the rest of the American Catholic community. Kuzniewski's manuscript will be published by the University of Notre Dame Press in the coming year. It is the third volume in the publication series.

The deadline for the 1979 competition is Sept. 1, 1979. Anyone interested in submitting a manuscript for this competition may obtain further information by writing to the Center for the Study of American Catholicism, 1109 Memorial Library, University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, IN 46556.

Research Travel Grants Awarded

Four research travel grants have been awarded by the Center for the Study of American Catholicism to the following scholars from the December 1978 and March 1979 competitions: James J. Divita of Marian College to study the relationship between the Catholic church and Indiana Italians; William E. Ellis of Eastern Kentucky University to do research on Patrick Henry Callahan, an important member of the Louisville, Kentucky community; Mary Ewens, O.P., of Rosary College to further her work on the history of American women religious; and Donald F. Crosby, S.J., of The University of Santa Clara to complete a study on the American Catholic experience in World War II.

The next deadline date for travel grant application is May 21, 1979. Awards will be announced on June 1. Anyone desiring to apply for these grants should write to the Center for the Study of American Catholicism, 1109 Memorial Library, University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, IN 46556.

A New Newsletter

The Catholic Archives Newsletter made its first appearance in January 1979. The purpose of the newsletter is to serve as a forum for communication among individuals and organizations engaged in archival collection. If you have any archival news, etc., feel free to send the information along to James M. O'Toole, Editor, Catholic Archives Newsletter, Archives, Archdiocese of Boston, 2121 Commonwealth Ave., Brighton, MA 02135. The newsletter is semi-annual (January and June) and costs \$2 per year.

American Catholic Studies Seminar and Working Papers

The American Catholic Studies Seminar met three times during the spring of 1979. The seminar continued its focus on the theme of religion and the family. Josef Barton presented the paper entitled "Land, Labor and Community in Nueces: Czech Farmers and Mexican Laborers in South Texas, 1880-1930"; Russell Blake reviewed his paper on "The Private Sanctuary of Home': Evangelical Protestantism in the Shaping of Antebellum Planter Family Life" and Joan Aldous gave her paper on "Religion and the Family: The Tragic Linkage."

These papers are now reproduced in the Working Paper Series. A special addition to this Working Paper Series 5 is a paper (OCCASIONAL PAPER, No. 2) by George M. Barringer of the Special Collections Division of Georgetown University. Barringer did a survey of manu-

script and archival collections relating to American Catholic history in Catholic college and university libraries. This article is entitled "Historia vero testis temporum." Anyone interested in obtaining these four papers can write to Center for the Study of American Catholicism, 1109 Memorial Library, University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, IN 46556. The cost is \$1.50 for each paper.

Manual for Writing Annals

Sr. Mary Linus Bax, C.P.P.S., has put together an extremely helpful manual for the writing of chronicles of religious congregations. Anyone wishing to obtain a copy of the guidelines may contact Sr. Mary Linus at Salem Heights Archives, 4830 Salem Heights, Dayton, OH 45416.

Bibliography: Women's Studies

Anna Rose Kearney recently compiled a bibliography of theses and dissertations completed at the University of Notre Dame from 1922 to 1978 on various women-related topics. The bibliography covers a wide range of interests and the works cited can be found in the University of Notre Dame Library. The title of the bibliography is Women and interested individuals can write to Dr. Anna Rose Kearney at College Library, University of Notre Dame Library, Notre Dame, IN 46556.

The Marquette Archives

Marquette University Library has made available a brochure listing their archival holdings, which include a substantial body of primary source material for scholars and researchers interested in the relationships between religion and social change in America during the past hundred years. For further information, write to Charles B. Elston, Archivist, Archives, Memorial Library, Marquette University, 1415 W. Wisconsin Ave., Milwaukee, WI 53233.

Multicultural History Society of Ontario

The Multicultural History Society of Ontario is involved in the systematic gathering and preservation of written and oral sources in immigration and ethnic history. It publishes a scholarly journal, Polyphony, devoted to the examination of the area in terms of institutions, religions, sociology, etc. and their role in immigrant and ethnic communities and the research they generate. The organization also makes available Occasional Papers in Ethnic and Immigration Studies. For information on the organization and its publications, write to Multicultural History Society of Ontario, 43 Queen's Park Crescent East, Toronto, Ontario M52 2C3.



Bibliography on Mother Joseph

Sr. Rita Bergamini, S.P. and Netta Wilson have compiled an extensive bibliography on Mother Joseph entitled "Bibliography, Mother Joseph of the Sacred Heart, A Sister of Providence." Mother Joseph was a pioneer in the development of Catholicism in the Pacific Northwest. Archives, Sisters of Providence, 4800 37th Ave., S.W., Seattle, WA, will be able to provide further information.

St. Joseph Academy and Yakima

The Sisters of Providence have also published Magic Valley, the story of St. Joseph Academy in Yakima, Wa. It is a delightful, picturesque book written by Ellis Lucia. The book can be obtained from the Sisters of Providence at the above mentioned address.

Chicano Studies Newsletter

The Chicano Studies Program at the University of California at Riverside puts out a newsletter on Chicano Studies. It is a very informative publication that covers local information as well as national news. It is also interdisciplinary. The newsletter is entitled IXKO YAN, la cara de accion, and is available by writing to the Chicano Studies Program, University of California, Riverside, CA 92521.

Italian-American Studies

The Center for Migration Studies recently released a new book about the Italian experience in San Francisco from 1850 to 1930. This study is entitled The Italians of San Francisco, 1850-1930 and the author is Deanna Paoli Gumina. Gumina traces the history of San Francisco's Italian immigrants during the Gold Rush days and their assimilation into the Bay Area.

Another helpful volume on Italian-Americans published by the Center for Migration Studies is Silvano M. Tomasi and Edward Stibili's Italian-Americans and Religion: An Annotated Bibliography. It is an extensive survey of both published and unpublished material dealing with the Italian American experience in the U.S. With a foreword by John Tracy Ellis, this bibliography includes material covering the three major periods of Italian religious experience: the missionary period, the period of mass migration from 1880 to 1925, and the modern period. This book (and Gumina's study) can be obtained through the Center for Migration Studies, 209 Flagg Place, Staten Island, NY 10304.

Out of the Cloisters

Out of the Cloisters by Helen Rose Fuchs Ebaugh is an interesting study about structural and ideological changes that have taken place in Catholic women religious orders since Vatican

II. Ebaugh analyzes the patterns occurring within orders with particular focus on the relationship between organizational change and membership loss. This book sells for \$9.95 from The University of Texas Press, Austin, TX 78712.

Polish-American Ethnic Identity

The Polish American Historical Association has again made available to the public Neil C. Sandberg's Ethnic Identity and Assimilation. This award-winning study focuses on the ethnic attitudes among Polish Americans in Los Angeles. This book sells for \$4.75 from the Polish American Historical Association, c/o Polish Museum of America, 984 Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, IL 60622.

The Polish American Historical Association publishes the Polish American Studies, a scholarly journal to explore the history and culture of the Polish community in the U.S. Interested individuals should write to the Association at the above mentioned address for further information.

Religious Books and Serials in Print

To aid individuals and organizations in need of access to religious materials, R.R. Bowker Company published the first edition of Religious Books and Serials in Print 1978-1979. Arranged in two sections, "Books" and "Serials," the volume is indexed by subject, author and title; and by subject and title for serials. In addition, the index has two special features, the "Sacred Word Index" and "Subject Area Directory." For further information, contact Shirley Soffer, R.R. Bowker Company, 1180 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10036.

History of Divine Providence

The History of the Missionary Catechists of Divine Providence by Sr. Mary Paul Valdez, M.C.D.P., is a refreshing account of the history of the Catechists of Divine Providence and its founder, Sr. Mary Benita Vermeersch. It narrates the growth of this group in Texas, its involvement in the Mexican War, and its work in the religious instruction of public school children. This volume costs \$6.95 and is available by writing to Sr. Mary Paul Valdez, M.C.D.P., 806 Church St., Brenham, TX 77833.

Irish Poems

Fides/Claretian has published a delightful collection of Irish poems put together by Leo R. Ward, C.S.C., entitled Irish Portraits and Other Poems. Additional information is available from James F. Burns, Editor, Fides/Claretian, Notre Dame, IN 46556.

Personal Notices

Sr. M. Christian Athans, B.V.M., affiliated with Graduate Theological Union, is currently doing research on Catholic-Jewish relations in the U.S. from 1929 to 1941.

Associated with Bryn Mawr College, Dolores E. Brien's current interest is the experience of Catholic women in Grail.

Nelson J. Callahan edited the diary of Fr. Richard L. Burtzell entitled The Diary of Richard L. Burtzell, Priest of New York: The Early Years, 1865-1868; it is available through Arno Press.

Rev. James T. Connelly, C.S.C., with Alokolum National Seminary in Uganda, is doing research on the Congregation of Holy Cross in East Africa.

Arno Press published the book by Robert Emmett Curran entitled Michael Augustine Corrigan and the Shaping of Conservative Catholicism in America, 1878-1902.

Rev. Thomas Curry, with Claremont Graduate School, is doing research on the freedom of religion in colonial America.

Francis J. Daly, S.J., with the Chicago Jesuit Community (Loyola House), is currently working on a history of American Jesuits.

Reinhard R. Doerries, associated with Universitaet Hamburg, recently had two articles published in German journals, "The Americanizing of the German Immigrant: A Chapter from U.S. Social History" in Amerikastudien/American Studies Vol. 23, No.1, 1978 and "Zwischen Staat und Kirche: Peter Paul Cahensly und die katholischen deutschen Einwanderer in den Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika" in A. Fischer, G. Moltmann, and K. Schwabe, eds., Russia-Germany-America, Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1978 (Frankfurter Historische Abhandlungen, Band 17).

Keith P. Dyrud, Michael Novak and Rudolph J. Vecoli edited an anthology entitled The Other Catholics, which describes the experience of Hungarians, Italians, Lithuanians and Poles. This book is available through Arno Press.

Marc Ellis' first book, A Year at the Catholic Worker, was published by Paulist Press in December 1978; he is currently working on the biography of Peter Maurin.

Dean R. Esslinger of Towson State University is doing a social history of Baltimore during the period from 1784 to 1984.

Mary Ewens' dissertation has been made available through Arno Press entitled The Role of the Nun in the Nineteenth-Century America: Variations on the International Theme.

Joseph George, Jr., affiliated with Villanova University, is working on American Church history.

Sr. M. Alma Louise, C.S.C., who is affiliated with the archives of St. Mary's College, Notre Dame, IN, is doing a history of the congregation of the Sisters of Holy Cross. Joining her is Sr. M. Campion Kuhn who is working on the same topic but focusing on the 19th century.

Sr. Mary Nona McGreal, O.P., with the Dominican Education Center, is presently working in Rome writing in the interest of the cause for the beatification of Fr. Samuel Mazzuchelli, O.P., an Italian Dominican missionary to the American frontier.

Patricia F. McNeal's book, The American Catholic Peace Movement 1928-1972, has been published by Arno Press.

Richard K. MacMaster is with James Madison University and has recently published a book entitled Conscience in Crisis: Mennonites and Other Peace Churches in America 1739-1789 (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press). He is currently researching German Jesuit parishes in 18th-century Pennsylvania and the relationship of the Catholic minority to the Pennsylvania German culture.

Bruno V. Manno of Dayton University is on a postdoctoral leave working on ethnicity, pluralism and American society.

Three books by Randall M. Miller of St. Joseph's College were published in 1978. They are entitled, "Dear Master": Letters of a Slave Family (Cornell University Press); Ethnic Images in American Film and Television (Balch Institute); and The Cotton Mill Movement in Alabama (revised edition by Arno Press). In addition Miller wrote an article, "Immigrants in the Old South," in Immigration History Newsletter (Nov. 1978) and read a paper on Catholicism and slavery at the Princeton Theological Seminary series on slavery and religion and at the meeting of the American Academy of Religion in New Orleans in November 1978.

Rev. Patrick J. Mullins, C.M., is the archivist of DePaul University and is researching the history of that institution.

Philip J. Murnion's The Catholic Priest and the Changing Structure of Ministry, New York, 1920-1970 has been published by Arno Press.

Mary J. Oates of Regis College is doing research on the organization and works of the Catholic sisters in Massachusetts from 1870 to 1940.

Daniel P. O'Neill, with St. Mary's College in Winona, MN., is working on recruitment, mobility and ethnicity of St. Paul's priests from 1850 to 1930.

Sr. Imogene Palen of Marian College, Fond du Lac, WI, is researching the life of Fr. Caspar Rehl, an early Austrian priest active in Wisconsin and the founder of the Sisters of St. Agnes.

Sr. Josephine M. Peplinski, with the Sisters of St. Joseph of the Third Order of St. Francis, is writing a history of the congregation, which was founded in 1901 in Stevens Point, WI.



Br. John Prior, C.F.C., is living in Peru and doing research on Edmund Ignatius Rice, founder of the Irish Christian Brothers.

Frank Renkiewicz, affiliated with the College of St. Teresa and the Polish American Historical Association, is studying ethnic and Polish Americans and the economics of ethnic groups.

Martin J. Stamm of the University of Pennsylvania is working on the topics of American Catholic higher education, elites and organizational management.

Sr. Helen Streck, a member of the Adorers of the Blood of Christ, is working on the history of the province in Wichita, KS.

Sr. Gabrielle Sullivan, S.N.D., with the College of Notre Dame, is doing research on California pioneers from Wexford, Ireland from 1820 to 1840.

Peter W. Williams of Miami University is working on the cultural history of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati from 1898 to 1962; he was recently awarded a National Endowment for the Humanities grant to pursue this topic.

Rev. Michael Zilligen, the archivist of the Diocese of Brownsville, Texas, is working on Catholic church history in the 19th century.

Research Projects

"A COMPARATIVE SOCIAL HISTORY OF THE FIRST EIGHT PERMANENT COMMUNITIES OF WOMEN RELIGIOUS WITHIN THE ORIGINAL BOUNDARIES OF THE UNITED STATES, 1790-1850"

In 1962, Cardinal Suenens published The Nun in the World. The rivulets of change that had been forming suddenly became a thundering river and very few American women religious were left untouched. During the years that followed, discussions, meetings and publications became our regular fare so that when the Fathers of Vatican II told us that our renewal comprised "both a constant return to the sources of the whole of Christian life and to the primitive inspiration of the institutes, and their adaptation to the changed conditions of our time ('Perfectae Caritatis' Art. 2): most of us thought we were ready. But were we? Did we know our sources and our primitive inspiration? Did we, as American women religious, know our common sources? We had heard many times during the sixties that the American Sister had some unique qualities. Yet there is no history of Women Religious in the United States. Do we really have unique characteristics of value in our world today? Without a study of women religious in the United States we will remain without answers. As I considered this situation the general topic of a study seemed very clear, but how could I keep it within manageable boundaries? My initial research led me to the interesting fact that before 1830, no organized community of immigrant women religious succeeded in

making a permanent foundation within these boundaries of the United States which were determined by the Treaty of Paris of 1783. It seemed wise, moreover, to limit this study to those communities which were founded within the area where the Anglo-American culture predominated. For in spite of the important contribution of other cultures to our present make-up as a nation, the Anglo-American has retained its dominance.

The Carmelites, the proto-women religious in the newly formed nation, did come from Belgium, but three of the four nuns who came were from the Matthews family of Charles County, Maryland. The remaining seven communities that were established by 1829, (Visitation Nuns, Georgetown, 1799/1816; Sisters of Charity, Emmitsburg, 1809; Sisters of Loretto, 1812; Sisters of Charity, Nazareth, 1812; Dominican Sisters, St. Catherine, Ky., 1822; Oblates of Providence, 1829; Sisters of Charity of Our Lady of Mercy, Charleston, 1829) were founded in the United States either by native Americans or women who had lived here long enough to have become accustomed to American life.

This study can only be a beginning. Its aim is to determine who the women were who entered these communities, as much as possible about their background, and whether there is any clear relationship between who they were and their choice of community. The possible sources of related material are too extensive to consult them all. It was impossible to read every extant record of the period; therefore I am relying principally on archival sources. My focus has been primarily on the total membership, rather than the leadership, and the manner in which these communities lived their lives and carried on their apostolate in the American environment. Aspects of the communities' development such as institutional development and spirituality are considered only as they affect the work of the sisters and their relationship with the total community or as they indicate possible causes of the different development of the several communities. A major portion of my study centers around the available data concerning the young women who entered these eight communities between the date of their founding and 1850. This data ranges from a name on the community register to the detailed biographies of Saint Elizabeth Seton. For my purposes I was principally interested in the date of birth, entrance, death or exit; the place of birth; family status; the degree of education the woman had when she entered; whether or not she was a convert; the type of work she did in the community and the cause of death. Needless to say much of this information was not available, but there is enough to give an indication of strengths and weaknesses. Moreover, there is probably more information about these women than can be found about any other group of women of a similar size (1441) at that time in the United States. This information about individual sisters has been utilized in a computer program which has made it possible to see some interesting

trends. For example, we know the place of birth of 777 women, or approximately half of the total. Of these, 477 were Americans by birth, 229 were Irish, and 10 came from the West Indies. Looking just at the category of "higher superior" we find that 61 women spent a significant proportion of their religious life fulfilling these responsibilities. Of these 61 women, 38 were American born, only nine were Irish, but four came from the West Indies. Statistics such as these, when studied in the light of other available documents, are very helpful. At the very least, they set boundaries and keep outstanding personalities or unusual circumstances from an importance they do not deserve.

There is ample evidence that there was a good cross-section of American society in these eight communities. There were representatives of the planter class as well as newly freed slaves. There were recent immigrants and daughters of families whose ancestors were among the first settlers of the colonies. Some were highly cultured and well-educated, while others were illiterate. What moved this variety of women to come together in communities? What led them to be so open to the exigencies of 19th-century United States? Why did they succeed and others fail? What lesson had been learned that made possible the successful establishment of so many communities in the period of the great migrations from the middle of the century to its close? Or was there no influence at all?

The data seems to indicate that certain factors worked together to effect some unique, common characteristics. The need to provide education, for example, was a principal concern of most of the individuals concerned with the founding of these original communities. The Carmelites were the only community who did not, among themselves, have this aim. (Bishop Carroll did everything within his power to encourage them to undertake this work, but to no avail). During most of the period, and in most areas included within this study, it was not a question of providing a Catholic education in order to protect the children from the influence of Protestantism in the public schools. Educational opportunities of any kind were minimal, but especially for the poorer classes. The sisters were often the pioneer educators in an area. An important consideration, too, in the establishment of schools was the need for the sisters to be self-supporting. This need even affected the Carmelites and led them to agree to open a school when they moved to Baltimore in 1831. American sisters, unlike religious women in Europe, established "pay schools" in which a large percentage of the students were non-Catholics, in order to support themselves, orphans, and the "free schools" for the poorer girls. The endless calls for new schools made it necessary to prepare as many sisters for teaching as possible. The statistics regarding illiteracy are extremely meager but other sources make it clear that very

few young women who entered the six non-cloistered communities remained illiterate. The central houses became teacher-training institutions by necessity almost from the very beginning.

One is struck by the way in which these women accepted the challenge, not only of initial poverty, but also of an ever-expanding, and therefore, ever-changing Church and nation. Here are our roots. They may be stronger and more meaningful than we ever imagined, but they may also furnish some unexpected guides to the present.

by Sister Barbara Misner
The Catholic University of America
Washington, D.C.

EUROPEAN IMMIGRANTS AND THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN CONNECTICUT, 1870-1920

The growth of the American Catholic Church in the 19th century resulting from increased European immigration greatly concerned American Catholic leaders. This concern intensified, especially after the 1880s, when the accommodation of hundreds of thousands of "new immigrants" from southern and eastern Europe confronted the predominantly Gaelic-American hierarchy. As the Catholic population of the country doubled between 1880 and 1900, and reached nearly 20 million by the 1920s, the problems became more pressing. Because American Catholic bishops did not generally promulgate joint policies, procedures for incorporating immigrants remained the province of the individual bishop. The Diocese of Hartford was one of the first dioceses to develop an immigrant policy. This study seeks to clarify three issues having to do with such a policy: the degree to which one diocese worked to adapt itself to the American environment; the manner in which it answered the needs of its members, especially those of the immigrants; and the extent to which its actions were found acceptable to the Church in general and to American society.

Between 1843 and 1878, the first four bishops of the Diocese of Hartford laid the foundation for a general immigrant policy. Lawrence McMahon (bishop, 1879-1893) implemented that policy with respect to the "new immigrants," and saw to the formation of the first Slovak, Italian, and Polish parishes and the assignment of the first "new immigrant" pastors. The Archdiocese of New York excepted, no northeastern diocese had so early begun the process of incorporating so many different immigrant groups into its structure.

Under McMahon's successor, Michael Tierney (bishop, 1894-1908), the diocese developed a coherent immigrant policy: 28 national parishes were organized, immigrant priests as well as Polish and Italian religious communities were recruited, and other measures to ease the incorporation of immigrants were introduced. The diocese's newly founded seminary emphasized language training,

and its graduates were sent to Europe to gain further mastery and understanding of the languages and customs there. The diocesan press publicized the accomplishments of the immigrants in general, and the national parishes and their pastors became widely known.

During the episcopate of John J. Nilan (bishop, 1910-1934), a similar policy obtained. Twenty-six more national parishes for the "new immigrants" were organized, and their pastors contributed to the links between the Catholic Church and local communities. Priests, sisters, and laity worked to maintain an atmosphere of ethnic pride that continued to find acknowledgment in the diocesan press.

Despite these efforts, the history of the Diocese of Hartford is replete with instances of opposition to episcopal authority by ethnic minorities. Investigation reveals, however, that prolonged disputes usually stemmed from internecine rivalry, with the bishop suffering from the factiousness. In every case immigrants were the active agents in either the process of assimilation or resistance. For example, while the Italian immigrants chose to cooperate with both Italian and Irish pastors

assigned to them, other ethnic minorities consistently contested episcopal authority. Central to explosive incidents in Polish and French Canadian parishes in the 1890s was the naming of pastors; nothing the bishop first attempted seemed to mollify either group. As late as the first decades of the 20th century, Hungarian, Lithuanian, and Slovak communities repeated the pattern, sometimes rejecting priests whom they themselves had recommended.

Such episodes notwithstanding, interaction between ethnic minority leaders and diocesan officials eventually resolved disputes as the "new immigrants" developed ethnic distinctiveness and strong parochial bonds within the diocesan structure. Perhaps the chief reason that the overall achievements of ethnic minorities within the Diocese of Hartford have been overlooked is that some of the early discord has obscured the more long-lasting and noteworthy accomplishments of both diocesan and ethnic leaders.

by Dolores Ann Liptak, R.S.M.
The University of Connecticut
Storrs, Connecticut

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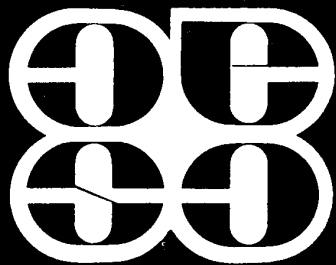
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