

REGARDLESS OF RACE: THE ORIGIN AND DESEGREGATION  
OF AFRICAN AMERICAN CATHOLIC PAROCHIAL  
SCHOOLS IN TEXAS, 1884-1954

THESIS

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by

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	
CHAPTER	
I. INTRODUCTION.....	1
II. FROM BALTIMORE TO TEXAS: THE JOURNEY OF NEARLY A CENTURY.....	30
III. WAITING ON THE WORLD TO CHANGE.....	72
IV. MORAL RENEWAL .....	110
V. CONCLUSION.....	155
BIBLIOGRAPHY .....	162

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

When Texas gained its Independence from Mexico in 1836, President Sam Houston wanted to create a Texas that was less rugged, and one that would contain a more sophisticated society of classes. Part of this redefinition of Texas would be to reassign the Catholic religion. This would entail discontinuing the Spanish Roman Catholic model already existing within the Republic. Houston, a Catholic himself, was not against the Catholic Church. Revolutionary residents resented Spanish Catholics and anticlericalism remained rampant. Any religion was viewed with considerable suspicion, especially the hierarchical nature of the Catholic Church. Not tying oneself to any one religion was a political stance that worked well for Texas Anglos.<sup>1</sup>

Despite anticlericalism among Anglos, the politically savvy Houston knew that a tie to European Roman Catholicism, or the French Roman Catholic version, was appealing to European countries investing in the future of Texas. Texas desperately needed European recognition for trade agreements if they hoped to achieve the goal of United States Statehood. Houston approved French Catholic agent Count Charles de Farnese to confer with Pope Gregory XVI. Count de Farnese was to negotiate the terms

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<sup>1</sup> For extensive reading and clarification on the expansive topic of the Texas Revolution, read: Gregg Cantrell's *Stephen F. Austin: Empresario of Texas*, (Yale University Press, 2001); Alwyn Barr's *Texas in Revolt. the Battle for San Antonio, 1835*, (University of Texas Press, 1990), and the Texas State Historical Association's article, "Religion," <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/izrdf>.



to reinstate the Catholic Church in Texas based on the Baltimore, Maryland, French version.<sup>2</sup> Knowing he was going to cut ties with the Spanish Roman Catholic model, Houston wrote to Pope Gregory XVI. Houston stated in his 1836 letter, ““if the Holy See shall deem it fitting to employ your talents in the service of Texas, by doing so it will give genuine satisfaction to your most respectful servant.””<sup>3</sup> Three years later, the Baltimore French version of Catholicism was officially introduced.<sup>4</sup>

This version of Catholicism began with the ecumenical Right Reverend Archbishop John Carroll of Baltimore, Maryland.<sup>5</sup> On November 6, 1789, the Holy See granted Baltimore a diocesan standing, naming it the first Diocese of the United States. John Carroll was its first bishop.<sup>6</sup> On April 8, 1808, the Holy See raised Baltimore to an Archdiocese and John Carroll served as the first archbishop of the United States.<sup>7</sup>

Archbishop Carroll set the precedence for the Catholic Church within the United States. He was often looked to, even revered, as a director of how the Church should appear within the States. Carroll was a fervent patriot who supported the Federalist beliefs of separation of church and state.<sup>8</sup> Since Texas recently gained its independence from a Spanish Catholic controlled state, Houston knew Archbishop Carroll’s model

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<sup>2</sup> Ralph Bayard, *Lone-Star Vanguard. The Catholic Re-Occupation of Texas 1838-1848*, (St. Louis, MO: The Vincentian Press, 1945), 346, 364.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid ; the term Holy See is the official name for the jurisdiction of the Pope. *See* is from the Latin, *seat* For further information, see the Catholic Encyclopedia.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.; although President Sam Houston implemented this model the Spanish Catholic model did not disappear.

<sup>5</sup> The Baltimore Basilica, America’s First Cathedral, “Archbishop John Carroll,” <http://www.baltimorebasilica.org>, (accessed September 14, 2011); when referencing the Baltimore French model in modern terms it is referred to as the Maryland Tradition, according to the Baltimore Basilica.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

appealed to the Revolutionary Anglos. This appealing version containing Federalist undertones made the implementation within Texas easier.

Carroll also believed that the Catholic “populace should intermingle imperceptibly within the social fabric” of the local areas, something that was not happening with non-Catholic Texas.<sup>9</sup> Since Archbishop Carroll distrusted the Congregation of the Propaganda, the pontifical administration department that is in charge of spreading Catholicism, he was not forthright in his instruction to them nor did he always follow their directives.<sup>10</sup> Unbeknownst to Archbishop Carroll, his irreverent disregard for following directives later became the practice for many southern bishops. Southern United States bishops were often given directives from the Vatican. The Vatican’s directives were meant to be implemented within the United States Councils, but most bishops, especially Southern ones, picked and chose which ones to follow. When discussing African Americans, there was no collective decision and often the bishops deferred to local prelates to handle the directives as they saw fit.

Since Carroll tied Baltimore to France, bringing in the French version of Catholicism, French orders such as the Sulpicians, Ursulines, Jesuits, and the Congregation of the Holy Cross began to appear in the United States. All of these orders eventually arrived in Texas and held a different ideology than that of Spanish Roman

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.; For a fuller discussion of the Congregation of the Propaganda see the Catholic Encyclopedia.

Catholics. These order's missions were to educate and minister to the underprivileged, including African Americans.<sup>11</sup> No race or nationality was off limits.

Pope Gregory XVI granted Texas a Prefecture status in 1839.<sup>12</sup> The pope named Father John Timon as the Prefect Apostolic and Father Jean Marie Odin as the Vice-Prefect to oversee the new territory.<sup>13</sup> The Holy See governed the Prefecture until a permanent Diocese could be established. The Prefecture flourished under Odin's building of parishes and schools, and Pope Gregory XVI upgraded the Prefecture to a Vicariate Diocese. This was the intermediary stage between Prefecture and a full Diocese. With the annexation of Texas in 1845, the Holy See was assured that Texas was stable enough to hold its own Diocesan status. On May 4, 1847, Pope Pius IX issued a Papal Bull that granted full Diocesan status to Texas, naming Odin the first bishop.<sup>14</sup> Texas' first Diocese, encompassing most of the state, eventually became the Diocese of Galveston.

Bishop Odin's distinct purpose was to implement parochial education. This he did through funds received from *La Société de la Propagation de la Foi*, or the Society for the Propagation of the Faith.<sup>15</sup> Founded in 1822 in Lyons, France, the goal of the Society was to enlist the encouragement of all Catholics, assist in all Catholic missions,

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<sup>11</sup> For further reading on the complexities of Spanish and French entry and rule in Texas, see Donald E. Chipman and Harriett Denise Joseph's work, *Spanish Texas 1519-1821*, (University of Texas Press, 2010).

<sup>12</sup> Pope Pius IX, *Papal Bull*, trans., Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston Archives (ADGHA); The Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston, "History of the Archdiocese of Galveston," <http://www.archgh.org/About/History>, (accessed February 9, 2011).

<sup>13</sup> The term prefecture stems from the root word prefect or prefect apostolic which is defined as a person put in charge or in authority over a jurisdiction. Therefore, a prefecture status given to a state within the United States is the territory given to the prefect. Essentially, Father John Timon was president and Father Jean Marie Odin was vice-president of a Catholic territory, the Texas See or the seat of Texas. For further discussion see the Catholic Encyclopedia.

<sup>14</sup> Pope Pius IX, *Papal Bull Creating the Diocese of Galveston*, 1847, ADGHA.

<sup>15</sup> Bayard, 346.

and to do so without regard to nationality.<sup>16</sup> In 1840, the United States received \$2,749,436.11. These funds were used to implement parochial institutions.<sup>17</sup> However, the implementation of these schools and new parishes was slow due to Southern racial ideology. The Church thought Texas difficult to penetrate because of the heavily Protestant Anglo population and multi-racial practices. It was also difficult to convert Native Americans due to their ancestral rituals that worked symbiotically within the Church in Texas. However, Odin pressed on, building seven new parochial schools and one Catholic university within the State by the time the Civil War ended.

On June 19, 1865, the reading of the Emancipation Proclamation took place in Galveston, setting the slaves free within the State of Texas. Though the Catholic Church was firmly established within the Diocese of Galveston, there was no real guidance from Ecclesiastical legislation on efforts to evangelize the recently emancipated slaves.<sup>18</sup> There was discussion at bishop councils and congresses but no significant consideration for change occurred until 1886. This was achieved through the efforts of the Right Reverend Bishop Nicholas Gallagher of the Galveston Diocese.<sup>19</sup> His commitments to African American education would break the barrier that kept African American Catholic churches out of Texas. Because the new Catholic Church existed for a lengthy time in Texas, sentiments started to relax around their ministries. This era also saw the formalization of the segregation movement beginning in Texas and the United States.

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<sup>16</sup> Joseph Fréri, "The Society for the Propagation of the Faith," *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, 12(1911): New York: Robert Appleton Company, <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/12461a.htm>, (accessed September 21, 2011).

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.; for further discussion on The Society for the Propagation of the Faith, its organization, history, administration, and results, see *The Catholic Encyclopedia*.

<sup>18</sup> Patrick Carey, *Catholics in America. a history* (Westport, Connecticut: Praeger Publishers, 2004), 46.

<sup>19</sup> ADGHA, "History of the Archdiocese of Galveston."

Although legal segregation did not occur until 1896 with the passage of *Plessy v. Ferguson*, Texas practiced Jim Crow segregation during the late 1880s in a period known as the “nadir” of U.S. race relations.<sup>20</sup>

Through Gallagher’s efforts, African American parochial education expanded into other dioceses within Texas. This expansion brought forth by Bishop Gallagher, under the Third Plenary Council of 1884, provided a choice of education for African Americans.<sup>21</sup> These schools would change the Catholic landscape within Texas particularly in Galveston, San Antonio, and eventually, Austin.

While the Church established itself within a racially divided south, they eventually addressed the varying levels of racial integration in their parochial schools. As Jim Crow ideology spread throughout the South, the Catholic Church resisted full integration in its parishes and schools. Nationally, African American Catholics organized into such groups as the Federated Colored Catholics (FCC), the Catholic Interracial Council of New York (CIC), the National Catholic Federation for the Promotion of Better Race Relations (NCF), and the National Black Catholic Clergy Caucus (NBCCC), to discuss the effects of segregation on African American Catholics. These organizations, along with the Ecclesiastical Congresses and Roman Curia, affected the way the Texas See ran its routine operations. The FCC requested that the Church integrate parochial schools, but the bishops were reluctant. The Church’s response was to leave those

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<sup>20</sup> Nadir is a term originated by historian Rayford Logan in his 1954 book, *The Negro in American Life and Thought: the Nadir, 1877-1901*. The term refers to the period after Reconstruction to the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century when racism towards African Americans reached its pinnacle.

<sup>21</sup> Harvard University Americana Collection. *The Memorial Volume, a history of the Third Plenary Council of Baltimore, November 9-December 7, 1884* (Baltimore, Maryland: The Baltimore Publishing Company):1885, <http://www.archive.org/details/memorialvolume00compgoog>, (accessed February 5, 2011): 94; referred hereafter as HUAC.

decisions to the local bishops, and sometimes local parish priests, to implement changes within a Diocese. As southern bishops were slow to react, providing long years of inaction, Father Weber, a local parish priest, made a personal choice in 1936 to open the Church to African American Catholics within Austin. Eventually, Father Weber would also establish a fully integrated hospital and a parish school that opened in 1941. Despite bringing the Church to African American Catholics within Austin, complete access to the Church was still denied.

Though Bishops Gallagher and Byrne of Galveston and the Right Reverend Bishop Neraz of San Antonio implemented schools for African Americans within their dioceses, it would not be until the Right Reverend Archbishop Robert E. Lucey of the Diocese of San Antonio took action against segregated Catholic parochial schools in Texas along with the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Topeka, Kansas* decision.

Bishop Lucey's direction in April of 1954 allowed real, effective change within the Texas See regarding integration of parochial schools by declaring in a pastoral letter that all children regardless of race could enter Catholic schools in Texas. Moreover, the *Brown* decision a month later helped facilitate the Catholic parochial schools integration much faster than secular schools allowed. In truth, the Catholic Church did not have to answer to federal law and, therefore, the Church did not have to wait until the 1954 decision. Most dioceses outside of Texas chose not to wait. Archbishops and bishops in St. Louis, Washington, D.C., New Orleans, and Raleigh paved the way for Archbishop Lucey to officially declare desegregation within his diocese.

While secular schools grappled with the federal mandates of the *Brown* decision, the Church answered to a higher order based on moral and ethical issues. Though changes could have been made earlier, some desegregated their parochial schools tied to the African American parishes long before 1954. While some Catholic higher education institutions declared they were fully desegregated from the onset, this policy was not advertised. In addition, the requirement to enter Catholic higher education required a level of secondary education that was not offered to a wide base of African Americans in Jim Crow society. Jim Crow ideology in the South was too strong, and the Catholic Church in Texas was not immune to its rules. The racial attitudes of many parishioners reflected the racial sentiments of the local societies about African Americans and the Church.

Though African American parishes and schools existed within Texas's cities whose African American population was equal to or lower than that of other cities, the City of Austin was the slowest to implement parishes and schools for African Americans. Beginning in 1936, the Austin community built Holy Rosary Parish. Austin added one more element to Catholic institutions by being one of the first to bring integrated medical services to the city, and in Texas, beginning in 1941.

Austin was slow to bring parochial education to African Americans for several reasons. One of these reasons was due to population totals of African Americans. Austin did not have the sustained African American population of surrounding counties, such as Galveston, Harris, and Bexar. Though African Americans lived in Austin, Travis County, the scattering of their communities made their population totals seem lower to

the Catholic Church. In reality, the African American population was equal to that of Galveston County for some time, but Galveston built the first African American parish and school within Texas.

Texas's annexation to the United States in 1845 began a population growth in Austin. As a result of Austin being named the capitol of Texas, by 1850 the city reached 800 people.<sup>22</sup> Twenty-five percent of this population was African American.<sup>23</sup> By 1860, the percentage of African American population as a whole in Travis County varied between thirty and forty-nine percent.<sup>24</sup> By 1890, six years after African American Catholic parochial education entered Texas, the African American population as a total percentage to Travis County dropped and fluctuated between twenty to thirty-four percent.<sup>25</sup> By 1900, the African American population percent in Travis County was twenty-eight percent, remaining in its previous range of ten years prior.<sup>26</sup> Between the years of 1900-1930, the African American population within Travis County as a whole remained between thirteen and fifteen thousand people.<sup>27</sup>

When the African American population data in Travis County and Austin to those surrounding counties of Galveston and Harris are compared, the African American population totals did not exceed those of Travis County until 1890. In 1840, the African

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<sup>22</sup> David C. Humphrey, "Austin, TX (Travis County)," Handbook of Texas Online—TSHA, <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/hda03>, (accessed February 12, 2011).

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Perry-Castaneda Map Collection at The University of Texas at Austin, "Black Slaves As A Percentage of Total Population, 1860," [http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/atlas\\_texas/slaves\\_population\\_1860.jpg](http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/atlas_texas/slaves_population_1860.jpg), (accessed January 22, 2011), referred hereafter as PCMC.

<sup>25</sup> PCMC, "Blacks As A Percentage of Total Population, 1890," [http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/atlas\\_texas/tex\\_percentage\\_black\\_1890.jpg](http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/atlas_texas/tex_percentage_black_1890.jpg), (accessed January 22, 2011).

<sup>26</sup> Historic Texas County Population, "Historic Travis County Population: 1850-Present," <http://www.txcip.org/tac/census/hist.php?FIPS=48453>, (accessed March 20, 2012).

<sup>27</sup> PCMC, "Blacks As A Percentage of Population, 1890," [http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/atlas\\_texas/tex\\_percentage\\_black\\_1890.jpg](http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/atlas_texas/tex_percentage_black_1890.jpg), (accessed January 22, 2011)



American population in Travis, Galveston, and Harris Counties was consistent, holding between ten and nineteen percent.<sup>28</sup> Brazoria County, directly west of Galveston County, held one of the highest African American population percentages ranging between thirty and forty-nine percent in 1840.<sup>29</sup> In 1860, Travis County actually outnumbered Galveston and Harris County's African American population percentages. Galveston had a percentage of ten to nineteen percent of African Americans in their total population. Harris County ranged between twenty and twenty-nine percent African Americans in their total population.<sup>30</sup> Brazoria had a sixty-five to seventy-nine percent African American population in their county total while Ft. Bend County, which sits slightly north, held over eighty percent of African Americans in their total population.<sup>31</sup> By 1890, the shifts in African American populations were evident.

In 1890, Harris County's African American population percentage ranged from thirty-five and forty-nine percent of the total population.<sup>32</sup> Brazoria and Ft. Bend Counties held over seventy-five percent of the African American population.<sup>33</sup> Galveston remained the same as Travis County in 1890, but since Galveston was considered the "Catholic Capitol" as it housed the diocesan cathedral, it received the first African American parochial school. Galveston's population totals in 1900 are difficult to assess. On September 8, 1900, a hurricane now referred to as "The Great Storm," hit the shores

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<sup>28</sup> PCMC, "Black Slaves As A Percentage of Total Population, 1840," [http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/atlas\\_texas/population\\_slaves\\_1840.jpg](http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/atlas_texas/population_slaves_1840.jpg), (accessed January 22, 2011).

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> PCMC, 1860 map.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> PCMC, 1890 map.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

of Galveston nearly destroying the entire area and killing approximately 8,000 people.<sup>34</sup> Recovery from the storm was swift however, and the city of Galveston became known as the “Ellis Island of Texas” as immigrants flowed into the city.<sup>35</sup>

Bexar County, within the Diocese of San Antonio, kept its Catholic presence intact from 1731. It was the only county with an African American parochial school that had a steady African American population ranging from zero to twenty-percent between 1840 and 1890, which was lower than Austin.<sup>36</sup> Therefore, while the African American population statistics of Travis County remain relatively equal to those of Galveston County by 1884, Galveston had however one Catholic University, was named the Diocese of Texas, and contained the Diocesan Cathedral marking Galveston the premier location to begin Bishop Gallagher’s work for African American parochial education.

There remained, however, several other reasons to not build parochial schools within Austin. First, Austin was a frontier city due to frequent Mexican and Indian attacks from 1839-1845. It was not the elite, commercial site of Galveston’s seaport. Second, the Catholic population in Austin was mostly Irish, German, and French whom Bishop Odin drew into Texas. There were simply not enough African American Catholics in Austin or Travis County to warrant their own church. Those that did exist attended the white Catholic churches.

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<sup>34</sup> Galveston and Texas History Center, Rosenberg Library, <http://www.gthcenter.org/exhibits/storms/1900/index.html>, (accessed March 20, 2012).

<sup>35</sup> Diana J. Kleiner, “Galveston County,” *Handbook of Texas Online—TSHA*, <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/hcg02>, (accessed March 20, 2012).

<sup>36</sup> Gilbert R. Cruz, “SAN ANTONIO, CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE OF,” *Handbook of Texas Online—TSHA*, <http://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/ics01>, (accessed March 31, 2011).

Third, a lack of resources and manpower plagued the Catholic Church. Finally, Austin's central location within Texas was isolated from any population centers and seaports, whereas Galveston and Houston were not. It was not until 1929, when the City of Austin enacted a city plan to segregate African Americans to the eastern portion of Austin, did the development of a Catholic Church for African Americans begin.

To date, a comprehensive historical study of the Catholic Church's involvement in parochial education for African Americans in Texas is lacking within the secondary literature. Therefore, the burden of this study lay with obtaining primary sources and with the scarcity of secondary sources to supplement the primary documents. The Catholic Archives of Texas became the most significant repository, followed by the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston Archives, in obtaining primary documents for this study. Other repositories offering considerable information for the study were the Austin History Center, the Dolph Briscoe Center for American History, and the Harvard Americana Collection. The archives of Catholic orders such as the Holy Cross Brothers of the Midwest Province in Notre Dame, Indiana, the Robert M. Meyers Archives of the Society of the Divine Word, Chicago Province in Techny, Illinois, the Archdiocese of St. Louis, the Archdiocese of Raleigh, and the archives of Saint Edward's University provided useful primary sources and documentation.

Outside the accessible archives, there are limited secondary sources that examine the Catholic Church's expansion of African American parochial education in Texas. There are vast secondary sources regarding the Catholic Church, African American Catholics, and African American education. Though the secondary literature does not

completely tell the story of African American parochial education in Texas, there are aspects of each author's works that contributes to this study.

In 1986 Reverend Peter E. Hogan, an archivist at the Josephite House of Central Administration in Baltimore, Maryland, wrote an article entitled "Towards a Black Archives," in which he argued that researchers have barely begun to scratch the surface of African American Catholic history in the United States. There is much missing on their educational influences, as well. Hogan claimed that a dissertation or a series of dissertations are required to bring light to the subject of African American Catholics through their movement, their priests, nuns, schools, and influences on communities within the United States. He believed that a visionary effort is attainable with the opening of an African American dioceses archive in conjunction with the United States Catholic Conference.<sup>37</sup>

Noted historian John Hope Franklin once told Hogan that "the reason Black Catholics did not have a better historical presence was lack of archival resources."<sup>38</sup> It appears that Franklin was correct in that these regional archives are inaccessible to average researchers.

To date, an African American Dioceses archive has not been achieved, and the African American Apostolate story remains to be fully told. Timothy Matovina, professor of theology at Notre Dame in 2009 wrote, "It is frustrating to note that the process of incorporating...[African American Catholic scholar's] research and insights

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<sup>37</sup> Peter E. Hogan, "Towards A Black Archives," *US Catholic Historian*, 5, no.1 (1986):97, *The Black Catholic Experience*.

<sup>38</sup> *American Historical Association*,  
<http://www.historians.org/Perspectives/issues/2005/0509/0509mem1.cfm> (accessed Nov. 12, 2010).

into course offerings and textbooks of U.S Catholic history and theology, as well as pastoral planning within U.S. Catholicism, has been painstakingly slow.”<sup>39</sup>

Before and after Hogan’s article in 1986, there are extensive secondary sources regarding Catholic history. Some studies are regional, while others are national. There are some studies that are anthropological and sociological in nature, but still provide historical content.

To begin, one such work is Ralph Bayard’s 1945 work *Lone-Star Vanguard: the Catholic Re-Occupation of Texas* which is an erudite volume of the reawakening of Catholicism in Texas from 1838-1848. Though it is a fascinating read of the political wrangling between President Sam Houston and the Catholic Church, Bayard does well to highlight the priests and bishops that were responsible for revitalizing Catholicism in Texas. Bayard, a Vincentian Father himself, comes across biased at times, as he focuses on and highlights the career of Vincentian Bishop Odin. Bayard’s work successfully examines how Catholicism re-entered Texas, and how the system became politically re-created through legislation while leaving the racial stories of slavery and parochial education out of the narrative.

Nessa Theresa Baskerville Johnson’s 1978 book, *A Special Pilgrimage: A History of Black Catholics in Richmond* centers her work around thirteen African American Catholics who worshipped in the balcony of St. Peter’s Cathedral in the late 1870s in Virginia. It is more of an oral history of black Catholics, in a beautiful narrative of the

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<sup>39</sup> Shawn M. Copeland, LaReine-Marie Mosely, and Albert J. Raboteau, contr., *Uncommon Faithfulness: The Black Catholic Experience*, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2009), 4.

city, but not of the entire Richmond Dioceses itself.<sup>40</sup> Though African Americans attended the church, the white Catholics did not see them as equal Catholics. Other African Americans did not understand them. Despite being doubly ousted, these thirteen African American Catholics were able to build the first African American parish within the city of Shockoe Hill within the Diocese of Richmond. Soon to follow was an elementary school, an industrial and normal school, an orphanage, and Richmond's first kindergarten school for African American children. Johnson does well to discuss how desegregation in the 1950s changed the Catholic community of Richmond and discusses the role of Richmond's Black Catholic Caucus.

Randall M. Miller's 1983 work, *Catholics in the Old South: Essays on Church and Culture* provides an interesting compilation of works that pertain to the Catholic Church within the southern region of the United States. At the time of publication, most works centered on the Catholic Church and the north.<sup>41</sup> Here, Randall is compiling essays that vary greatly on the subject of Catholics in the South offering at the time, a breadth to Catholic history. Within the work are essays which include a myriad of subjects. Two regard African American Catholics which deal mainly on slavery. It is a rich collection of Catholic history that expands the struggles the Catholic Church faced when implementing their institutions into the South.

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<sup>40</sup> Bailey, James H., review of *A Special Pilgrimage: A History of Black Catholics in Richmond*, by Nessa Theresa Baskerville Johnson, *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, 87, no. 3 (July 1979): 378-379, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4248334>, (accessed October 14, 2010).

<sup>41</sup> Michael V. Gannon, review of *Catholics in the Old South*, by Randall M. Miller; Jon L. Wakelyn, *The Florida Historical Quarterly*, 63, no. 2 (October 1984):215-217, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/30147649>, (accessed October 14, 2010).

Richard C. Madden's 1985 work, *Catholics in South Carolina: A Record* is the first of its kind within the Diocese of Charleston as its only source is the diocesan archives. Madden's work is biased as he is a cleric in the Diocese of Charleston, but that is not to say his work does not offer something to the historical narrative of Charleston Catholics. It is the story of the beginnings of the diocese and is the first book to be written on the subject. The work focuses on priests, their lives, and their institutional works within South Carolina.

Since Hogan's 1986 article, the literature on the subject of African American Catholics has grown considerably. Father Cyprian Davis was the first to write extensively on the history of African American Catholics. His work, *History of Black Catholics in the United States*, written in 1990, agreeably argues that, "we have lacked a historical overview of the black Catholic community in this country."<sup>42</sup>

His work is more a study of the Diaspora of Catholicism from Africa to the Western Hemisphere, something that is unmatched within the subject of African American Catholicism. Davis begins with the Bible and moves to the twentieth-century United States and periods covering slavery, Reconstruction, and the Civil Rights Movement. The latter part of his book examines the Black Congresses that evoked change within the Catholic Church. Though his work is not exhaustive, Davis brings attention to areas of African American Catholicism that have remained hidden. His work refrains from offering biographical accounts or simply adding African American Catholic elements to white Catholic Church history. While Davis does not mention Texas and discusses remarkably little of the impact of parochial education, he does focus on the

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<sup>42</sup> Ibid., xi.

desegregation of the Catholic Church, and the role of African American women's orders, and offers insight into the need for more attention to those African American Catholics who played a role in civil rights issues. Davis' work offers a solid platform of information.

Stephen J. Ochs, who published *Desegregating the Altar: the Josephites and the Struggle for Black Priests, 1871-1960* in 1990, details the Josephite Order which was assigned by the bishop councils in 1868 to attend to African Americans. As Ochs illustrates, the very order assigned to administer to underprivileged African Americans was the order that suppressed and segregated African Americans within the Church. The book details the infighting that occurred in bishop councils and the twenty-year struggle to obtain integration at the Catholic University in Washington, D.C. Ochs' work offers great insight as to how the desegregation process worked in one order and one higher parochial educational institution.

James T. Moore's two-part works, *Through Fire and Flood* and *Acts of Faith* written in 1992 and 2002, respectively, begins another string of regional history of Catholicism while incorporating African American Catholics. Both of Moore's works examine the growth and development of the Catholic Church in Texas.<sup>43</sup>

Moore's works are the first comprehensive study regarding Texas Catholicism since the 1940s when Ralph Bayard published his work on Father Odin. Moore examines to an extent in his first book, the effect Catholicism had on slaves and their religious influences. Moore also provides his thoughts on the Catholic view of slavery by

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<sup>43</sup> James T. Moore, *Through Fire and Flood The Catholic Church in Frontier Texas 1836-1900*, (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1992), xii.



correctly stating, “like other Southern bishops they simply accepted it as part of the society in which they lived.”<sup>44</sup>

Moore does attempt, more than other authors writing on Southern Catholicism, to provide examples of parochial education to African American children. His example includes the school in Victoria, Texas at the end of Reconstruction. Furthermore, his best attempt at incorporating black Catholics into his work stems from Bishop Neraz’s appeal to all San Antonio churches in September of 1887, to erect a church for black Catholics.<sup>45</sup> According to Moore, “every other ethnic group in the city—but not the blacks—had a Catholic church that it considered its own.”<sup>46</sup>

Moore continues to offer further information in his works on Texas than previously done before by incorporating snippets of information on the school in Galveston founded by the Sisters of Mercy in 1881.<sup>47</sup> Moore continues by detailing the first half of the Dominican arrival in Galveston in 1887, to the building of Holy Rosary School and the opening of a second school at another location the following year.

Moore does well to provide names of parishes, orphanages, some schools, and hospitals in both of his works, but does not push into the depth of what he could offer to readers. He needed to provide the full view of how these two exclusionary groups in Texas, Catholics and African Americans, interconnected and held fast to their beliefs in a segregated South.

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<sup>44</sup> Ibid., 122.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., 180.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., 213.

Gary Wray McDonogh's 1993 book, *Black and Catholic in Savannah, GA* is an anthropological study derived to illuminate the ideal that parish schools were built for conversions after the Civil War. McDonogh extends his study to integration beginning in the 1950s and how the process of desegregation impacted African American parishes and schools within the Diocese of Savannah.

Ruthe Winegarten's *Black Texas Women*, published in 1995, does not set out to express an argument or theory, but rather to illuminate the lives of African American women who overcame obstacles. Winegarten examines the Sisters of the Holy Family and highlights their work in Texas. She succinctly states that the Sisters of the Holy Family were an all black nun order founded in New Orleans in 1842 that sent four sisters into Texas to acquire the Holy Rosary and Industrial School in Galveston.<sup>48</sup> Winegarten continues by stating that the sisters added schools in Houston in 1905 and 1931, but as she does not provide further information, the reader is left to wonder what happened to the sisters and the school. She is the first to mention, however, the sisters opening schools in San Antonio in 1911, Ames in 1914, and Marshall in 1945, but does not provide any details to these schools.

In addition to mentioning the nun's work in Texas, Winegarten briefly touches upon St. Mary's University in San Antonio. She offers biographical information of the first African American women to graduate from a Texas university. Winegarten's book is a wonderful repository of information that is highlighted enough to bring awareness to

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<sup>48</sup> Ruthe Winegarten, *Black Texas Women 150 Years of Trial and Triumph*, (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1995), 132.

those African American women who have positively impacted Texas. It is a platform used to gain information to conduct new research.

John T. McGreevy's 1996 work *Parish Boundaries: the Catholic Encounter with Race in the Twentieth Century Urban North*, focuses on the northern areas of Boston, Chicago, Philadelphia, and Detroit. McGreevy examines how the white Catholic Church relates to African Americans. He focuses on twentieth-century U.S. race relations that occurred in the parishes of the cities. McGreevy examines what cultural conflicts occurred between the parishes, and how the Church transformed, positively impacting race relations in the northern cities.

With Diane Hayes' work, *Taking Down Our Harps: Black Catholics in the United States*, written in 1998, the historiography makes another shift back to African American Catholics. Hayes states that a coming of age has occurred primarily within the Black Catholic Congress Movement.<sup>49</sup> Her work argues it was enough for African Americans to obtain acceptance and assimilation into the Catholic Church prior to 1960. However, with the Seventh and Eighth Black Congresses calling for a rebuilding of family and community on the pattern of earlier Congresses, now that the Catholic Church has recognized African American Catholics, it should integrate itself more firmly into African American Catholic culture.<sup>50</sup> Through a collection of essays and articles, Hayes' work examines the issues African American Catholics confronted in the earlier Congresses and how they are addressing them now. These essays and articles are written

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<sup>49</sup> Diana L. Hayes, *Taking Down Our Harps. Black Catholics in the United States*, (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1998), xi.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., xii.

by theologians, ethicists, historians, liturgists, and religious educators.<sup>51</sup> While her work is not a historical view of African American Catholics in the United States, it is a social approach that displays “a shared perspective of where Black Catholics have journeyed from, where they are today, and hopefully, where they are going.”<sup>52</sup>

*No Cross, No Crown: Black Nuns in 19<sup>th</sup> Century New Orleans* by Mary Bernard Deggs in 2002 centers on the history of the Sisters of the Holy Family, whose work eventually spread into Texas. Deggs does not record the history of the order moving into Texas for she died in 1896, and the order entered Texas in 1898. However, it is a valuable work in that it is the only first-hand written account of the order.

Another regional work *Tar Heel Catholics: A History of Catholicism in North Carolina* by William F. Powers in 2003, focuses on the changing face of the Catholic Church within the state of North Carolina. It is a biography of prominent South Carolinians such as John England, as well as narrative of historical accounts regarding how the Catholic Church instituted itself within a predominately Baptist and Methodist state.

The 2003, co-authored work of Cyprian Davis and Jamie Phelps’, *Stamped With the Image of God: African Americans as God’s Image in Black*, provides primary source documents that cover 200 years of Catholic history. This book, in part, provides a glance at what some scholars have found on African American Catholicism while offering insight to what is missing in the historical context of African American Catholics.

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<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

Patrick Carey's 2004 work, *Catholics in America: A History*, is undoubtedly one of the finer works regarding Catholics in America. Carey skillfully examines the desegregation of Catholic churches and schools, bringing more of an attempt to incorporate African American Catholics than previous works before.

In *Catholics in America*, for the first time since Father Cyprian Davis' work, there is an examination of the national organizations for African American Catholics in the twentieth century. Carey touches on the existence of the black Congresses, Caucuses, and National Councils that arose after WWII and into 1978, when the real social change began and when the Secretariat for the Laity was created.<sup>53</sup> While Carey's examination does not substantiate his overall work, it is at least a beginning towards a discussion never afore mentioned in works regarding Catholic history.

Carey's work on African American Catholics is by no means extensive, but it is one of the first books to look into not only political arenas, but the area of African American sisters and African American Catholic women. Carey may fall short in providing a historical concept of African American Catholics, but he provides a useful guide to further research.

James Bennet's 2005, *Religion and the Rise of Jim Crow in New Orleans*, attempts to answer the pressing issue of integration of Catholic and Methodist churches from the end of Reconstruction to the Progressive Era. Bennett examines the patterns of racial inclusion and exclusion within religious institutions and how they reacted to the rise of Jim Crow. The most pressing question Bennett explores is what effect would

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<sup>53</sup> Patrick Carey, *Catholics in America. a history*, (Praeger Publishers: Westport, Conn., 2004), 127.

integrated churches have had on the system of Jim Crow outside their institutions?<sup>54</sup>

According to Bennett, it was the same question being asked throughout the South and United States.

The 2009 composition of M. Shawn Copeland's *Uncommon Faithfulness: The Black Catholic Experience* provides a collection of essays and articles regarding African American Catholics. These articles are written by leading scholars including, Albert J. Raboteau, Jamie T. Phelps, Diana L. Hayes, Diane Batts Morrow, and Cyprian Davis.

The first five articles in *Uncommon Faithfulness* provide a historical component. Albert J. Raboteau writes on slavery and understanding American religious history. He illustrates how African Americans have struggled religiously in order to find meaning and identity in the midst of brutal institutions such as slavery.<sup>55</sup> The second and third articles written by Morrow and Davis focus on nineteenth-century African American Catholic female agencies, by providing information on the Oblate Sisters of Providence, the first Catholic religious congregation of African American women in the United States, and Henriette Delille, founder of the Sisters of the Holy Family in New Orleans; respectively. The last two articles, written by Moore and Katrina M. Sanders, offer insight into twentieth-century African American Catholic history with findings on Catholic reactions to desegregation and the involvement of Catholics in the Civil Rights Movement.

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<sup>54</sup> Bennett, James. *Religion and the Rise of Jim Crow in New Orleans*. (Princeton University Press: Princeton, N J., 2005), 11.

<sup>55</sup> Shawn M. Copeland, *Uncommon Faithfulness: The Black Catholic Experience*, (Orbis Books: Maryknoll, New York, 2009), 24.

Having highlighted most of the secondary works centered on Catholicism and African American Catholics, there is abundant secondary literature regarding African American education. For the purposes of this study, the secondary works that were often accessed are highlighted in the historiography.

Carter Godwin Woodson's 1933 work *The Mis-Education of the Negro* has become a highly criticized book in its time. The book is a collection of newspaper articles, written to highlight the societal restrictions placed upon African Americans since emancipation. Though it has been a highly criticized work of offering a compiled negative opinion that does nothing to lift the African American race, it is to say a harsh look at what reality was for African Americans in higher public and parochial education. Woodson does not want these newspaper articles to be cast aside and forgotten. Therefore, by placing them in book form, the reader can assess the entire situation of how restrictive society has really been on African Americans since emancipation.

Henry Allen Bullock's 1967 book, *A History of Negro Education in the South: From 1619 to the Present*, examines "the historical development of educational opportunities for Negroes in the South, and with the manner in which these evolving opportunities facilitated the desegregation movement now occurring [1967] in the United States."<sup>56</sup> Bullock's work is one of the first to offer an examination of how the decision of *Brown* is disseminating in the United States. A sociologist by training, Bullock is able to historically provide how society fostered educational institutions into segregated facilities for African Americans. He then examines how society will untangle itself from

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<sup>56</sup> Henry A. Bullock, *A History of Negro Education in the South from 1619 to the Present*. (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1967), vii.

the net of segregation. Though there is no mention of parochial education, the idea of Bullock's work is to promote the awareness of how society puts in place and dismantles the choices it makes.

Janet Duitsman Cornelius' 1991 book, *When I Can Read My Title Clear: Literacy, Slavery, and Religion in the Antebellum South*, offers an excellent account of how slaves learned to read and write and how religious groups often struggled with the idea of slavery and education. Cornelius' work focuses on those associations and individuals who fostered the literacy campaign in the South for slaves.

Cornelius does well to mention Catholic orders such as the Oblate Sisters of Baltimore and the Sisters of the Holy Family from New Orleans as teachers for African American children in Nashville, Baltimore, and Washington, D.C.<sup>57</sup> She also does well to incorporate some of the work the Ursulines, Carmelites, and Sulpicians did in educating mulatto children in New Orleans and Baltimore.

James Anderson's 1998 book, *The Education of Blacks in the South, 1860-1935* discusses the beginnings of African American secular and private education in the South from the time of slavery. Anderson discusses how and why northern philanthropy moved south to improve African American education. Anderson's exceptional work argues that there have been two types of education as a tradition in America: one that educates towards democratic citizenship and one that educates towards a second class citizenship.<sup>58</sup> Anderson highlights examples of these schools such as the Hampton and Tuskegee

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<sup>57</sup> Janet Duitsman Cornelius, *When I Can Read My Title Clear. Literacy, Slavery, and Religion in the Antebellum South*, (Columbia, S.C.: University of South Carolina Press, 1991), 81.

<sup>58</sup> James Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South, 1860-1935*, (Chapel Hill, N.C. and London: The University of North Carolina Press, 1988), 2.



Institute and brings in a fresh argument that northern philanthropists, not just white southerners, also wanted second class education for African Americans to keep them in subordinate roles for economic reasons.<sup>59</sup> This is the reason why philanthropic groups in the North put their money and efforts into building normal and industrial institutes that did not uplift the African American race but severely hindered them in their education. Anderson offers a keen insight to the political side of African American education and although he does not discuss the Catholic Church, or any parochial institution, as being philanthropic, it is one of the more complete histories of African American education in the south.

Lastly, Amilcar Shabazz's work, *Advancing Democracy: African Americans and the Struggle for Access and Equality in Higher Education in Texas*, published in 2004, focuses on the struggles that led to the *Brown* decision. Shabazz's skillful work highlights the historical components of higher education in Texas, including those of Catholic universities. It is a book that extensively examines how the higher educational institutions in Texas restructured themselves and began to include African Americans within their higher learning facilities. Shabazz's work continues where James Anderson left off.

This study will focus on the evolvement of parochial education in Texas for African Americans and the role of the Church in desegregating parochial schools. Chapter Two will discuss how the Catholic Church began to implement education and missions for African Americans through the bishop councils, and the reasoning behind the progress of the Catholic Church as it pertains to the African American ministries.

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<sup>59</sup> Ibid., 92.

Chapter Two will also examine the types of education that existed for African Americans within Texas prior to Catholic involvement. The first part of Chapter Three focuses the activities of the Federation of Colored Catholics and the Catholic Interracial Council at the national level with regard to African American Catholics. Since the Catholic Church moved slowly within the State of Texas, the influences of national organizations helped broaden the prospective ideology that eventually became part of Texas's Catholic identity. The second half of the chapter moves into Austin and examines the creation of East Austin, and the Holy Cross Parish, school, and hospital. It examines the efforts of a grass roots community to build Catholic institutions within a segregated city and how the community of East Austin became vital to the growth and expansion of African American Catholics.

Chapter Four will once again look at the national field to explore how other dioceses within the United States enacted parochial integration. These dioceses that integrated eight years before the *Brown* decision in 1954 produced a ripple effect that eventually brought integration into the South and, eventually, Texas. The desegregation efforts also played a role in the *Brown* decision. Chief Justice Earl Warren, who ruled on *Brown*, discussed desegregation efforts with the Archbishop of St. Louis. African American parochial desegregation had a tremendous impact on the parishes, schools, and communities such as East Austin.

Finally, this study will reveal that the Catholic Church was slow to administer to African Americans due to the emergence of Jim Crow ideology and anti-Catholic sentiments among Protestants. Notwithstanding this ideology, the Church fastened

themselves to their commitments of evangelism and education. Archbishops, bishops, parish priests, and African American Catholic laymen held true to their principles despite opposition. Their determination, along with their belief that segregation and racism was sin, laid the foundation for parochial desegregation. Once the Catholic Church established within Texas, their parishes and schools provided an alternative means of spiritual service and an educational choice for African Americans not offered at a secular level.

*Regardless of Race* demonstrates that the Catholic Church penetrated a segregated society in Texas with a Jim Crow ideology. Though the Church's moves were guarded, they were able to keep intact most of the parishes and schools built for African Americans within Texas until they chose to integrate after WWII. This study demonstrates that although the Catholic Church knowingly entered into a state with anti-Catholic and anti-African American sentiments, they were able to build and change the African American Catholic communities. It is not a criticism of the Catholic Church, but a supposition that the Church itself was a victim of segregationist ideology outside and within the Church. It is how they moved within such a system to build African American education and ministry that is important.

With that, the study also shows how some of the national organizations that formed in the northern states impacted parochial education. It also shows what state, federal, and Ecclesiastical legislation passed in regard to African American education. Finally, the study focuses on the effects desegregation had on parochial schools for African Americans. Due to the *Brown* decision, some African American Catholics would

lose their neighborhood parochial schools, but this did not mean a loss of education. The Catholic Church, with the backing of the *Brown* decision, would easily desegregate their parochial schools, which broadened the African American Catholic student's educational opportunity. Until the Jim Crow ideology could be penetrated by justice through the federal courts, the Catholic Church provided an alternate means within local African American communities in Texas that granted African Americans the freedom to choose between a secular and a parochial education.

## CHAPTER II

### FROM BALTIMORE TO TEXAS: THE JOURNEY OF NEARLY A CENTURY

*“Some seek knowledge for the sake of knowledge: that is curiosity. Others seek knowledge so that they themselves may be known: that is vanity. But there are still others who seek knowledge in order to serve and edify others: and that is charity.”—Bernard of Clairveaux*

Since the initiation of the Catholic Church in the United States, education has always been of utmost importance. In November of 1791, the Right Reverend Bishop John Carroll addressed the First Catholic Synod in Baltimore on the topic of Catholic education. A year later, he wrote the first pastoral letter to the United States addressing the need for the instruction of the youth. Bishop Carroll suggested that a Christian education was of the highest importance and went on to establish Georgetown University in Washington, D.C. that same year.<sup>60</sup> The educational ideology that began in Baltimore would follow a complicated path through different ecclesiastical legislative actions. The lengthy journey of education from Baltimore eventually spread south and into Texas. The process nearly took an entire century.

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<sup>60</sup> Georgetown University History, <http://www.georgetown.edu/about/history/index.html> (accessed February 5, 2011); John Carroll, *Pastoral Letter of 1792*, “The National Pastorals of the American Hierarchy,” Peter Guilday, ed., n.p., National Catholic Welfare Council, 1923, <http://www.ewtn.com/library/BISHOPS/BC1792.HTM> (accessed February 5, 2011).

The topic of education appears at some level of either importance, urgency, or at least mentioned in the U.S. ecclesiastical councils. Almost forty years later, in 1829, the First Provincial Council was held in Baltimore. From this, the council decreed that, “wherever parochial schools are possible, they are ordered to be opened, and Sunday-schools are insisted upon as an absolute necessity.”<sup>61</sup> Second, the bishops stated that it was “necessary that schools should be established, in which the young may be taught the principles of faith and morality, while being instructed in letters.”<sup>62</sup> Third, the bishops declared that it was the priest’s obligation to prohibit children from attending any school where the Catholic doctrine and morality were attacked.<sup>63</sup> The addressing of these educational issues started a serious discussion about the education of African Americans in later councils. This educational ideology was plausible in the North, but implementing it in the segregated south became the Catholic Church’s burden to bear.

The Second Provincial Council, held in October of 1833, dealt with the re-districting of old and settling of new boundaries for dioceses. From this short council, however, came a decision regarding the Indian and Negro missions (renamed Black and Indian Mission, BIM). The decree was short and precise, stating that the Indian and Negro missions would be placed under the Society of Jesus, commonly known as the Jesuits, a term applied to the order in 1544.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> HUAC, 33.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., 35; John H. Pollen, “The Society of Jesus,” *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, (New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1912), <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/14081a.htm> (accessed October 18, 2011).

The Jesuit order was officially formed on September 27, 1540, in a Papal Bull of Pope Paul III. Ignatius Loyola, a converted court page from the Castile castle of Spain, journeyed to Rome after being ordained in Italy. Pope Paul III welcomed Loyola and two of his companions and put the group to work at various priestly duties. The group vowed to convert those whom they considered pagans and the pope allowed Loyola to form a new order based on poverty, chastity, and obedience. The group referred to themselves in Latin as Societies Jesu, which in English translates to the Society of Jesus. They pronounced their vows on April 22, 1541.<sup>65</sup>

The Society of Jesus reached out to expand young minds and conduct intellectual endeavors in academia. Their underlying core teaching was to “find God in all things.” Therefore, the Jesuits commonly expanded their ecclesiastical teachings to include science, or secular disciplines.<sup>66</sup> The Jesuits focused on foreign missions, expanding their reach to China, Latin America, and eventually North America in Canada.<sup>67</sup> There, they administered to the Iroquois and Ottawa Indian tribes. Eventually, the Jesuits migrated from Canada and into Louisiana, beginning in 1716.<sup>68</sup> In 1759, they moved into Illinois from Canada.<sup>69</sup>

The Jesuits were immensely influential in their teachings due to their far reaching missions. They were instrumental not only in spreading Christianity, but were

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<sup>65</sup> Fr. Norman O’Neal, S.J., *The Life of St Ignatius of Loyola*, University of San Francisco through the Jesuit website, <http://www.stignatiussf.org/a/himself.htm> (accessed October 18, 2011).

<sup>66</sup> Jesuits, Our History, About Us, *Science and Technology*, <http://www.jesuit.org> (accessed October 18, 2011).

<sup>67</sup> Cyprian Davis, “Jesuits, Society of Jesus,” General Information, <http://www.mb-soft.com/believe/text/Jesuit.htm> (accessed October 18, 2011).

<sup>68</sup> Reuben Gold Thwaites, ed., *The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents 1610-1791*, (Cleveland, OH: The Burrows Brothers Company, 1901), <http://www.puffin.creighton.edu/jesuit/relations> (accessed October 18, 2011).

<sup>69</sup> Ibid.

educational leaders of eighteenth-century Europe.<sup>70</sup> The Jesuits were spiritual advisors to royalty and taught the princes of kings.<sup>71</sup> With their influence came opposition from powerful sources, such as the monarchs of France and Spain, Voltaire, and some cardinals at the Vatican.<sup>72</sup> Pope Clement XIV shut down the Jesuit order and suppressed them in 1773.<sup>73</sup> This suppression caused Archbishop John Carroll, a Society of Jesus member, to flee from Europe and return to Maryland after writing a vindication of the Society.<sup>74</sup> In 1814, Pope Pius VII reinstated the Jesuit Order after his return to Rome.<sup>75</sup> The reinstatement came one year before Archbishop Carroll's death.

The Jesuits became intensely active and expansive in Texas during the 1870s.<sup>76</sup> Due to Mexico's anticlerical government, Jesuit refugees from Mexico settled in San Antonio until 1880, when they returned home to a calmer environment.<sup>77</sup> Jesuit missionaries from Naples, working in New Mexico, arrived to take over the abandoned missions in El Paso in 1881.<sup>78</sup> The Jesuits were most influential and successful in expanding El Paso Catholicism into a future diocese.<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> Davis, "Jesuits, Society of Jesus."

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid.; for further reading on the Papal Bull Suppression of the Jesuits by Pope Clement XIV, see *The Suppression of the Jesuits, 1750-1773*, <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/14096a.htm>.

<sup>74</sup> Louis O'Donovan, "John Carroll," *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, 3 (New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1908), <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/03381b.htm> (accessed October 18, 2011).

<sup>75</sup> Davis, "Jesuits, Society of Jesus."; the Georgetown University which Carroll founded in 1789 was originally a Catholic University due to the suppression of the Jesuits. When the Jesuit order was reinstated in 1814, Georgetown became a Jesuit University awarding its first bachelor's degrees in 1817. <http://www.georgetown.edu/about/history/index.html>.

<sup>76</sup> Steven P. Ryan, S.J., "Jesuits," TSHA—*The Handbook of Texas Online*, <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/ixj02> (accessed October 18, 2011).

<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.



Since the Jesuit missions focused on Mexican immigrants and higher education in Texas, the expansion of their order did not fully extend, if at all, to African Americans as the Second Plenary Council stipulated. As Texas was a slave state, African American slaves were kept from learning or attending church services. When the Catholic Church did expand its role among African Americans beginning in 1884, the Jesuit Order in Texas was mainly considered an order for Mexicans and Anglos. African Americans received their aid from individual prelates, Catholic philanthropists, and the Black and Indian Mission (BIM).

There was no uniformity from the Second Provincial Council to decide how to minister to African Americans. The short decree regarding the Indian and Negro Mission was not uniformly handed down in a pastoral letter or by any other document to give it any authority or substance. There was no discussion on funding the Indian and Negro missions, but it did remain on record.

A Papal Magisterium, *In Supremo Apostolatus*, issued by Pope Gregory XVI in 1839, renounced both the slave-trade and slavery.<sup>80</sup> The letter did not dissolve the institution but merely condemned the slave-trade which produced slaves. American bishops dismissed Pope Gregory's missive as meaning only the slave-trade was rejected, and, therefore, the teachings of *In Supremo Apostolatus* went unannounced to the American Catholic world.

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<sup>80</sup> Pope Gregory XVI, *In Supremo Apostolatus*, read during the 4<sup>th</sup> Provincial Council of Baltimore, December 3, 1839, <http://www.papalencyclicals.net/Greg16/g16sup.htm> (accessed January 17, 2011). This Papal Magisterium is highly controversial between the Catholic Church and Church historians. The Catholic Church maintains its stance that *In Supremo Apostolatus* did condemn both slavery and the slave-trade. Church historians maintain the stance that Pope Gregory's letter is only condemning the slave-trade. Both the Catholic Church and Church historians do agree that the letter condemns the slave-trade, whether or not the question of if the document condemns slavery remains debatable. For further reading and insight, read Fr. Joel S. Panzer's, *The Popes and Slavery*, (Alba House, 1996).

In 1839, no ecclesiastical legislative body had forcefully pushed for the advancement of slaves. The institution of which American Catholics participated was a permeable institution. If the Catholic Church did not formally dissolve the institution, but merely criticized the manner in which slaves were procured, then southern American Catholic slave holders perhaps had no reason to see the institution as immoral. Though there were clergy within the Catholic Church that were slave owners, Archbishop Carroll being one, there were prelates who disagreed with the institution. Therefore, local priests and bishops administered to African Americans as no institutions existed for them other than oppressive ones. Priests were allowed to give religious services only if the slave owners permitted them.

An isolated incident did occur within Texas due to a plantation owner who strongly practiced his Catholic faith. Mr. Spann gave permission to the priests to come every Sunday and minister to his slaves, the Sweeds, who were all baptized in the Catholic faith. The priests formed a church in 1848, Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary, near the plantation. Spann's plantation, located at former Washington-On-The-Brazos, had a resident priest from 1859 to 1868.<sup>81</sup>

Spann freed his slaves after the Civil War. As Spann and his family left Old Washington to return to South Carolina, the slaves kept the church. They named it the Blessed Virgin Mary.<sup>82</sup> They also maintained a short-lived orphanage for African

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<sup>81</sup> Blessed Virgin Mary Catholic Church, About US, [http://home.catholicweb.com/Blessed\\_Virgin\\_Mary\\_Catholic\\_Church/index.cfm/about](http://home.catholicweb.com/Blessed_Virgin_Mary_Catholic_Church/index.cfm/about) (accessed October 11, 2011), referred hereafter as BVMCC.

<sup>82</sup> James T. Moore, *Acts of Faith*, (Texas A&M University Press: College Station, 2002), 210; BVMCC.

American children.<sup>83</sup> This remains the oldest African American Catholic institution in Texas and is where most descendents of the Sweed slaves worship.<sup>84</sup>

Whereas Spann's Catholic slaves practiced their owner's faith whether they wanted to or not, other areas of Texas remained strongly anti-Catholic and anti-African American. The priests at Blessed Virgin Mary were often attacked and beaten for their association with African American Catholics.<sup>85</sup> Some, in the cover of darkness, risked their lives to administer the faith to African Americans.<sup>86</sup>

From 1836 to 1847, the Holy See established a See in Texas. It was only after the admission of Texas to the Union that the Church earnestly considered bringing in a full diocese. When Pope Pius IX issued a Bull in 1847 declaring the Vicariate Diocese the Diocese of Galveston, he also declared that St. Mary's Church in Galveston would become the Cathedral.<sup>87</sup> The Diocese of Galveston encompassed the entire state of Texas except for the El Paso region, which belonged to Arizona, and was placed as a suffragan diocese to the Archepiscopal See of New Orleans. What this meant was that Galveston, along with Mobile, Alabama, Natchez, Mississippi, and Little Rock, Arkansas were overseen by a metropolitan bishop or a suffragan bishop.<sup>88</sup> This suffragan bishop would be Antoine Blanc from Lyons, France, who became the first archbishop of New Orleans

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<sup>83</sup> Moore, *Acts of Faith*, 210.

<sup>84</sup> BVMCC.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid. For more information on the descendents of the Sweed slaves, see Brad Owens' *Catholic Spirit* article, "Austin Diocese: In the Beginning."

<sup>87</sup> ADGHA, Pope Pius IX, Papal Bull

<sup>88</sup> Carlos Eduardo Castaneda, *Our Catholic Heritage in Texas, 1519-1936*, (reprint, Temecula, CA: Reprint Services, 1993), 7:111.

on July 19, 1850.<sup>89</sup> The newly formed Diocese of Galveston was under the supervision of its own bishop, the Right Reverend Bishop Odin, the pioneering Vincentian who revitalized Catholicism within Texas and instituted the building of Catholic parochial schools.

When the First Plenary Council of Baltimore met on May 9, 1852, they exercised a stronger stance towards education. Article thirteen stated that, "bishops are exhorted to have a Catholic school in every parish and the teachers should be paid from the parochial funds."<sup>90</sup> Bishop Odin did not ignore this decree. Between the years of 1852 to 1866, a total of seven Catholic parochial schools and one university, Saint Mary's University, formerly St. Mary's Institute, were built. St. Mary's Institute opened in 1852 in San Antonio chiefly through Odin's persistence. He let the Marianists run the institution. St. Mary's claim was that "from the first day...[we] welcomed children of all nationalities and religions."<sup>91</sup> Seven new parochial schools were built within the parishes of San Antonio, Brownsville, Galveston, Austin, and Victoria. Since slavery existed, no parochial schools existed specifically for African Americans.

Tensions over slavery in the United States were cresting by 1852, and the topic of education was set aside. With the outbreak of the Civil War, the Second Plenary Council

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<sup>89</sup> Thomas Meehan, "Anthony Blanc." *The Catholic Encyclopedia*. 2(1907): New York: Robert Appleton Company, <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/02592b.htm> (accessed February 4, 2011).

<sup>90</sup> Fanning, William. "Plenary Councils of Baltimore." *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, 2(1907), New York: Robert Appleton Company, <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/02235a.htm> (accessed February 7, 2011).

<sup>91</sup> St. Mary's University, History, <http://www.stmarytx.edu/sesqui/?go=noble> (accessed February 9, 2011); this statement on their website is erroneous as they desegregated in 1952. The Marianists are a French Order. There are two orders, the Daughter of Mary Immaculate founded in 1816 and the Society of Mary founded in 1817. Both were founded by the Blessed William Joseph Chaminade. They look to Mary, the mother of Jesus as being the true disciple to the world and vow to spread the word of Christ through their teaching and work. One of their creeds is, "To unite people in the power of prayer to work wonders in the world." For further information on the Marianists visit <http://www.marianist.com/>.

of Baltimore postponed its meeting. After the war ended, The Right Reverend Archbishop Martin J. Spalding of Baltimore pushed for an immediate meeting. He wrote to the Congregation of Propaganda, the pontifical administration department in charge of spreading Catholicism, for approval. Cardinal Barnabo, secretary to the Congregation of Propaganda, allowed such a meeting. Its main topic was the status of the freedmen.<sup>92</sup>

Archbishop Spalding's view was "these unfortunates are thrown on our Charity...It is a golden opportunity for reaping a harvest of souls, which neglected may not return."<sup>93</sup> Archbishop Spalding had always been timid. He often published works anonymously on highly volatile subjects such as the Civil War, as he took the side of the Confederates.<sup>94</sup> His timidity became the detrimental factor in this council.

Permission was granted and Archbishop Spalding was named the apostolic delegate. Prior to the council meeting, Rome granted final approval of Archbishop Spalding's proposals to have a prefect apostolic for African Americans, special churches, priests, and mission work among African Americans.<sup>95</sup> In addition, Rome approved a prefect apostolic to administer and oversee the spirituality of African Americans on a national level.<sup>96</sup>

When the council met, Archbishop Spalding brought his ideas of caring for the freeman to the bishops in attendance. Discussions and infighting ensued as to how to handle the education of the emancipated slaves, since the Thirteenth Amendment was

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<sup>92</sup> Davis, *History of Black Catholics*, 117-118.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid., 118.

<sup>94</sup> The Archdiocese of Baltimore, "Most Reverend Martin J. Spalding," <http://www.archbalt.org/about-us/the-archdiocese/our-history/people/spalding.cfm> (accessed February 10, 2012).

<sup>95</sup> Davis, *History of Black Catholics*, 118.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid.

about to abolish slavery. Since such forceful opposition arose, especially from the Right Reverend Archbishop Peter Richard Kenrick of the Diocese of St. Louis, Archbishop Spalding never admitted to the council that the idea to have a national coordinator for African Americans was his. The bishops at the council were concerned that the instigator of these proposals may be made a bishop by the pope.<sup>97</sup> This became the most contested topic of the council.

At this time, the view from Catholic bishops was that “Protestants have never converted a heathen people” and, therefore, the council called for “each archbishop...to make a careful study of the situation in regard to the blacks in his province and to take such steps as he thinks proper to Christianize this unfortunate people.”<sup>98</sup> The Catholic Church viewed the freed slaves as heathen only in the sense that they were not Catholic. The council knew that now was the time to examine more closely the situation of the freed people. Here was now an opportunity for the Church to have full, unbridled access to a group, that before slavery, had been unreachable except through the permissions of slave owners. Moreover, the abolishment of slavery meant a scrambling of bishops to keep the freed slaves from Protestant clutches.

The council went on, issuing a pastoral letter, which is usually addressed to all members of the dioceses or sometimes to the clergy. The bishop, however, or one of his officials, issues the ordinances written within the letter.<sup>99</sup> The letter stated that they “feel in some manner a new and most extensive field of charity and devotedness has been

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<sup>97</sup> Ibid., 119.

<sup>98</sup> HUAC, 43.

<sup>99</sup> Johannes Baptist Sigmüller, “Ecclesiastical Letters,” *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, 9(1910), New York, NY: Robert Appleton Company, <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/09202a.htm> (accessed February 11, 2011).

opened to us by the emancipation of the immense slave population of the South. We could have wished...for a more gradual system of emancipation...so that they [emancipated slaves] might have been in some measure prepared to make a better use of their freedom.”<sup>100</sup> The council urged, but did not demand, that the bishops adopt plans to educate the liberated slaves. The bishops within the council regretted that “our means and opportunity of spreading over them the protecting and salutary influences of our holy religion are so restricted.”<sup>101</sup> Restrictions included limited access to those freed people who remained on their former master’s plantation, anti-Catholic sentiments, and the racist views of some Catholic prelates. Some at the council also thought that the Protestant white slave owners would never allow the former slaves to become educated, let alone equal. However, the decrees and accommodations to African Americans from this council did not have enough merit to enact large amounts of change in the status of the freed slaves.

While the Secondary Plenary Council’s priority focused on ministering to the faith of African Americans and keeping them to the cloth, the council could not come to a unified decision on how to administer ecclesiastical assistance. Moreover, the decree set forth by the council more readily applied to the higher parochial institutes of education because those were the institutions already established. Money was in short supply after the war, and the Catholic Church could not supply funds for the building of new schools. That decision, although decreed, was left to the parochial administration on whether or not they would open their doors wider.

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<sup>100</sup> HUAC, 43.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid., 44.

Odin, now the archbishop of New Orleans, was in attendance at the council, and he knew the African American situation as well as anyone in Texas. Now that he was in New Orleans, his position was to make decisions that were necessary to help the freedmen. As the Diocese of Galveston remained a suffragan diocese to the Archdiocese of New Orleans, Archbishop Odin oversaw his successor, the Right Reverend Bishop Claude Dubuis.<sup>102</sup> Archbishop Odin could have handed the order to Bishop Dubuis to help the freedmen, but he was remiss. Odin knew of the freedmen's plight, but the Civil War left New Orleans with financial problems, as well as churches, missions, schools and seminaries that had been ransacked and burned.<sup>103</sup> The only thing Odin could offer at the council was to "increase the amount of missionaries" to the freedmen "but nothing more must be innovated."<sup>104</sup> Here was the chance for the Catholic Church to rectify the wrong of slavery within their institution and morally uplift the former slaves, but instead Bishop Dubuis did nothing.

Bishops at the council had every right to be concerned, and it may explain Odin's decision to remain cautious, as not only were most Texans against freedmen, there were anti-Catholic sentiments that dated back to Mexico's rule. After all, the violent response that greeted the Freedmen's Bureau was enough to give the Catholic Church pause in what might have become a volatile mission. The bishops at this council agreed that

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<sup>102</sup> In ecclesiastical language, a suffragan diocese is a bishop who rules his own diocese but under the jurisdiction of a metropolitan diocese. The metropolitan diocese, or Episcopal, contains an archbishop that in Odin's time, presided over and governed the smaller dioceses in his jurisdiction. Therefore, the Diocese of Galveston was a province, or an archiepiscopal, of the metropolitan diocese of New Orleans. Ecclesiastical legislation has made changes over time to the role of an archbishop and how he may rule his province. In the time period Odin was archbishop, he was allowed to oversee his suffragans in a more lenient manner. See *Corpus Juris Canonici* at UCLA <http://digital.library.ucla.edu/canonlaw/>.

<sup>103</sup> Archdiocese of New Orleans, "A History of the Archdiocese of New Orleans," <http://archdiocese-no.org/history/civilwar.htm> (accessed March 29, 2011).

<sup>104</sup> Davis, *History of Black Catholics*, 119.



pastoral care for African Americans needed to be faithfully administered, and they struggled with the decision of segregating churches, parishes, and schools within the south and segregated seating within the churches.<sup>105</sup> The few African American Catholics that existed within Austin were welcome to practice their faith at St. Patrick's, the only Catholic Church in Austin at the time.

In September of 1871, "the rite of confirmation was administered to several young ladies at the Catholic Church...[and] one of the ladies was colored."<sup>106</sup> African Americans were apparently welcome, but the church itself had segregated seating. Therefore, the council ended with a letter that expressed their hope that somebody would do something to aid the recently freed slaves. The council was not willing to reach unification to bring about a collective means of administering to the emancipated slaves.<sup>107</sup> Archbishop Spalding failed to unify the bishops behind his directives of a uniform catechism, a Catholic University, and the need to administer to African Americans.<sup>108</sup> Though there was legislative talk at the ecclesiastical council, the Church was still hesitant to move into Texas after the Civil War to start building schools for African Americans. That endeavor belonged to the Freedmen's Bureau.

To African Americans, education certainly meant freedom, and they "considered the right to education crucial to their future as a free people."<sup>109</sup> Therefore, it is plausible that African Americans saw these philanthropic institutions as favorable. Indeed,

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<sup>105</sup> Ibid, 120.

<sup>106</sup> "Local Matters," *Tri-Weekly Statesman* (Austin, TX), Tuesday, September 19, 1871.

<sup>107</sup> Davis, *History of Black Catholics*, 121.

<sup>108</sup> Archdiocese of Baltimore, "Most Reverend Martin J. Spalding."

<sup>109</sup> Vincent Harding, *There Is a River: The Black Struggle for Freedom in America*, (San Diego, CA: Harcourt Brace & Company, 1981), 297.

Reconstruction under President Andrew Johnson and the entry of the Freedmen's Bureau was the first federal attempt at providing African Americans with education.

The Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands owed its origins to the 1864 American's Freedmen's Inquiry Commission's report. The commission's report stated "for a time we need a freedmen's bureau, but not because these people are negroes, only because they are men who have been, for generations, despoiled of their rights."<sup>110</sup> Therefore, the Freedmen's Bureau was established by the United States Congress in March of 1865 as a branch of the United States Army.<sup>111</sup> The Freedmen's Bureau, although helpful in its educational attempts, was a temporary agency only meant to provide aid and advice. The commission's report further stated that "any assistance given to these people should be regarded as a temporary necessity and all supervision over them should be provisional only, and advisory in its character."<sup>112</sup> In essence, the committee was handing down the Constitutional right for the pursuit of happiness to the freedmen on a temporary basis. The white planter class in Texas rejected the Freedmen's Bureau because they saw it as a military occupation and a threat to the social system.

In September of 1865, Freedman Bureau agent Edward M. Gregory discovered that in Texas African Americans were already establishing schools on their own and had been doing so illegally in the antebellum period.<sup>113</sup> African Americans found literate men or women, black or white, who were willing to teach and continue the self-sustaining

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<sup>110</sup> Robert Dale Owen, et al., "Final Report of the American Freedmen's Inquiry Commission to the Secretary of War," (New York, NY: n.p., 1864), Civil War Home Website, <http://civilwarhome.com/commissionreport.htm> (accessed March 29, 2011).

<sup>111</sup> Cecil Harper, Jr., "Freedman's Bureau," TSHA—*Handbook of Texas Online*, <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/ncf01> (accessed March 28, 2011).

<sup>112</sup> Ibid.

<sup>113</sup> Anderson, *Education of Blacks in the South*, 7.

method of education learned in slavery. In the spring of 1866, ninety schools were under the Freedmen's Bureau in Texas.<sup>114</sup> Gregory, who believed in self-sustaining education, did not stress African American education nor did he apply for Freedmen's Bureau money. Therefore, education for African Americans was a self-sustaining process.<sup>115</sup> It would not be until May of 1866, that Freedmen Bureau agent Joseph B. Kiddoo entered Texas and improved the public education system for African Americans.

Kiddoo worked particularly closely with the American Missionary Association to supply teachers, and acquire rental contracts for land on which to build schools and churches.<sup>116</sup> Brevet Brigadier General James Oakes headed the Austin, Texas, District from 1867 to 1869.<sup>117</sup> A year after his arrival, General Oakes opened a Freedmen's Bureau school with money contributed by African American Austinites.<sup>118</sup> Three other Texas agents would come and go, building the public educational system for African Americans. Agents were usually met with rioting, burning of schools, abuse of teachers and themselves. It became exceedingly dangerous "to establish schools in locations from which no government office could be reached easily," and so they refrained from moving too far into the interior of Texas.<sup>119</sup> In Palestine, Texas, the violence became so severe

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<sup>114</sup> Barry A. Crouch, *Freedmen's Bureau and Black Texans* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1992), 19.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*, 21.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*, 25.

<sup>117</sup> Arlington National Cemetery Records, "Oakes, James Brigadier General, United States Army," Arlington National Cemetery Website, <http://www.arlingtoncemetery.net/joakes/htm> (accessed March 30, 2011).

<sup>118</sup> George Washington Carver Museum and Cultural Center, "Segregation and Civil Rights 1865-1965," <http://www.ci/Austin/tx.us/carver/afriamericansaustin.htm> (accessed March 30, 2011), referred hereafter as GWCMCC.

<sup>119</sup> Crouch, 61.

one white preacher who presided over an African American congregation was threatened that “if he ever preached there again, he would preach his next sermon in Hell.”<sup>120</sup>

Although Freedmen’s Bureau agents did not stray too far from the eastern portion of the state, they were quite successful in certain regions. They endeavored to provide an educational foundation for African Americans despite white planter class sentiment that was demeaning and violent. Nevertheless, the system of federal philanthropy would not last.

Due to the vast land area of Texas and the violent nature of the planter class, and the shortage of manpower and funds, kept the Freedmen’s Bureau was not able to complete the job it was sent to do by the United States Government. In addition to these problems, the yellow fever epidemic of 1867 severely hindered the establishment of an African American public educational system; however, the Freedmen’s Bureau persevered. By July of 1870, 150 Freedmen’s Bureau schools were operating in Texas districts with an enrollment of just over 9,000 students.<sup>121</sup> The educational component of the Freedmen’s Bureau was also the last office to leave Texas. While the Freedmen’s Bureau phased out its other operations by 1868, the educational office stayed in Texas until 1872.<sup>122</sup>

The United States government, although philanthropic to an extent, allowed for an agency to enter into a broken social system. The Freedmen’s Bureau in Texas, although successful for a short period of time, was akin to putting a band aid on a bullet wound.

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<sup>120</sup> Claude Elliott, “The Freedmen’s Bureau in Texas,” *Faculty Publications-History*, paper 6, Texas State University-San Marcos, eCommons, <http://ecommons.txstate.edu/histfacp/6> (accessed September 19, 2010).

<sup>121</sup> Harper, Jr., “Freedmen’s Bureau.”

<sup>122</sup> Crouch, 64.

The system failed because the social order would not allow it to succeed. African Americans were once again thrust back into a self-sustaining mode of providing for their own needs, including education. While the United States government enacted legislation to aid the recent freedmen, the state of Texas was also enacting its own legislation regarding education.

In 1866, the State of Texas implemented a new Constitution during presidential reconstruction. In order to comply with presidential reconstruction, the State needed to make changes to their previous Constitution making secession null and void, accept the abolition of slavery, canceled Texas's war debt, and made amendments that dealt with freedmen and education.<sup>123</sup> In Article 10, Section 7 of the new Constitution, it states that

The Legislature may provide for the levying of a tax for educational purposes...that all the sums arising from said tax which may be collected from Africans, or persons of African descent, shall be exclusively appropriated for the maintenance of a system of public schools for Africans and their children; and it shall be the duty of the Legislature to encourage schools among these people.<sup>124</sup>

Whatever land African Americans owned would be taxed and used towards their educational purposes, therefore keeping white land owners content so that no "white money" went to "black schools." The 1866 Constitution was supposed to include "benefits" for the freed people, however, what it did was separate the races by taxation. This legislation, though it sounded philanthropic on paper, was actually a very effective means of keeping small numbers of African American land owners from expanding and

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<sup>123</sup> Legislative Reference Library, <http://www.lrl.state.tx.us/legis/TexasLawTimeLine.cfm>, (accessed March 29, 2012).

<sup>124</sup> Texas Constitution 1866, art. 10, sec. 7

building their schools. The money received from African American land owner's taxes would be minimal and not enough to build or maintain any school buildings. Therefore, the public educational system for African Americans in Texas was stymied by two separate government bodies: the U.S. Government and Texas government.

With the Catholic Church still reluctant to enter Texas, African Americans continued to strengthen their communities and public schools despite the lack of federal aid and detrimental legislation. Austin allowed African Americans to start communities such as Wheatville, Clarksville, Masontown, and Pleasant Hill.<sup>125</sup> From these communities, African American schools emerged. By 1872, the African American population comprised of thirty-six percent of the city's population with no Catholic parochial schools for African Americans and only three Freedmen's Bureau schools collectively serving 200 students in Austin. Even with these schools, the educational need remained strong long after the Freedmen's Bureau left, because of the inadequate funding.<sup>126</sup>

With the establishment of the Clarksville and Wheatville communities, the first African American schools under the new public school system opened. Clarksville, an all-African American community at West 10<sup>th</sup> Street, was close to the University of Texas and the capitol building.<sup>127</sup> Now considered a stylish and modern place to live, it was at the time of its founding hidden by a dense forest.

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<sup>125</sup> Humphrey, "Austin, TX (Travis County)."

<sup>126</sup> Austin Past and Present History Project, "The Franzetti Store," [http://www.austinschools.org/curriculum/soc\\_stud/resources/APP/7th/CA01-Franzetti%20Store.pdf](http://www.austinschools.org/curriculum/soc_stud/resources/APP/7th/CA01-Franzetti%20Store.pdf) (accessed March 30, 2011).

<sup>127</sup> Though the University of Texas was established in 1883, it is used here as a point of reference for where the Clarksville community is located.

When Emancipation arrived in Texas on June 19, 1865, then Texas Governor Elisha Peace gave parcels of land from his plantation to his emancipated slaves hoping they would remain nearby and submit their services to him.<sup>128</sup> Confederate General Nathan Shelly owned some land around the current Clarksville area and sold it to Charles Clark, a former slave.<sup>129</sup> Clark built a house on 10<sup>th</sup> Street and began dividing and selling his property to other African Americans to start building a community.<sup>130</sup> Sweet Home Baptist Church, still in existence today, opened in 1882 with the Reverend Jacob Fontaine presiding as its first pastor.<sup>131</sup>

Wheatville was near present day Guadalupe Street close to the University of Texas. It was a community that began when former Arkansas slave, James Wheat, brought his family to Austin in 1867.<sup>132</sup> Wheat built a house and lived where what is now 2409 San Gabriel Street. He raised corn on land that is bordered today by Guadalupe, West 24<sup>th</sup>, and San Gabriel Streets.<sup>133</sup> The Reverend Jacob Fontaine originally settled in Wheatville in the 1860s and founded St. John Regular Missionary Baptist Association. Later, the community founded the New Hope Baptist Church in 1889, which moved to East Austin after 1928. Wheatville probably had a rudimentary school, but when the Travis County Court designated funds for the building of African American schools, a more developed school opened on West 25<sup>th</sup> Street in 1877.<sup>134</sup> Further research is warranted to know what happened to the three Freedmen's Bureau schools in Austin, but

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<sup>128</sup> Nolan Thompson, "Clarksville, TX (Travis County)," *Handbook of Texas—TSHA*, (<http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/hpc01>), (accessed November 20, 2011).

<sup>129</sup> Ibid.

<sup>130</sup> Ibid.

<sup>131</sup> Ibid.

<sup>132</sup> Thompson, "Wheatville."

<sup>133</sup> Ibid.

<sup>134</sup> GWCMCC, "Segregation and Civil Rights 1865-1965 "

most likely they succumbed to the same hardships as other schools during that time. Therefore, the schools in the African American communities of Wheatville and Clarksville were probably the only educational institutions in Austin after the Freedmen's Bureau left.

Catholic higher education began in Austin soon after the Freedmen's Bureau disbanded its Texas operations. Father Edward Sorin of the Congregation of the Holy Cross arrived with six brothers, under the orders of Father Basil Moreau of France, in New York in 1841. They were to head for Indiana and begin building the University of Notre Dame.<sup>135</sup> With the establishment of the Indiana province in the United States, the impetus for the growth of the Holy Cross order expanded and eventually settled itself in Austin.

Sorin arrived in Austin in 1872 at the request of Mary Doyle, a wealthy widow who believed that her 398 acres of farm land would provide a suitable section for a Catholic school.<sup>136</sup> In addition to Doyle's land, Father Sorin bought an adjacent 123 acres owned by Colonel Willis L. Robards.<sup>137</sup> Construction of two small schoolhouses began. When finished in 1881, one school was named St. Edward's Academy, after Father Sorin's patron Saint Edward. It was to become an all boy preparatory school.<sup>138</sup> Four

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<sup>135</sup> Daniel Hudson, "Edward Sorin," *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, (New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1912), New Advent, <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/14150a.htm> (accessed October 27, 2011); The Congregation of the Holy Cross (C.S.C.) was originally founded by Blessed Basil Anthony Moreau in Le Mans, France in 1837. The main purpose of the order was to supply auxiliary priests to assist diocesan clergy. The main goal, however, would become education. The main commitment is to live with the poor as friends and neighbors. For further reading visit Congregation of Holy Cross, United States Province of Priests and Brothers, <http://holycrossusa.org/about/history>.

<sup>136</sup> Rose V. Batson and William H. Dunn, C.S.C., "St. Edward's University," TSHA—*Handbook of Texas Online*, <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/kbs44> (accessed October 27, 2011).

<sup>137</sup> Ibid.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid.



years later the State of Texas chartered the school as Saint Edward's College. The construction of the main building began on the Robard's tract in 1889.<sup>139</sup> Though the main boarders were from Mexico and Texas, the College never had a segregation policy.<sup>140</sup> From the onset all qualified boys of any race were welcome; however, African Americans would not attend the high school and college until the mid twentieth-century.<sup>141</sup>

The staffing of the college came from the University of Notre Dame, which supplied exiled religious orders from France to work within several areas of the school. Lay persons Knute Rockne and William J. Disch helped expand the school through football and baseball, respectively.<sup>142</sup> In 1925, the State of Texas re-chartered the college as St. Edward's University while still maintaining its high school on campus.<sup>143</sup> The importance of the establishment of the Holy Cross university of St. Edward's cannot be ignored when examining the Catholic education for African Americans in Austin. The founding of Holy Cross Parish and School for African Americans in East Austin stems directly from the creation of St. Edward's University. It is certain that without the

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<sup>139</sup> Ibid.

<sup>140</sup> "Shivers' Son Attending Nonsegregated St. Ed's: No Problem, Reports Head of School," *The Austin American*, Tuesday, May 25, 1954.

<sup>141</sup> Ibid.; the high school and college departments would not officially be divided until 1921 with the closing of the high school in 1967.

<sup>142</sup> Ibid.; History and Campus Traditions, <http://www.think.stedwards.edu/deanofstudents/studenthandbook/historycampustraditions> (accessed October 27, 2011). Knute Rockne coached football clinics at St. Edward's in 1925. See <http://www.knuterockne.com/biography.htm>. It was baseball, however, that would prove to be the more successful sport at St. Edward's. William J. Disch, the "Grand Old Man" of Texas (originally from Missouri) coached baseball at St. Edwards from 1901-1911. The University of Texas noticed his success and offered Disch a coaching position at their university. Disch accepted the offer in 1911 and successfully won twenty-one out of twenty-six championships. Disch-Falk field at the University of Texas is named in his honor and shares the name with Disch's successor, Bibb Augustus Falk. While St. Edward's football team disbanded, baseball is still the top sport. <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fdi21> <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/articles/ffa34>.

<sup>143</sup> Batson, "St. Edward's."

university's establishment, no African American Catholic parish and school would have existed in the East Austin community.

Public higher education for African Americans, however, rapidly expanded. Still lacking a demand for African American Catholic parochial education, Austin emphasized its focus on public education.

In 1881 Tillotson Collegiate and Normal Institute opened its doors to 171 African American students.<sup>144</sup> The college, founded by George Jeffery Tillotson, an American Missionary Society of Congregational minister, struggled with the decision of which curriculum to use, Booker T. Washington's industrial education or W.E.B Dubois's liberal model. Tillotson ultimately decided to do both.<sup>145</sup> Wheatville, Clarksville, and Tillotson were the only well established and known African American schools in Austin from 1877 to 1881. However, higher education for African Americans expanded across the state such as, Paul Quinn College originally located in Austin in 1872, but later moved to Waco in 1877, and Marshall's Wiley College in 1873. Some schools were built due to the Morrill Act of 1862, which gave federal funds to build African American

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<sup>144</sup> GWCMCC, "Segregation and Civil Rights 1865-1965."

<sup>145</sup> Black Past: Remembered and Reclaimed, "Huston-Tillotson University (1881-)," <http://www.blackpast.org/?q=aaw/huston-tillotson-university-1881> (accessed March 30, 2011).

colleges.<sup>146</sup> Prairie View State Normal School in 1878 outside of Houston was one of the Morrill Act schools.<sup>147</sup>

In addition to the Morrill Act, State legislation such as the Constitution of 1876, stipulated that the legislature would “establish and provide for the maintenance of a College or Branch University for the instruction of the colored youths of the State” to be voted on by the people, with no taxes and no appropriation of funds to be given by the State.<sup>148</sup> The Branch University was to be under the “university of the first class,” or as it is more commonly known, The University of Texas.<sup>149</sup>

Some voters believed that the establishment of Prairie View State Normal School, fulfilled the requirement of a “colored branch,” while others disagreed that Prairie View State Normal School did not offer a full classic curriculum and therefore there was a need for a “colored branch university.”<sup>150</sup> This would become one of the most controversial, political, and heated debates in the educational history of Texas. The “colored branch” never came to fruition. Instead, after the case went to the Texas Supreme Court in 1898,

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<sup>146</sup> In 1862 President Lincoln signed the Morrill Land-Grant Act into law. The Morrill Act provided each state with 30,000 acres of land of which the proceeds from the sale of the land by the states would fund public colleges. These colleges would have to promote the agriculture and mechanical arts curricula. In the United States, sixty-nine colleges were funded by the land grants. In Texas, the 12<sup>th</sup> Legislature adopted the Morrill Act in 1866. Texas had three state supported colleges, A&M College and the A&M College for Colored Youths, both founded in 1876, and Prairie View. Library of Congress, “Morrill Act,” Library of Congress Website, <http://www.loc.gov/rr/program/bib/ourdocs/Morrill.html> (accessed April 8, 2011).

<sup>147</sup> Michael R. Heintze, “Black Colleges,” TSHA—*Handbook of Texas Online*, <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/khb01> (accessed March 26, 2011).

<sup>148</sup> Texas Constitution of 1876, art. 7, sec. 14.

<sup>149</sup> Ibid.

<sup>150</sup> Alton Hornsby, Jr., “‘The Colored Branch University’ Issue in Texas—Prelude to Sweatt vs Painter,” *The Journal of Negro History*, 61, no. 1 (January 1976):51-52.

Prairie View State Normal School “was authorized to begin teaching college courses in full classical and scientific studies.”<sup>151</sup>

Other African American higher educational facilities were founded across Texas from 1881 to 1912, but primary and secondary education, were slow in expanding. The African American community of Clarksville opened a school with forty-seven pupils in 1896 on the proceeds from the sale of land belonging to Governor Elisha Pease’s plantation.<sup>152</sup> The first African American school in East Austin, located at San Marcos and East Eleventh Streets, was Robinson Hill. It opened in 1884 and closed in 1909.<sup>153</sup> To supplement Robinson Hill, the first African American high school, Austin Colored High, opened in 1889.<sup>154</sup> In 1894, Gregorytown, a small community in East Austin, listed in its district Gregory School, later renamed Blackshear Elementary.<sup>155</sup>

In 1907 Austin opened its second African American public high school, Anderson High School (AHS), originally located on Olive and Curve Streets. In 1913, AHS moved to 1607 Pennsylvania Avenue in East Austin where it remains today.<sup>156</sup> No middle school for African Americans existed until 1930, when H.T. Kealing Junior High (KMS) opened in East Austin.<sup>157</sup> While these educational facilities existed for African Americans they were by no means privileged. In the case of Blackshear Elementary, the school had 450

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<sup>151</sup> Heintze, “Black Colleges.”

<sup>152</sup> GWCMCC, “Sirens and Symbols: Clarksville Residents Reflect on the Texas Confederate Home,” [http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/carver/online\\_exhibits/sir\\_history.htm](http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/carver/online_exhibits/sir_history.htm) (accessed March 30, 2011).

<sup>153</sup> “Prize Winning Essay Traces School History,” *Austin-American Statesman*, February 26, 1973.

<sup>154</sup> Ibid.

<sup>155</sup> Mike Clark-Madison, “Loving and Fighting: After a century of struggle, will Blackshear Elementary ever beat the odds?,” *The Austin Chronicle*, Friday, June 28, 2002, <http://www.austinchronicle.com/news/2002-06-28/95746/> (accessed November 30, 2011).

<sup>156</sup> “Prize Winning Essay Traces School History,” *Austin-American Statesman*, February 26, 1973.

<sup>157</sup> Ibid.

students with eleven teachers. The school operated with no heat or electricity. The building itself was nearly condemnable and the street was the playground.<sup>158</sup>

Starting in 1920, the “Rosenwald Schools,” a philanthropic endeavor to institute industrial schools, began for African Americans, which replaced the typical shack-style schoolhouses in rural areas. Travis County had five known Rosenwald Schools in Pflugerville, Comanche, Pilot, Gravel Hill, and Littig.<sup>159</sup> Since East Austin was considered an educational hub, it received none. African Americans received money from the Rosenwald Fund to build schools, but even so, the majority of African American schools were built and funded by the African American community.<sup>160</sup> In Texas, and more specifically in East Austin, the same would hold true for the Catholic schools.

By 1884 things began to change at the ecclesiastical level of the Catholic Church regarding African Americans and education. There is no researched documentation to point to the Church’s inaction between 1866 and 1884, and its sudden interest in the African American situation beginning in 1884. The supposition that caused the sudden interest in 1884 is due to the failures of Reconstruction and its demise in the 1870s. Federal and state endeavors of Reconstruction of allowing African American males to hold office and vote seemed to the Church that these governments were making attempts to aid African Americans. Therefore, it is probable that the Church did not see a need to minister to African Americans except through ecclesiastical concerns between 1866 and 1874. When Reconstruction ultimately failed due to white planter classes overturning

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<sup>158</sup> Madison, “Loving and Fighting.”

<sup>159</sup> Rosenwald Schools in Texas, Spreadsheet, Rosenwald School Files at Fisk University, [http://www.thc.state.tx.us/ctycommissions/chcpdfs/chc\\_rsnwld\\_schls\\_sprdsht.pdf](http://www.thc.state.tx.us/ctycommissions/chcpdfs/chc_rsnwld_schls_sprdsht.pdf) (accessed March 29, 2011).

<sup>160</sup> Anderson, *Education of Blacks in the South*, 171.

African American successes, it caused southern U.S. race relations to rise once again to extreme levels of violence by the 1880s. It was at this time the Vatican began to take notice and made plans on how to address the race situation in the U.S.

The Third Plenary Council, closed to the public, convened on November 9, 1884, in Baltimore.<sup>161</sup> This council was called by Rome's Curia, not by American bishops, to evaluate the situation in America as it pertained to African Americans.<sup>162</sup> Rome was again asking the United States Catholic Bishops to come to a consensus on this topic. Once more, it was up to the United States Catholic Bishops to implement Rome's decrees. The topic at the council was how to administer to the "unfortunate race," meaning African Americans. The council set the precedent for Catholic parochial education for African Americans and Bishop Gallagher took the council's decrees seriously.

Bishop W.H. Gross' sermon at the council prompted his fellow bishops to seriously consider the matter of the education of African-Americans. Bishop Gross, appointed to the See of Savannah, Georgia in 1873, read his sermon, *The Missions for the Colored People*, to his fellow bishops.<sup>163</sup> His sermon preached that African American people were still in need of assistance from the Catholic Church. Gross' sermon called for "Catholics [to] remember that the colored people should be dear to us from an even higher motive," for Jesus shed His blood for them as well.<sup>164</sup> While his intentions were good, as Gross had always advocated for African Americans, his sermon infuriated

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<sup>161</sup> Davis, *History of Black Catholics*, 132.

<sup>162</sup> Ibid.

<sup>163</sup> HUAC, 94.

<sup>164</sup> Ibid., 74.

African American Protestant preachers which made the Catholic Church distance itself from the verbal attacks received afterwards.<sup>165</sup> Gross' sermon, however, spoke to the council members who agreed with him. The council's decrees officially initiated the efforts set forth by Bishop Gallagher to provide Catholic parochial education for African Americans in Texas.

First, the council passed a decree stipulating that a committee be appointed to "aid the missions among the Indians and Negroes."<sup>166</sup> Although the Secondary Provincial Council created the commission in 1833, there was no established process for collecting funds for the Indian and Negro Mission.<sup>167</sup> The Third Plenary Council, however, rectified that situation and organized a means to gather funds. The Indian and Negro Mission, renamed Black and Indian Mission (BIM) was, and still is, responsible for collecting funds annually on the first Sunday in Lent from individual parishes, distributing them as diocesan grants.<sup>168</sup>

Second, the council, agreed that separation of schools seemed the best way to make sure African-American children and adults receive an adequate and fair education. The second decree that came from this council was written in title six, article one, of "The Education of Catholic Youth" which stated that, "Catholic schools, especially parochial [ones] are an absolute necessity and obligation of pastors to establish them."<sup>169</sup> The decree further stipulated that immigrants be taught in their own language. Catholics

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<sup>165</sup> Davis, *History of Black Catholics*, 135.

<sup>166</sup> Fanning, "Plenary Councils of Baltimore."

<sup>167</sup> HUAC, 35.

<sup>168</sup> Black and Indian Mission Office, "History," <http://www.blackandindianmission.org> (accessed February 11, 2011).

<sup>169</sup> Fanning, "Plenary Councils of Baltimore."

separated their schools by ethnicity. It made sense to them to have a separate African American parish and school as this was customary. German Catholics were taught in German schools while Irish, Spanish, French, and eventually African American Catholics were taught in their own schools. If required, they were taught in their native tongue.

The church's separation of schools by race or nationality was not intended to segregate the schools by ethnicity, as the Jim Crow South had done. This separation of parishes and schools would eventually fall victim to the social customs that prevailed over Christian ideals. What the segregation of schools in Catholic ideals was meant to do was provide a means of instruction to those who did not know how to read, write, or speak in English. With these groups, a collective whole could identify with each other and foster "like communities."

Finally, the educational system in Europe was far different than the one in the United States and the Catholic parochial educational system tended to follow the European way, with no separation of church and state, meaning education and religion went hand-in-hand. The two institutions could not function without each other, for to educate the soul was to educate the mind, and vice versa.

Following the Third Plenary Council, other ecclesiastical organizations came from African American laymen. The First Congress of Colored Catholics convened on January 1-4, 1889 in Washington, D.C. While short lived, the opportunity for a gathering of African American Catholics in one area broke substantial barriers allowing communication and fellowship.



Daniel A. Rudd, the promoter of these congresses, was an African American Catholic. A resident of Cincinnati, the same state where Right Reverend Bishop Gallagher of the Diocese of Galveston hailed, Rudd created the *Ohio State Tribune* in 1884.<sup>170</sup> Rudd, however, wanted to promote his Catholic religion and changed the newspaper's characteristics and name in 1886 to the *American Catholic Tribune*.<sup>171</sup> He promoted the paper nationally and printed a call in 1888 for the meeting of the congress. Baltimore Bishop John Slattery heeded the call.

Father Slattery, an influential Josephite whose priestly order was the only one appointed to help and further the cause of African Americans in America, joined Rudd in championing the congress.<sup>172</sup> When the congress convened, its purpose was to convert and educate the African American race, as well as to gather what information they could about African American Catholics within the country.<sup>173</sup> The final decrees pledged to create schools and other Catholic institutions across the United States.<sup>174</sup> Their call was to promote the importance of education. They wrote,

The education of a people being the great and fundamental means of elevating it to the higher planes to which all Christian civilization tends, we pledge ourselves to aid in establishing, wherever we are to be found, Catholic schools, embracing the primary and higher branches of knowledge, as in them and through them alone can we expect to reach the large masses of Colored children now growing up in this country without a semblance of Christian education.<sup>175</sup>

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<sup>170</sup> David Spalding, C.F.X, "The Negro Catholic Congresses, 1889-1894," *The Catholic Historical Review* 55, no. 3 (October 1969):337-338.

<sup>171</sup> *Ibid.*, 338.

<sup>172</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>173</sup> *Ibid.*, 340.

<sup>174</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>175</sup> "What We Have Seen and Heard," A Pastoral Letter on Evangelization from the Black Bishops of the United States, September 8, 1984, CAT.

The commitment of the lay congress laid in providing for their future generations what they were denied. They were fully aware of what education could mean to a young person: success and freedom.

The meeting of the First Congress of Colored Catholics was a success. It was a means to draw out the invisible African American Catholic and to give them a voice without fears of retribution and patronization. The congresses would eventually become a meeting place where African Americans could have a larger body of Catholic companions that shared the same faith. When the Second Congress of Colored Catholics met, from July 8-10, 1890 in Cincinnati, the topic of education was reiterated, and again the participants wanted the Church to grant full privileges to parochial education. Other resolutions dealt with labor unions and railroads. However, once again, this congress allowed for African American Catholics to voice their opinions and attempt to right injustices.

The Third Congress of Colored Catholics convened in Philadelphia on January 5, 1892. This time a delegate from Galveston, William E. Easton attended.<sup>176</sup> William Easton, a fairly prominent African American, was educated in the north. At the age of thirteen, he enrolled in a Canadian seminary and then the La Salle Academy in Rhode Island.<sup>177</sup> After completing his education in a Holy Cross college, Easton moved to Texas

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<sup>176</sup> Reverend Thomas O'Keefe, "The Third Congress of Colored Catholics," *Catholic World* 55, no. 325 (April 1892):109.

<sup>177</sup> Delilah Leontium Beasley, *The Negro trail blazers of California, a compilation of records from the California archives in the Bancroft Library at the University of California, in Berkeley, and from the diaries, old papers, and conversations of old pioneers in the State of California. It is a true record of facts as they pertain to the history of the pioneer and present day Negroes of California*, (Los Angeles, California, 1919; reprint, California: California Historical Society and the cooperation of the San Francisco Negro Historical and Cultural Society, R and E Associates, 1968), 258 (referred hereafter as *The Negro Trailblazers of California* and page citations are to the reprint edition), Google eBooks,

at the age of twenty-two where he began a career as a teacher in 1833.<sup>178</sup> Shortly thereafter, Easton became Secretary of the Republican State Executive Committee that aided in elections. Easton also held a position on the Executive Committee of the Republican Party in Austin. At the time of the Third Congress of Colored Catholics in 1892, Easton had his own publishing company, the Texas Blade.<sup>179</sup> He believed strongly in providing an outlet for the African American voice. Perhaps this is what drew him to the Third Congress.

As the first two congresses were experiments, the Third Congress gained enough of a gathering to make a stronger stance on African American Catholic concerns. Held in Philadelphia, this congress formed a committee on parish schools to “inquire into the policy of our Catholic parochial schools towards colored children, and likewise the conduct of colored Catholics towards the parish schools.”<sup>180</sup> The congress also formed the building committee which raised funds for African American churches and schools and encouraged new ones.<sup>181</sup>

Two more Colored Congresses convened; the fourth in September of 1893, and the fifth in October of 1894. Easton attended both and spoke against the establishment of permanent schools for African Americans. He argued their goal should be to secure access to already active parochial institutions on “common and equal grounds” not build separate institutions for separate races.<sup>182</sup> Here was the misinterpretation, and perhaps

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[http://books.google.com/ebooks?id=PA12AAAAMAAJ&source=gbs\\_slider\\_cls\\_metadata\\_7\\_mylibrary](http://books.google.com/ebooks?id=PA12AAAAMAAJ&source=gbs_slider_cls_metadata_7_mylibrary) (accessed October 2011).

<sup>178</sup> Ibid.

<sup>179</sup> Ibid.

<sup>180</sup> O’Keefe, 111.

<sup>181</sup> Ibid.

<sup>182</sup> Beasley, 258

misunderstanding of the Third Plenary Council's decree. What the Roman Catholic Church intended to say in its decrees was not always interpreted correctly by U.S. Catholic Bishops. The southern mindset of U.S. Bishops was different, but segregation on any level was not tolerated by those African Americans vying for change in the south.

The Fifth Congress of Colored Catholics of 1894 would be the last to convene and historians can only speculate as to why. Rudd continued to publish his *Tribune* paper but made no mention as to reasons for the demise of the congresses. After the Fifth Congress, Rudd turned his attention more to the white prejudices of African Americans and began to publish information on lynchings and segregation laws, while at the same time promoting race pride.<sup>183</sup> It is likely that the ending of these congresses ended because the white Catholic Ecclesiastical body was unwilling to listen to African American Catholics at the time or at least take them seriously. As the Fifth Congress of Colored Catholics convened, the United States Supreme Court was nearing a decision regarding the separate but equal doctrine. The ruling of *Plessy v. Ferguson* in 1896 made it the law of the land. This ruling allowed the segregated African American parishes and parochial schools to be seen by southerners as truly separate and the long road to racially integrate these schools began.

Whatever the reasons for their demise, the congresses initiated by Rudd were instrumental in drawing African American Catholics out into the open, giving them a space to assert themselves within the Catholic Church. These congresses provided African American Catholics with a sense of pride, accomplishment, and most important,

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<sup>183</sup> Cyprian Davis, "Daniel A. Rudd. Founder, The National Black Catholic Congress," *Celebrating Black History Month*, The National Black History Congress Website, <http://www.nbccongress.org/features/black-catholic-history-month.asp> (accessed November 30, 2011).

an identity within the Church. The congresses offered at least a measure of religious acceptance in that African American Catholics had double the discrimination, especially in Texas. The congress was an arena in which they might plea for justice from the white Catholic Church, even though the results were not favorable to Rudd's demands. The ideals of these congresses set forth an example to African American Catholics that if any changes were needed, it would have to come from them and those that would help them. These congresses and Rudd's newspaper coverage allowed African American Catholics in Texas to maintain a Catholic consciousness and propelled their beliefs into the open. This, in turn, allowed the establishment of African American Catholic churches and schools in Texas. Despite the opposition to the building of these parishes and schools, the combination of faith and fervor from both the clergy and community permitted the establishment of Catholic institutions for African Americans.

Two years after the Third Plenary Council closed on December 7, 1884, and in the midst of Rudd's congresses, schools, along with churches and hospitals for African-Americans began to surface across the cities within the dioceses of Texas. In Texas, the movement to establish schools for African Americans was a type of grass-roots movement put forth by local priests and bishops. Pope Leo XIII appointed Bishop Gallagher administrator of the Diocese of Galveston on April 30, 1882, when Pierre Dufal resigned as administrator after serving one year.<sup>184</sup> Gallagher, hailing from Columbus, Ohio, was vicar general of the Diocese of Columbia when he was called to Texas. When Gallagher arrived in Texas, he made it clear that an important part of his

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<sup>184</sup> ADGH, "History of the Archdiocese of Galveston," <http://www.archgh.org/About/History> (accessed February 2011).

mission would be to commit to the specific needs of African Americans, Catholic or not.<sup>185</sup> Bishop Gallagher, a Holy Cross brother, literally interpreted the Third Plenary Council's decree as "court ordered." Gallagher may have been to some degree influenced by Rudd's writings for African American Catholics, since both of their careers began around the same time in Ohio. Bishop Gallagher began his missionary work among African Americans within his diocese by authorizing and funding the building of two schools specifically for African Americans. One school, Holy Rosary Parish opened in Galveston, and the second school, St. Nicholas, opened in Houston. Parochial education, through the efforts of Bishop Gallagher, had finally arrived in Texas, but it was no easy task.

Until Holy Rosary Parish opened, African-Americans were welcome at St. Mary's Cathedral, the mother church of the Diocese of Galveston. Bishop Gallagher wanted to build and establish schools for the African American children of St. Mary's.<sup>186</sup> Gallagher wrote to BIM director E.R. Dryer, that his goal was "to save the children to the faith by establishing schools."<sup>187</sup> However, much opposition to the building of the first African-American school faced Gallagher's plan. First, many whites of other faiths, including some Catholics, were against the school. Gallagher also needed teachers who were willing to work for nothing. He recruited the Dominican Sisters from his home state of Ohio, to come and establish a convent and staff the school Gallagher built. It was a

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<sup>185</sup> Ibid.

<sup>186</sup> Robert Giles, "Holy Rosary School in Galveston Closes," *The Texas Catholic Herald*, June 8, 1979.

<sup>187</sup> T. Lindsay Baker, "Holy Rosary School and Church, 1887-1914: A Pioneer Catholic Effort Among African American Texas," *Journal of Texas Catholic History and Culture*, 6, no. 5 (1995): 19.

small, drafty, and leaky two story cottage located on Twelfth Street and Avenue K in the East Side of Galveston.<sup>188</sup> Despite the conditions, teachers and ninety students prevailed.

Gallagher's next challenge was money. Gallagher could not secure any monies within his own diocese and complained that the work was "not at all popular and even Catholics criticize severely our efforts in behalf of the colored people."<sup>189</sup> The expansion of students to the Twelfth Street and Avenue K location caused Gallagher to borrow money to build a bigger school in a more central location. This was ideal to his belief that more good would be accomplished in teaching African-Americans if the school were centrally located. The new school located on 25<sup>th</sup> Street and Avenue I, had four classrooms upon completion. It could hold fifty students in each room and included a chapel.<sup>190</sup> Holy Rosary School was now also Holy Rosary Parish because of the chapel where they celebrated their first mass there in 1888. Gallagher now faced a third challenge which was staffing the parish with a priest.

Even though Bishop Gallagher served as the priest of the new parish, he could not take on the role as a permanent fixture as he was a bishop of a rather large diocese. Gallagher found his priest in a determined minded German, Reverend Phillip L. Keller who moved to Texas in 1888 from seminary school in Kansas.<sup>191</sup>

Bishop Gallagher had a post to fill at Galveston's German church of St. Joseph's after their priest died. Gallagher hoped that Keller would take that position upon

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<sup>188</sup> Ibid., 20-21.

<sup>189</sup> Ibid., 21.

<sup>190</sup> Ibid.

<sup>191</sup> Ibid., 22.

completion of his seminary training in 1889.<sup>192</sup> In fact, Keller's oratory skills and charisma led the St. Joseph's congregation to plead with him to stay permanently. Keller, however, insisted that his heart and his work belonged to the African-Americans.<sup>193</sup>

Gallagher selected another young and recently ordained priest, Father William Ketchum. He was a Native American and sought to take over Gallagher's duties at Holy Rosary Parish. However, Ketchum's own people persuaded him to work among them and minister to their needs by becoming involved in the Catholic Indian Missions of the United States.<sup>194</sup>

Keller was then appointed to Holy Rosary Parish, a position he held until 1913. He successfully built the parish and school into Holy Rosary Industrial School and Orphan's Home. Father Keller financially supported the institutions with his nationally acclaimed magazine, *The Colored Man's Friend*.<sup>195</sup>

Under Keller's administration, the Sisters of the Holy Family, an all African-American order from Louisiana, took over the teachings of the school in 1898. Later, when Father Keller resigned from Holy Rosary Parish in 1913, the Josephites took over the school.<sup>196</sup>

In Houston, St. Nicholas would be the first all African-American church and school built within the city's Third Ward. Considered the "mother church for African-Americans," it is dedicated to the patron Saint Nicholas, the Guardian of Children. The

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<sup>192</sup> Ibid

<sup>193</sup> Robert C. Giles, *Changing Times The Story of the Diocese of Galveston-Houston in Commemoration of Its Founding*, (Houston, TX: John L. Morkovsky, 1972), 107.

<sup>194</sup> Ibid.

<sup>195</sup> Ibid , 108

<sup>196</sup> Ogilvie, "Holy Rosary Parish, Galveston."



parish school opened in October of 1887.<sup>197</sup> Father Hennessy, a preacher at Annunciation Church founded in 1869, also in Houston's Third Ward, opened his doors to the African-American Catholics who wanted to worship and attend Sunday school. Father Hennessy taught the catechism to the African-American children and soon the number of children began to rise. Seeing the need for a school of their own, Father Hennessy sought out a means to find land and funds to build a primary school where African-American children could comfortably attend.

Putting the Sunday school into the hands of the Sisters of the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament, Father Hennessy learned of land that Bishop Dubuis owned from an inheritance that was to be used specifically for educational purposes. This land, located approximately six blocks from the Annunciation Church, seemed to Father Hennessey the ideal location to build a school.

Bishop DuBuis recruited Mother M. Gabriel Dillion and three of her sisters from the French order, Sisters of the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament, to come to Texas. They staffed the school until "a teaching community of Black nuns could be found to take over [in which] the Sisters of the Incarnate Word would withdraw in their favor."<sup>198</sup> This would not happen until 1905 when a convent was permanently established and the Sisters of the Holy Family took over.

Though the parish of St. Nicholas had trouble sustaining itself, the school of St. Nicholas thrived and flourished. By 1890 the school housed 98 pupils. By 1892, Bishop

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<sup>197</sup> St. Nicholas History Committee, "We've Come This Far by Faith...Faith Will Carry Us to the Future: a 120<sup>th</sup> history of Saint Nicholas Catholic Church Houston's Historic Black Parish", Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston Archives, unnumbered document; referred hereafter as SNHC.

<sup>198</sup> Ibid.

Gallagher reported to the BIM that, “the school had 115 pupils” and he welcomed a \$600 grant to use towards the school.<sup>199</sup> A year later, Bishop Gallagher reported to the BIM that, “the white people, in general, manifest little interest in our efforts to benefit the colored race; and even the Catholics give little aid or encouragement to this good work.”<sup>200</sup> Bishop Gallagher continued to point out to the BIM that their grants were needed because of prejudices not only from whites and Catholics but from the African-Americans themselves who were not Catholic. “The laudable work in behalf of the colored people in this diocese still goes on with fair success, notwithstanding the many ill disposed toward our Holy Faith, especially the colored ministers, who in various ways strive to keep colored people from our churches, and the colored children from our schools.”<sup>201</sup> Bishop Gallagher did not go into detail about what attempts were made by non-Catholic ministers to keep African-Americans out of the Catholic churches and schools. Apparently, it was enough to warrant an appeal to the BIM and a sign that some whites and African-Americans outside the Catholic faith held anti-Catholic views.

Despite these views, the school changed its façade and locations in the Third Ward, though never straying far from the original streets of Chenevert and Lamar. Throughout the years as money came in from BIM loans and fundraisers, the clergy and staff expanded St. Nicholas into a high school.

Bishop Neraz of the then Diocese of San Antonio, who also attended the Third Plenary Council, argued favorably for missions among African Americans. His diocese built the third African American church and school, St. Peter Claver. It opened due in

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<sup>199</sup> Ibid.

<sup>200</sup> Ibid.

<sup>201</sup> Ibid., Bishop Gallagher’s letter printed in “We’ve Come This Far by Faith...”

large part from the endeavors of Margaret Healy Murphy. Margaret Healy, orphaned at twelve and married at sixteen, lived in Corpus Christi with her husband John Bernard Murphy, who was a successful businessman and mayor of the city.<sup>202</sup> When he died in 1884, Margaret began a mission to minister to children in need. In 1887, she attended a mass at St. Mary's Church in San Antonio where the letter from the Bishops of the United States asked for parishioners to mission to African Americans and their educational needs.<sup>203</sup> It was a calling Murphy heeded, telling a friend that "the Holy Spirit has helped me to make this decision."<sup>204</sup>

After selling some personal property, she purchased land on the corner of Live Oak and Nolan Streets in San Antonio.<sup>205</sup> In 1888, despite opposition from the City Council and the Ku Klux Klan, Margaret Murphy opened St. Peter's Claver in San Antonio to aid African-Americans. The following year the school had sixty children enrolled. By 1892, the school had 200 students. In addition, the school expanded into an academy and dormitory.<sup>206</sup>

In 1892, Bishop Neraz helped Mother Margaret found the first Catholic order of women in Texas; the Sisters of the Holy Ghost.<sup>207</sup> Previously, the female orders in Texas had come from France and Louisiana. They were successful in spreading the mission work of education to African Americans within the State of Texas.

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<sup>202</sup> Healy-Murphy Center, "About Us," [http://www.healymurphy.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=about\\_History](http://www.healymurphy.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=about_History), (accessed February 7, 2012).

<sup>203</sup> Ibid.

<sup>204</sup> Ibid.

<sup>205</sup> Ibid.

<sup>206</sup> Ibid.

<sup>207</sup> Sister M. Emmanuel Cahill, "Sisters of the Holy Spirit and Mary Immaculate," TSHA—*Handbook of Texas Online*, <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/ixs01> (accessed February 2, 2011).

In 1908, the Diocese of Dallas followed suit with the establishment of The Sisters Institute at St. Peter's Church, opening under the Right Reverend Bishop Edward Joseph Dunne.<sup>208</sup> This school operated under the Sister Servants of the Holy Ghost and Mary Immaculate. It was partially funded from a grant by Katharine Drexel.<sup>209</sup>

Born in Pennsylvania to Francis Anthony Drexel, a wealthy banker, Katharine learned at an early age that their wealth was on loan and meant to be shared.<sup>210</sup> With the death of her parents she inherited a large sum of money. Aware of the plight of African Americans and Indians within the United States, Katharine resolved to use the large inheritance to finance institutions that benefited these races. In 1885, her first mission school for Native Americans opened in Santa Fe, New Mexico.<sup>211</sup>

Pope Leo XIII encouraged Katharine to become a missionary herself and in 1889 she began her training for religious vocation with the Sisters of Mercy at Pittsburgh.<sup>212</sup> In 1891, Katharine founded the organization, Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament for Indians and Colored People and the requests for help from ethnic parochial institutions began to reach Katharine.<sup>213</sup> She granted money to different institutions that enabled them to staff

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<sup>208</sup> Steve Landregan, Catholic Schools, Diocese of Dallas, "About Us," <http://www.csodallas.org/AboutUs/History.html>, (accessed November 18, 2011).

<sup>209</sup> Ibid.

<sup>210</sup> *L'Osservatore Romano*, Weekly Edition in English, November 21, 1988, 2, reprinted by Eternal Word Television Network (EWTN), <http://www.ewtn.com/library/mary/drexel.htm>, (accessed February 7, 2012).

<sup>211</sup> Ibid.

<sup>212</sup> Ibid.

<sup>213</sup> Ibid.

their schools and continue edifying young African American students.<sup>214</sup> St. Peter's Church was one of those institutions.

St. Peter's was founded by ex-slave Mary Jordan and her husband, Valentine Jordan.<sup>215</sup> They were non-Catholic, but witnessed the exemplary education offered by Ursuline Nuns who taught in the area. The Jordans decided that a Catholic education within their community would be a benefit and so they consulted with Bishop Dunne who agreed with their request. As the construction of the Sacred Heart Cathedral was complete, Bishop Dunne rebuilt the pro-cathedral and handed it over for the use of St. Peter's Church.<sup>216</sup> St. Peter's Church received \$2500 from the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament and used the funds to establish an industrial school for the African American community.<sup>217</sup> The school was under the direction of the Sister Servants of the Holy Ghost and Mary Immaculate of San Antonio. By 1910 they turned the school into an academy, renaming the institution St. Peter's Academy. By 1922, a four year high school program was added to the institution.<sup>218</sup>

The missions for African Americans in Texas began to spread thanks to philanthropic laymen and Catholic clergy. The building of new institutions stalled shortly after the passing of the separate but equal doctrine in 1896. As the nadir of race

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<sup>214</sup> Mother Katharine Drexel is responsible for the founded and funding of Xavier University in 1915. Xavier University is the first all-African American university in the United States dedicated to higher education.

<sup>215</sup> St. Peter the Apostle Catholic Church, "Information: History of the Community," <http://www.stpeterdal.com/info.html> (accessed February 7, 2012).

<sup>216</sup> A pro-cathedral is a parish that is temporarily being used as the cathedral to the diocese until the construction on the permanent cathedral is complete.

<sup>217</sup> St. Peter the Apostle Catholic Church

<sup>218</sup> Ibid.

relations fully became entrenched in Texas by the turn of the century, the established parochial institutions were still able to grow despite anti-clericalism.

After the building of Holy Rosary Parish, St. Nicholas, St. Peter's Claver, and St. Peter's Academy, no other African American parochial establishments were created, to a large extent, in Texas until 1936. Under the Diocese of Galveston, East Austin implemented its first and only African American Catholic church, Holy Cross Parish in 1936, with a school and hospital to follow. The Holy Cross Parish, however, was not created exclusively by a bishop or a priest, or philanthropist, but from a small, African American Catholic community residing in segregated East Austin.

After the establishment of African American parochial institutions in the Jim Crow South, it took northern attempts to desegregate parochial schools. In 1915, attempts were once made again by Catholic laymen to bring about a change in the ecclesiastical mindset. Thomas Wyatt Turner, a Catholic layman, attempted to bring awareness to the Catholic Church that racial discrimination was detrimental to the unification of the Church. Turner also argued that racial discrimination was against the Vatican's teaching. However, since the U.S. bishop's ideology proved to be opposite of the Vatican, penetrating the southern U.S. bishop's mindset was difficult. Turner continued to challenge this mindset and opened a dialogue with the United States Catholic Church through his newspaper, letters, and meetings with U.S. Bishops. Turner aimed his directives at the African American Catholic community, forming a collective alliance known as the Federation of Colored Catholics.

## CHAPTER III

### WAITING ON THE WORLD TO CHANGE

*“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world.*

*Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.” –MARGARET MEAD*

The turn of the century brought about many changes for African American Catholics. The Northern efforts of by Thomas Wyatt Turner certainly brought forth a dialogue that was never before discussed openly. These discussions indirectly influenced the Southern African American Catholic communities even though Turner’s directives never fully penetrated the Jim Crow ideology entrenched in Austin, Texas.<sup>219</sup> Turner’s discussions actively pursued integration and an end to discrimination on all levels of Catholic interests, including education, veterans of foreign wars, and secondary schools. Turner’s efforts brought about a change that unified the Catholic civil rights movement, with the modern Civil Rights Movement. He was the first African American Catholic activist to help bridge the gap between secular and parochial race issues. Though Turner intended to take an activist approach in his movement, it was a style that would not fit

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<sup>219</sup> Marylin W. Nickels, “Thomas Wyatt Turner and the Federated Colored Catholics,” *US Catholic Historian*, The Black Catholic Community 1880-1987 7 no. 2/3 (Spring-Summer, 1988): 219.

within the Catholic hierarchy. Those Catholic clergy that imbedded themselves within Turner's activist group saw him as a threat to Catholicity. There were questions raised regarding if a Catholic layman such as Turner could head such a radical group and keep within Canon Law.

Turner obtained his MA from Howard University in 1905 and his Ph.D. from Cornell University in 1921.<sup>220</sup> He studied at the Catholic University of America, the University of Rochester, and Johns Hopkins. In between, he accepted teaching positions at Booker T. Washington's Tuskegee University, the Baltimore High and Training School for Black Students, and St. Louis High in Missouri prior to graduating from Howard.<sup>221</sup> In 1913, Turner accepted a faculty position at Howard University in Washington, DC. Here an African American Catholic student approached Turner and told him that the Catholic University of America denied him entry. This student told Turner that he was informed that he would be a "better fit" at Howard.<sup>222</sup> Though Turner studied at the exact same university, the school was now denying enrollment to African Americans. Appalled, he started a group that lead to what could be considered the earliest civil rights movement for African American Catholics and parochial education in America.<sup>223</sup>

Turner began a letter writing campaign protesting every racist move the Catholic Church made against African Americans and African American Catholics. Starting with the schools, he wrote Father Walter Elliott, a Paulist whose American order was founded

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<sup>220</sup> Ibid., 217; 226.

<sup>221</sup> Ibid., 217.

<sup>222</sup> Ibid., 219.

<sup>223</sup> Ibid.



in 1858, sought to evangelize every American into Catholicism. Father Elliott dismissed Turner, advising him to accept that white and African American students were never to mix in schools and to take a more practical approach such as providing exclusively African American schools.<sup>224</sup>

Turner, undeterred, replied to Elliott challenging him and other prelates to deal with racism as they did other violations of the Ten Commandments. Turner defined racism as a sin, but was the only one discussing the idea at the time. No Catholic prelate saw racism as a sin in the early twentieth-century. They viewed racism as a sociopolitical or sociological issue rather than a Church concern.<sup>225</sup> Turner wrote more letters protesting different Catholic groups that were racist towards African Americans. He protested Catholic parades that referred to African Americans as “pickaninnies” and groups of Catholics that continued to segregate mass.<sup>226</sup> He also publicized a verbal outcry against the Josephite order and the Catholic Church in the newspaper *Afro-*

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<sup>224</sup> Stephen J. Ochs, *Desegregating the Altar: The Josephites and the Struggle for Black Priests 1871-1960*, (Baton Rouge and London: Louisiana State University Press, 1990): 222.

<sup>225</sup> Ibid.

<sup>226</sup> Ibid., The term ‘pickaninny’ was a racially derogatory term used to describe an African American child. The first known ‘picaninny’ is the character Topsy, from Harriet Beecher Stowe’s *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*. Though Stowe’s work was meant to promote the harshness and immoralities of slavery, the character of Topsy was promulgated as being a “wild-child” with unkempt hair and bug eyes. Topsy became a character in minstrel shows in the 1850s and into the early part of the twentieth century. Thomas Edison, having invented the motion picture in 1891, began a photograph experiment in 1893, keeping the racist term alive with his 1904 slide-show exhibition titled, *Ten Picaninnies*. The slide-show experiment became the forerunner to the 1920s *Our Gang*, or as it is more commonly known, *The Little Rascals*. This comedy featured an interracial cast, but the African American character known as Buckwheat, spoke in broken English, was hard to understand, and dressed in rags with unkempt hair. The term ‘picaninny’ became outdated as a racist term in the 1980s when Eddie Murphy played a Buckwheat character on the popular television satire, *Saturday Night Live*. However, because of this skit, the term ‘picaninny’ was socially replaced with Buckwheat. For further reading on the term, read sociologist Dr. David Pilgrim’s work at the Jim Crow Museum of Racist Memorabilia at Ferris State University, <http://www.ferris.edu/jimcrow/picaninny/> (accessed January 24, 2012).

*American*.<sup>227</sup> The Catholic prelates simply viewed him as a nuisance; however, it was only the beginning for Turner.

In 1917, Turner met with some friends at his home to discuss the racist actions by the Catholic Church. This meeting turned into several meetings and eventually led to the formation of the Committee for the Advancement of Colored Catholics and (changed to the Federated Colored Catholics or FCC in 1924), voting Turner their president. The FCC was modeled after the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). The FCC members or, the Committee of the Fifteen, met to devise ways to “combat racism in the church through investigation, publicity, and appeals to lawful authority.”<sup>228</sup> The FCC firmly believed that only they could relay the needs of African American Catholics and asked the Catholic Church to help them gain equality within the Church.<sup>229</sup>

The first action the FCC protested was the inadequate support African American World War I servicemen received compared to their white counterparts.<sup>230</sup> Turner met with Cardinal James Gibbons, the prelate of Baltimore, who dismissed Turner stating that “he did not feel well acquainted with him enough to warrant a letter that ‘would mean a criticism of his administration.’”<sup>231</sup> However, Cardinal Gibbons reassured Turner that if ever the opportunity came to speak with President Woodrow Wilson on the matter, he would not hesitate to speak with him.<sup>232</sup> Cardinal Gibbons suggested that Turner take the

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<sup>227</sup> Ochs, 226.

<sup>228</sup> Ibid., 223.

<sup>229</sup> Ibid.

<sup>230</sup> Bentley Anderson, *Black, White, and Catholic: New Orleans Interracialism, 1947-1956*, (Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press, 2005). 12.

<sup>231</sup> Ochs, 221.

<sup>232</sup> Ibid.

matter up with the National Catholic War Council (NCWC), which eventually sided with the FCC.

In time, the FCC was successful in integrating WWI African American Catholics into cantonments and providing the needed support for African American servicemen. Thus began the political, active protest movement for African American Catholics. In addition, the FCC succeeded in securing admission of African American Catholics into Catholic organizations such as the Knights of Columbus and the National Catholic War Council in 1919.<sup>233</sup>

In September of 1919, the FCC was to meet with bishops at the first meeting of the American hierarchy to present their claims that the admission of African American Catholics to Catholic institutions were denied. In addition, the FCC claimed there were inadequate parochial schools for African American Catholic children and that they wanted more African American lay representatives within the Church.<sup>234</sup> Finally, they specifically claimed that the Josephite seminary, the very order meant to administer to African American Catholics, denied them admission.<sup>235</sup>

Though Turner was pleased that the meeting was granted, it did not go as he had hoped. For one thing, the committee was not allowed to formally address the hierarchy of bishops. The bishops issued a pacifying pastoral letter in which they assured Turner and the Committee that they deplored any racial bigotry. The bishops also claimed they would condemn lynching and would consider the “Negro problem.” While they considered education necessary to better African Americans, there was no discussion on

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<sup>233</sup> Nickels, 221.

<sup>234</sup> Ibid., 227

<sup>235</sup> Ibid

discrimination.<sup>236</sup> Despite the seemingly patronizing results, African American Catholic activists were not deterred.

Turner continued, determined to find the source of discrimination in the Church. He turned his attention to the Josephite seminaries, a conflict that would continue for two decades.<sup>237</sup> He continued to verbally attack the Josephites by writing letters of disapproval about the segregation of their seminaries. Turner saw his argument as a matter of principle. The Josephite order was directed by the Holy See to establish and maintain the order for the African American Catholics. Denying them entrance into seminaries went against the inclusive ideals of the Church and the orders of the Holy See. By 1930, however, the heated arguments and threats began to soften and Turner later wrote that he believed the Josephite order to be “fondly loved as any priests among our people.”<sup>238</sup>

At a second hierarchical meeting in 1930, Turner intended to focus on the integration of education, and he hoped to discuss the idea with Southern bishops.<sup>239</sup> Once again, Turner was not allowed to address the bishops directly, and did not receive the result he was hoping for, which was full integration of the Catholic University.

By this time, Turner’s FCC had begun to fracture. Two Jesuit priests, John LaFarge, the FCC’s national chaplain, and William Markoe, who was with Turner from the inception of the FCC, suggested that perhaps the FCC should integrate so white Catholics could learn African American Catholic concerns.<sup>240</sup> At the 1930 FCC convention in Detroit, Fathers Markoe and LaFarge began to make changes to the FCC’s

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<sup>236</sup> Ibid., 228.

<sup>237</sup> Ibid., 230.

<sup>238</sup> Ibid., 308.

<sup>239</sup> Ibid., 309.

<sup>240</sup> Ibid., 312.

objectives in Turner's absence. The disagreements between the two Jesuit Fathers and Turner over African American Catholic laymen heading an activist group had reached its pinnacle.

Markoe and LaFarge moved the FCC towards becoming an interracial organization without lay officials, leaving behind the activist and protest movement Turner believed was most effective. The FCC now answered to Catholic laity, under the direction of the bishop. The African American Catholic protests and advancements advocated by Turner and his supporters would now be under clerical control.<sup>241</sup>

In 1932, Markoe offered his parish newspaper, *St. Elizabeth's Chronicle*, to be the official publication of the FCC. Markoe dropped *St. Elizabeth* and simply called it *The Chronicle*. Markoe, however, wanted to change the name again and wrote a lengthy explanation to Turner in September of 1932. Markoe crafted the explanation in a soft manner, as if breaking the news to a child. He stated in his letter to Turner that the magazine's title was "a handicap as it didn't have any particular significance...and it does not advocate the cause of justice for the Negro."<sup>242</sup> Markoe continued his explanation in his four paged, hand-written letter offering Turner a business-like proposition as to what changing the name would do for the magazine. Markoe believed that more authors would contribute articles, which would increase subscriptions.<sup>243</sup> According to Markoe, the new magazine's title would be marketed correctly, drawing

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<sup>241</sup> Anderson, "*Black, White and Catholic* .," 13.

<sup>242</sup> Letter from William M. Markoe to Dr. Thomas Wyatt Turner, September 23, 1932, Howard University Thomas Wyatt Turner Papers (TWTP), Box 153-10, Folder 15, Archives of the Catholic University, referred hereafter as ACUA.

<sup>243</sup> Ibid.

more interest to the magazine. Finally, where cataloged in libraries, the magazine would draw more interest from seminary students of interracial studies.<sup>244</sup>

After his thorough explanation, Markoe frankly told Turner that the October issue of the magazine would bear the new name, *Interracial Review*.<sup>245</sup> Markoe continued to try to persuade Turner and offered to send him some rough proofs, not for consent, input, or direction, but so that, as Markoe states, he would be able “to see the wisdom of this forward step.”<sup>246</sup> Turner warned Markoe that he was in direct defiance of the organization’s constitution.<sup>247</sup> In return, Turner was removed from the presidency.

That same year, after a much heated debate, the FCC changed its name to the National Catholic Federation for the Promotion of Better Race Relation. Markoe published the results of the eighth annual convention in the *Interracial Review*, explaining the name change as a “final seal of approval upon itself as an interracial body.”<sup>248</sup> The article stated that Turner approved the name change, and in fact suggested the new name. It went on to state that the new name excluded the word “colored,” implying that the organization sought to form a mutual understanding and union. According to Turner, he did no such thing.

Writing a letter to his friend and advocate, President Eugene Clark of Miner Teachers College in Washington, D.C., Turner stated that the two Jesuits threatened to

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<sup>244</sup> Ibid.

<sup>245</sup> Ibid.

<sup>246</sup> Ibid.

<sup>247</sup> “Dr. Turner Asks Where Father Markoe Was When Federation Met Bishops,” *Afro-American*, February 4, 1933, Moorland Springam Research Center, Howard University, Library Division, ACUA.

<sup>248</sup> William M. Markoe, S.J., “Federation’s New Name Spells Progress,” *Interracial Review*, December 1932, ACUA.

resign from the organization if the name was not changed.<sup>249</sup> Markoe and LaFarge told Turner that they would form their own organization, one that met their “ends and aims.”<sup>250</sup> Turner explained to Clark that he held his ground for sometime against the two clergy and after reassurances of cooperation, Turner resigned to the name change. Turner found the Jesuits’ reasoning “queer” in that they insisted upon interracial activity, whereas Turner believed more of an effort should have been placed on “increasing racial solidarity and improvement.”<sup>251</sup> Turner, in his letter to Clark, openly admitted that he believed he had “broken with these clergy by telling them that no individual is indispensable to a movement.”<sup>252</sup> He was right.

In a letter dated December 5, 1932, the President-Elect of the National Catholic Federation for the Promotion of Better Race Relations, George Conrad, concisely informed Dr. Turner of his dismissal as president of the organization. The letter stated that Turner was in direct violation of Article III, Sec I, of the Constitution of the National Catholic Federation for the Promotion of Better Race Relations.<sup>253</sup> The charges devised by LaFarge, were “an unwarranted assumption of power, false publicity, and imprudence.”<sup>254</sup> The FCC was now officially removed.

Markoe spent his entire service as priest for African Americans, and served in an all-African American parish. He never believed, however, in separate institutions for African Americans, an advocacy notion that had appealed to Turner. What did not appeal

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<sup>249</sup> Letter from Dr. Thomas Wyatt Turner to President Eugene Clark, September 18, 1932, ACUA.

<sup>250</sup> Ibid.

<sup>251</sup> Ibid.

<sup>252</sup> Ibid.

<sup>253</sup> Letter from George Conrad to Dr. Thomas Wyatt Turner, December 5, 1932, ACUA.

<sup>254</sup> Anderson, “*Black, White, and Catholic*,” 13.

to Turner was the fact that Markoe viewed the FCC as a “Jim Crow organization that encouraged separatism and segregation.”<sup>255</sup> Markoe published this belief in the *Interracial Review* in a February 1933 article titled, “*Kingfish*” *Race Leaders*. In an opening obviously directed at Turner, Markoe wrote, “Like a millstone around the neck of the colored race in America today is that type of Negro leader who would prefer to be a ‘kingfish’ in a Negro organization than a respected human being in an interracial group.”<sup>256</sup> The same month, Turner retaliated in the *Afro-American*.

He wrote that Markoe was perpetuating false ideas among the public regarding the disagreements within the FCC were over conflicting racial and interracial ideas. Turner stated that he would not carry on with Markoe over such “foolishness” and “bi-racial activity has been a leading feature of our organization from its beginning.”<sup>257</sup> Turner accused Markoe of usurping the FCC’s leadership, disturbing the organization’s goals, and not being active enough to evoke any real change. Turner stated that “safety is his [Markoe’s] motto.”<sup>258</sup>

The fact that leading members of the Catholic Church, such as Fathers William Markoe and John LaFarge were members of the FCC and faithfully promoted its cause in the beginning shows that the FCC *was* interracial. Turner said, “we have always welcomed such members of the white group as desired to work with us, giving them sometimes as in case of the Rev. Father Markoe, most important elective positions.”<sup>259</sup>

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<sup>255</sup> Ibid.

<sup>256</sup> William M. Markoe, S J., “‘Kingfish’ Race Leaders,” *Interracial Review*, February 1933, ACUA.

<sup>257</sup> “Dr. Turner Asks...,” *Afro-American*. ACUA.

<sup>258</sup> Ibid.

<sup>259</sup> Ibid.



Therefore, the case made by historians, Bentley Anderson, Marilyn Nickels, and Stephen Ochs for Markoe and LaFarge wanting an interracial organization while Turner did not, is not entirely true. What may have really fragmented the FCC was that Markoe and LaFarge wanted the power of running such an organization in the way the Catholic hierarchy in the past had done. Markoe and LaFarge wanted to keep Catholic laymen out of running a Catholic organization despite the fact that Pope Pius XI believed that Catholic organizations could be run by lay people, provided that their method of action be on education.<sup>260</sup>

Turner thought the real problem was four-fold. One, Markoe refused to obey the constituted authorities in the organization. Two, Markoe believed that he had “super-constitutional privileges” that come from being a priest, which Turner vetoed as president of the FCC. Three, the changing of the FCC official magazine’s name without the permission of the president (again, Turner) or any other officer, was in Turner’s view, an act of defiance. Finally, the fourth reason for the real problem within the FCC, according to Turner was, “the inordinate desire of the good priest [Markoe] to put a stop to our progressive activity because he...was afraid, or hesitant in going through the whole program.”<sup>261</sup> Turner accused leaders in the Catholic Church of not wanting rapid change within an organization or within the Church itself regarding African Americans. This hesitancy, as Turner pointed out, became a recurrent theme in the higher echelons of prelates.

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<sup>260</sup> “Principles Underlying the Federation of Colored Catholics: as seen by Fr. LaFarge,” ACUA.

<sup>261</sup> “Dr Turner Asks...,” *Afro-American*, ACUA

What Turner also protested was the growing influence the two Jesuits imposed on the true advocate, the lay organization of the FCC. Father Markoe never accompanied Turner to his meetings at the Bishop Councils. Had he done so, perhaps Markoe may have shown true solidarity to the FCC, setting an example for the Church to follow which would have been more compliant with his priestly robes.

Turner's eastern faction of supporters remained intact until 1952. They elected Turner as president of their section beginning in 1933.<sup>262</sup> Markoe eventually broke from the FCC and formed the short lived National Interracial Catholic Federation (NICF) in the Midwest.<sup>263</sup> When Markoe was reassigned to the northwestern United States, he turned over the *Interracial Review* to LaFarge who, in turn, used it for his newly formed organization.<sup>264</sup>

John LaFarge, who kept quiet during the conflict between Markoe and Turner decided to relinquish his ties with the FCC and focus his attention on the Catholic Layman's Union formed in New York in 1928.<sup>265</sup> This group of twenty-five African American businessmen then met in 1934, and formed the Catholic Interracial Council of New York (CIC) which LaFarge called "fully Catholic and fully American in its goals."<sup>266</sup> It would be this organization that influenced all Catholic interracial

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<sup>262</sup> Ochs, 312.

<sup>263</sup> "Dr. Turner Asks..." *Afro-American*, ACUA.

<sup>264</sup> "Catholics and Race Chronology," ACUA, <http://archives.lib.cua.edu/education/fcc/fcc-chron.cfm> (accessed January 23, 2012).

<sup>265</sup> Ochs, 312.

<sup>266</sup> "Dr. Turner Asks..." *Afro-American*, ACUA, 312, 347; Martin A. Zielinski, "Working for Interracial Justice: The Catholic Interracial Council of New York, 1934-1964," *US Catholic Historian*, 7, no.2/3 (Spring-Summer 1988), 237.

organizations and bishops in the United States, even those that did manage to make it in the South.<sup>267</sup>

Born in Newport, Rhode Island in 1890, LaFarge received formal education at Harvard University, where he graduated in 1901. Subsequently, LaFarge pursued training for the priesthood at the University of Innsbruck in Austria under the Jesuit Order. He graduated in 1905 and by 1916 had traveled in countries where his mission work introduced him to various grass roots movements. It also allowed him to become fully knowledgeable of the problems of racially mixed communities and racial prejudices. He became deeply interested in the welfare and education of African Americans.<sup>268</sup> Therefore, it should be no surprise that the CIC under LaFarge pushed hardest for integration in the Catholic Church, schools, universities, hospitals, seminaries and other institutions.<sup>269</sup>

LaFarge's philosophy varied widely from Markoe's. LaFarge believed that educating the masses and changing the social outlook towards African Americans was the answer to change within the Church. In a March 1933 *Interracial Review* article titled, "What is Interracial," LaFarge explained that interracial means anything in which the two races are together in one setting regardless of the reasons why they are together. It could be the two races are at an "interracial poker game," an "interracial fight," or an "interracial jail." What LaFarge envisioned was not just simply integration, but

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<sup>267</sup> Bentley Anderson, *Black, White, and Catholic*, 14.

<sup>268</sup> John LaFarge, *The Book of Catholic Authors*, no. 6 (Walter Romig, 1960), Catholic Authors website, <http://www.catholicauthors.com/lafarge.html> (accessed December 3, 2011).

<sup>269</sup> Ochs, 348.

interracial *action*. This is where the betterment of both races occurs through education to eliminate prejudice and discrimination.<sup>270</sup>

For the next thirty years, Catholic Interracial Councils formed in cities across America, preaching their agenda to end racism in the Catholic Church and in America. The CIC would ultimately stand behind United States Supreme Court cases such as the “Scottsboro Boys,” A. Phillip Randolph’s civil rights endeavors, and other government rulings such as the Chavez Bill which was ultimately defeated.<sup>271</sup>

The CIC ultimately brought African American Catholics into the forefront, and combined their civil rights issues with the entire civil rights movement of African Americans in the United States. The non-Catholic and Catholic civil rights leaders relied on each other to bring about change for African Americans of all religions. Again, the CIC worked in the background, supporting the major civil rights players for equality for all African Americans; however, they never truly penetrated the South.

There were, however, chapters of the CIC in Atlanta and New Orleans, but the opposition to the group kept them from gaining any real ground, especially in New Orleans. It would be the student movement of the Southeastern Regional Interracial Commission (SERINCO) in 1948 that would enact more of an active change. SERINCO

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<sup>270</sup> John LaFarge, “What is Interracial?,” *Interracial Review*, March 1933, ACUA.

<sup>271</sup> Zielinski, 245; The “Scottsboro Boys,” a case of nine young, African American males who were accused in March of 1931 of raping two women, Victoria Price and Ruby Bates. The trial began in April of 1931 and eventually moved to the United States Supreme Court. Elements of this trial last well into the late 1970s when the last survivor of the “Scottsboro Boys,” Clarence Norris, was finally pardoned in October of 1976 by Alabama Governor George Wallace. Further reading on the “Scottsboro Boys” may be found at, <http://law2.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/scottsboro/scottsb.htm> (accessed December 4, 2011); Dennis Chavez, a United States Senator from New Mexico elected in 1936, introduced a bill in 1944 to establish the Fair Employment Practices Commission to prohibit discrimination based on race and national origin. Chavez campaigned for years to pass the bill only to have it suppressed by Southern legislators. For further insight on Denis Chavez, read Barry A. Crouch’s article, “Dennis Chavez and Roosevelt’s ‘Court-Packing’ Plan,” *New Mexico Historical Review*, 42(October 1967):261-280.

was comprised of university students from Loyola, Xavier, Ursuline College, St. Mary's Dominican College, and the College of the Sacred Heart.<sup>272</sup> Their aim was to unite both races through meetings, newsletters, and organized events regarding interracial issues, all the while promoting Catholicity.<sup>273</sup>

The very fact that interracial groups between 1924 and 1948 were meeting in the South shows that the Civil Rights Movement timeline that begins in 1955, is not historically accurate, as most recent historical scholarship is showing. The fact that interracial active groups were meeting showed that there were some southerners who viewed Jim Crow as a sin. Thus they put the ideology out into the Catholic world, marking it for change. Segregationists certainly viewed these interracial organizations as threats to their way of life and social custom, and spent more time subverting the organizations than listening to what they had to say. The rare prelates who individually fought segregationist groups stood out greatly.

The Catholic Church was not accustomed to being politically active. The FCC was a new, politically active, Church reformist group with which did not set well with older prelates. They were more comfortable waiting on the world around them to change through education and moral convictions. The Diocese of Austin enacted a CIC chapter in 1964, which was sixteen years after the organization's inception and ten years after the *Brown* decision.<sup>274</sup> Ideologies and social customs, along with federal government rulings, had to be visible in order to make some bishops take a stance within their dioceses.

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<sup>272</sup> Bentley Anderson, *Black, White, and Catholic*, xiv.

<sup>273</sup> Ibid.

<sup>274</sup> "Catholic Interracial Council Name for Diocese by Bishop L.J. Reicher," *Lone Star Register*, February 6, 1964, CAT.

The Right Reverend Bishop Louis J. Reicher of the Diocese of Austin decided to end racial discrimination in his diocese after the United States Bishop Council published their 1963 pastoral letter where they stated that Catholics should “make the quest for racial harmony a matter of personal involvement.”<sup>275</sup> Midwestern dioceses enacted this change long before 1963, but Austin was a unique Catholic situation in itself. In the City of Austin, the Southern, political mindset that brought about discrimination was evident throughout the city. Discrimination dictated the separation of communities, churches, schools, and businesses. In part, Austin was exemplifying what Turner’s FCC wanted to overturn.

In 1928, African Americans were forced to live in the eastern portion of Austin which ultimately became known as East Austin. This area contained no municipal facilities, medical centers, or formal education for primary school age children. African American churches were perhaps, the only well established institutions in East Austin. However, living within the sound Baptist and Methodist congregations were a few African American Catholics who did not have a place of their own to worship. These three African American Catholic families, along with Father Francis R. Weber, would begin the Holy Cross institutions that shaped, nurtured, and inspired a large portion of the East Austin community.

Since the Church is a hierarchical institution, Catholic laymen are not allowed to build Catholic churches. There needed to be a representative, or a priest, to guide the Catholic congregation in certain rituals along with the catechisms and the Eucharist. There were certain rules on marriage, last rites and other church related missives that

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<sup>275</sup> Ibid.

needed to be followed faithfully. The Catholic Church trained its priests to administer these regulations to their parishioners.

When Father Weber arrived from Notre Dame, the three African American Catholic families approached him and helped him build the Holy Cross Parish. Three Catholic institutions built specifically for African Americans in East Austin were the Holy Cross Parish, the Holy Cross Parish School, and the Holy Cross Hospital. These parochial institutions, specifically the hospital, became essential components to the East Austin community. They fostered a cultural connection that advanced and strengthened East Austin residents. Despite Austin's local government which was geared toward oppressing the African American race, the Catholic Church provided resources, such as their school and hospital, to offset the oppressiveness. Resourceful, committed families and clergy used these Catholic assets to provide a quality education, spiritual uplift, and medical care for the community.<sup>276</sup>

Before the Catholic Church built parochial institutions solely for African Americans in East Austin, two things happened. First, East Austin was officially created. The creation of East Austin came through a city plan from the consulting engineer firm Koch & Fowler.<sup>277</sup> Since the City of Austin changed its operation in 1924 from commission-run to council-run government, progressive ideas of beautifying the city for aesthetic purposes became city policy.<sup>278</sup>

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<sup>276</sup> Jacqueline Jordan Irvine and Michèle Foster, *Growing Up African American in Catholic Schools* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1996): 93-94.

<sup>277</sup> Koch & Fowler, "A City Plan for Austin, Texas," 1928, Austin History Center (AHC), A711.409764.

<sup>278</sup> Humphrey, "Austin, TX (Travis County);" for further reading on council run governments vs. commission run governments in Texas see Bradley Robert Rice, *Progressive Cities The Commission*

In 1928, Austin officially began segregating African Americans to the eastern portion of the city. According to sociologist Aldon Morris, the irony of segregation, although inherently wrong, was that it produced positive experiences.<sup>279</sup> Parochial institutions fostered a close-knit community, filled an educational gap, and supplied medical services that had not previously existed in segregated East Austin.

As the University of Texas was expanding rapidly, the land value around the university began to rise. Austin wanted to use the land from the Clarksville and Wheatville communities to achieve innovative ideas such as beautification, arts and culture, libraries, and infrastructure for the city.<sup>280</sup> In order for the progressive changes to take place, Austin decided to move the communities of Clarksville and Wheatville based on the 1928 Koch & Fowler method. The city plan stated that,

...in our studies in Austin we have found that the Negroes are present in small numbers, in practically all sections of the city, excepting the area just east of East Avenue and south of the City Cemetery. This area seems to be all Negro population. It is our recommendation that the nearest approach to the solution of the race segregation problem will be the recommendation of this district as a Negro district; and that all the facilities and conveniences be provided the Negroes in this district, as an incentive to draw the Negro population to this area.<sup>281</sup>

All municipal facilities, parks, playgrounds, and schools were to be located in East Austin where African Americans could use them.<sup>282</sup> In 1929, the city created the

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*Government Movement in America, 1901–1920* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1977) and *Forms of City Government* (7th ed., Austin: Institute of Public Affairs, University of Texas, 1968).

<sup>279</sup> Aldon Morris, *The Origins of the Civil Rights Movement. Black Communities Organizing for Change* (New York: The Free Press, 1984), 3.

<sup>280</sup> Humphrey, “Austin, TX.”

<sup>281</sup> Koch & Fowler, “A City Plan.”

<sup>282</sup> Ibid.



Rosewood Avenue Park and Playground for Colored.<sup>283</sup> Rudolph Bertram purchased seventeen acres of land and built a house and grocery store.<sup>284</sup> When Bertram's son-in-law, Charles Huppertz, passed away in 1929, Bertram sold seventeen acres of land to the City of Austin.<sup>285</sup> The city used the land to build the park that became the only park within the city where African Americans could recreate. The older portion of the recreation center was Bertram's residence.<sup>286</sup>

While the city of Austin implemented municipal facilities, they neglected to develop medical facilities in East Austin for African Americans. One doctor, E.I. Roberts operated a small clinic on San Bernard Street in East Austin. African American patients could travel to Austin's community hospital, but the care they received there was no better than if they had either let their illnesses either run their course or succumbed to them. Babies had to be born in homes with midwives with minimal prenatal or postpartum care.

The second occurrence in the development of Catholic institutions in East Austin was the Catholic Church's necessity for constructing a new church. While there were certainly other churches in East Austin of several different denominations, there was no Catholic Church.

Ebenezer Third Baptist Church was the fundamental Baptist church that sat due north of the French Legation on the corner of East 10<sup>th</sup> and San Marcos Streets. Since it

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<sup>283</sup> Wilson E. Dolman, et al., "East Austin Historic Sites Inventory," (Austin, TX: Preservation Central, Inc., 2006), 18.

<sup>284</sup> Austin Parks and Recreation, "Rosewood Recreation Center," Austin History Center Online, <http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/parks/rosewood.htm> (accessed November 19, 2011).

<sup>285</sup> Ibid.

<sup>286</sup> Ibid.

was the third Baptist congregation in Austin, it bore the name Third Baptist Church, later changing its name to Ebenezer Third Baptist Church. It began in 1875, in the home of Mrs. Eliza Hawkins with Reverend C. Ward as its first minister.<sup>287</sup> Far from the gothic design it has become, the early church was a small, wooden frame building. Nonetheless, it served the African American Baptist community. Since its followers expanded, Ebenezer was permitted twice to reconstruct and relocate.

The Metropolitan A.M.E. Church was a block away from Ebenezer on East 10<sup>th</sup> Street and Waller. Its beginnings started in the basement of the oldest Methodist church built for African Americans; Wesley United Methodist Church founded in 1865. It now sits on the corner of Hackberry and San Bernard Streets northwest of Holy Cross Parish. The Metropolitan A.M.E.'s initial congregation consisted of slaves.<sup>288</sup> Two ministers, a white Methodist missionary, Reverend Joseph Welch, and an African American Reverend Isaac Wright worked together to form the Wesley Methodist Church.<sup>289</sup>

The principal Episcopal church, St. David's Episcopal Church was located on the corner of East 8<sup>th</sup> Street and Trinity on the west side of I35. This church was the furthest from the African American communities, and it is unlikely there were any African Americans practicing here.

There were two other Baptist Churches in East Austin. Mt. Olive Baptist Church, founded in 1889 on the Tillotson College Campus was in proximity to the Holy Cross Parish. Located on Leona Street, Mt. Olive sat due north of the Holy Cross Parish.

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<sup>287</sup> Ebenezer Third Baptist Church, Historical Marker, <http://www.hmdb.org/PhotoFullSize.asp?PhotoID=155268> (accessed November 19, 2011).

<sup>288</sup> Wesley Methodist Church, "History," <http://wesleyunited.org/about-wesley/history/> (accessed November 19, 2011)

<sup>289</sup> Ibid.

However, when Holy Cross was built, Mt. Olive moved to its present day location on East 11<sup>th</sup> Street, one block from Holy Cross Parish. Greater Mount Zion Baptist Church existed far northeast of Holy Cross Parish on the corner of Pennsylvania Avenue and Chicon Street. Its founding father was the highly admired Reverend Jacob Fontaine.<sup>290</sup>

There were two Catholic Churches, St. Mary's, formerly known as St. Patrick's, and Our Lady of the Guadalupe, in the eastern portion of Austin. St. Mary's, on East 10<sup>th</sup> Street on the western side of I35 existed for the strong Irish and German cultures.<sup>291</sup> The church was formerly located at the northeast corner of 9<sup>th</sup> and Brazos Streets. In the 1860s the name was changed from St. Patrick's to St. Mary's, and in 1872 the Congregation of the Holy Cross took over the church. By 1874, Holy Cross presided over the school.<sup>292</sup> On March 9, 1873, the cornerstone of the church was laid at the new location of 10<sup>th</sup> and Brazos Streets in downtown Austin, where it remains today.<sup>293</sup>

The second Catholic Church in Austin was Our Lady of the Guadalupe. It sits directly across from the Texas State Cemetery on East 9<sup>th</sup> and Navasota Streets and existed for the Hispanic community. Out of the three African American Catholic families in the Austin area, two attended St. Mary's and one, the Mosbys, attended Our Lady of Guadalupe. Given the amount of churches that existed in the area, none were specifically for the African American Catholic families that lived in East Austin.

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<sup>290</sup> Mt. Zion Baptist Church, "Our History," <http://mtzion-baptist.org/content.cfm?id=296> (accessed November 19, 2011).

<sup>291</sup> Mary Starr Barkley Papers, AR.V.006, Box 8, Folder 1-2, Austin History Center, Austin, Texas, (referred hereafter as AHC).

<sup>292</sup> Mary Starr Barkley Papers, Vertical File, Box 8, Folder 1, AHC.

<sup>293</sup> *Daily Statesman*, Local Matters, Wednesday, March 12, 1873.

While St. Mary's and Our Lady of Guadalupe allowed African American Catholics to attend their services, they did not necessarily offer an inviting atmosphere for African Americans. St. Mary's Church had African Americans as parishioners as early as 1871. In September of that year, "the rite of confirmation was administered to several young ladies at the Catholic Church...[and] one of the ladies was colored."<sup>294</sup> St. Mary's was, however, a segregated institution that forced African American parishioners to sit behind signs in the back of the church.

Though St. Mary's had a school, there were no African Americans enrolled. By the time the African American Catholic numbers rose to thirty-five converts in 1936, the establishment of an all-African American parish and school did not sway African Americans to apply to St. Mary's.<sup>295</sup> Also, since St. Mary's did not reach out to the African American community, African Americans in Austin had no desire to attempt to enroll their children. St. Mary's was an Anglo Catholic Church and in the time of Jim Crow, whites went to their church and African Americans went to theirs. There was no pushing the boundaries, at least in Austin, from African Americans to attend white parochial schools.

Our Lady of Guadalupe, although integrated, only offered their services in Spanish. Therefore, if African American Catholics were going to feel comfortable practicing their faith, they needed a church of their own. There was no other option for them but to create one.

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<sup>294</sup> *Tri-Weekly Statesman*, Austin, Tuesday, September 19, 1871.

<sup>295</sup> Mary Starr Barkley Papers, Verticle File, Box 8, Folder 1, AHC.

In addition to the small number of practicing African American Catholics, the scattered nature of African American communities made numbers seem less significant to the Catholic Church. Prior to 1928, there were small African American communities dispersed throughout the eastern part of Austin. These communities of Horst's Pasture, Pleasantville, Kicheonville, Masontown, Robertson Hill, and Gregorytown, combined into one large, central, and cohesive community after 1928.<sup>296</sup> The communities of Wheatville and Clarksville were also affected by the 1928 city plan. Wheatville disbanded and migrated after the segregation of East Austin. Its abandoned territory became the West Campus area of the University of Texas.

The Clarksville community, though it still exists today as one of two African American national historical districts in the entire United States, struggled considerably when the migration to East Austin occurred.<sup>297</sup> Clarksville stood its ground after the 1928 plan despite the City of Austin shutting down its school and utility services.<sup>298</sup> Those African Americans migrating to the east side from Wheatville and Clarksville drew the existing smaller communities in closer as businesses and schools were centrally built and more easily accessed.

Having no real freedom of choice, African Americans began to make East Austin their community. Deed restrictions from the city kept African Americans from buying property except on the east side. Therefore, they could not develop or expand their

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<sup>296</sup> George Washington Carver Museum & Cultural Center (GWCMCC), Online Exhibits, "Signs and Symbols," [http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/carver/online\\_exhibits/sir\\_default.htm](http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/carver/online_exhibits/sir_default.htm) (accessed March 30, 2011).

<sup>297</sup> KLRU, "East Austin Gentrification."

<sup>298</sup> Ibid.

community outside of East Austin boundaries.<sup>299</sup> African Americans opened businesses in East Austin, such as funeral homes, grocery stores, hair salons, and other essential community businesses, all in close proximity to homes.<sup>300</sup> Driving was almost unheard of for the poorer African Americans and every business needed to be within walking distances of the community. East Austin became a densely settled, walkable community.

The Catholic Church slowly began to realize that as the community changed, a need to minister to the African American community was greater than previously thought. The church also knew that having a larger, centralized community meant a stronger outreach to save souls.

Though two African American colleges, Tillotson College and Samuel Huston College, along with Anderson High School existed, there remained a need for quality elementary education.<sup>301</sup> Kealing Junior High and Blackshear Elementary were offered as options for younger children, but both funding and conditions of the two schools were deplorable.<sup>302</sup> The Catholic Church built its institutions to bridge the educational gap separating preschool and middle school. It began with Holy Cross Parish.

At the age of thirty, Father Francis R. Weber arrived in Austin in the fall of 1935.<sup>303</sup> Born and reared in Detroit, Michigan, Father Weber went to the Holy Cross university of Notre Dame to obtain seminary training, and was ordained on June 24,

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<sup>299</sup> Mary Starr Barkley Papers, AHC.

<sup>300</sup> Ibid.

<sup>301</sup> Huston-Tillotson University, "About Us," <http://htu.edu/about> (accessed November 3, 2011); Tillotson College opened in 1881, Huston College opened in 1900, and Anderson High School opened in 1889.

<sup>302</sup> Kealing Middle School, "About Us," <http://www.kealing.org> (accessed November 3, 2011).

<sup>303</sup> Francis R. Weber to Bishop Christopher Byrne, December 29, 1935, Box 31.4, Diocese of Austin Collection, Catholic Texas Archives, Austin, TX. Referred to hereafter as the DOAC/CAT.

1935.<sup>304</sup> Father Weber expressed his desire to work among the African American community “having made some assessment of the current Negro situation,” in a letter to the Right Reverend Bishop Christopher Byrne of the Diocese of Galveston.<sup>305</sup> At the urging of his superior, Father Burns sent Father Weber to Austin so that he could assess the condition of African Americans.<sup>306</sup> At this time, the Holy Cross Congregation had no African American missions.<sup>307</sup> Therefore, if Father Weber found a need among the East Austin community to establish a parish, he should do so with the bishop’s blessing.

Father Weber arrived at Saint Edward’s University, the Catholic Holy Cross University in Austin. He was a tall and slender man, with an amiable face that always carried a smile. Although he looked overbearing and commanding in his long, black cassock, Father Weber was approachable due to his soft features, kind voice, and genteel mannerisms.<sup>308</sup> He walked the streets of East Austin getting to know members of the community and seeking out African American Catholics.

In a letter to the Right Reverend Bishop Christopher Byrne of the Diocese of Galveston, Father Weber stated that he ran across a prominent African American Catholic who was helping him locate a central area in the community.<sup>309</sup> This woman,

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<sup>304</sup> “Farewell Party Slated Tuesday for Holy Cross Church Pastor,” *Austin-American Statesman*, Sunday, August 3, 1952.

<sup>305</sup> Weber, December 29, 1935. DOAC/CAT.

<sup>306</sup> Ibid.

<sup>307</sup> Clarence J Howard, S.V D , “The Architect of Austin,” *St Augustine Register* 9, no. 2 (February, 1941): 28, Society of Divine Word—The Chicago Province, Robert M. Meyers Archives.

<sup>308</sup> Ibid.

<sup>309</sup> Weber, December 29, 1935. DOAC/CAT.

Eva Marie Mosby, along with two others, Mathilda DeBlanc, a Louisiana Creole Catholic, and Williametta Givens, were instrumental in the starting of Holy Cross Parish.<sup>310</sup>

Of the three founders of Holy Cross Parish, Mathilda DeBlanc lived the furthest away on Olive Street, near present day I-35 and slightly south of Oakwood Cemetery.<sup>311</sup> The DeBlancs hailed from Louisiana and only spoke Creole French when they arrived in Austin in 1914. They settled in the area of East Austin that housed mulatto creoles. Gilbert DeBlanc lost the family farm in Louisiana to devastating weather patterns, which forced the family to move. Gilbert took a job in Austin as a porter for a druggist. He also catered wedding and social events for the East Austin community. Mathilda DeBlanc taught herself to read, and she found work as a seamstress.<sup>312</sup>

As East Austin had little to no primary schools, education for the younger DeBlanc children came by way of neighbors and the Catholic Church, which was probably St. Mary's, as it was the closest one to the DeBlancs. The DeBlancs only learned what English the Catholic Church taught them through the catechisms. Sometimes, if they were not picking cotton in another town, Matilda DeBlanc sent her children to Miss Ernest, a neighbor, to learn their letters.<sup>313</sup> Miss Ernest also taught the children how to read the prayer books and missals. Those that were not educated knew the importance of having one and attempted to provide it not solely for themselves, but for their children. In fact, it would be their daughter, Ada Marie Simond DeBlanc who graduated with advanced degrees in health, eventually working for the Tuberculosis

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<sup>310</sup> Holy Cross Parish (HCP), "Our Faith Story," <http://www.holycrossaustin.org> (accessed February 12, 2011).

<sup>311</sup> Mathilda DeBlanc death certificate.

<sup>312</sup> Marian E. Barnes, *Black Texans They Overcame*, (Austin, TX: Eakin Press, 1996): 96.

<sup>313</sup> *Ibid*, 97.



Association and the Texas State Department of Health.<sup>314</sup> She too, was instrumental in starting Holy Cross Parish at the age of thirty-two and became an author of children's books that relayed the history of East Austin.<sup>315</sup>

The Givens lived on Poquito Street, which was further north of East Austin, just one block south of present day Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard, directly east of Oakwood Cemetery.<sup>316</sup> Williametta Givens hailed from Milano, Texas and was the wife of prominent civic leader and dentist, Dr. Everett Humbles Givens.<sup>317</sup> Dr. Everett's success allowed Mrs. Givens to remain at home, raising their children, and becoming involved in community affairs. Dr. Givens, an Austin native and WWI veteran brought many changes to the East Austin community, such as parks, street lights, paved streets, and swimming pools. He was never credited for opening the talks at City Council that brought Disch Baseball Field to East Austin.<sup>318</sup> If it needed to be built or repaired, Dr. Givens was at the City Council meetings speaking on behalf of the East Austin Community. He was a tall, robust man, with friendly eyes that complemented a

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<sup>314</sup> Ibid., 100.

<sup>315</sup> Ibid., 101.

<sup>316</sup> Williametta Jones Givens death certificate.

<sup>317</sup> Ibid.

<sup>318</sup> Minutes of the City Council, City of Austin, Regular Meeting, 1955, 1956, 1958, 1962, AHC; Alan C. Atchinson, "When Every Town Big Enough to Have a Bank Also Had a Professional Baseball Team: The Game Returns to Austin After World War II," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, CIII, no. 2 (October 1999): 201 eCommons Faculty Publications-History, [http://ecommons.txstate.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1019&context=histfacp&sei-redir=1&referer=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.google.com%2Furl%3Fsa%3Dt%26rct%3Dj%26q%3Datchinson%2Bwhen%2Bevery%2Btown%2B%26source%3Dweb%26cd%3D1%26ved%3D0CCQQFjAA%26url%3Dhttp%253A%252F%252Fecommons.txstate.edu%252Fcgi%252Fviewcontent.cgi%253Farticle%253D1019%2526context%253Dhistfacp%26ei%3D-yIBT\\_6MLea42gXUmqCxCA%26usg%3DAFQjCNHMyjv7SlxPTUCxkdnzJSXXknA14A#search=%22atchinson%20when%20every%20town%22](http://ecommons.txstate.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1019&context=histfacp&sei-redir=1&referer=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.google.com%2Furl%3Fsa%3Dt%26rct%3Dj%26q%3Datchinson%2Bwhen%2Bevery%2Btown%2B%26source%3Dweb%26cd%3D1%26ved%3D0CCQQFjAA%26url%3Dhttp%253A%252F%252Fecommons.txstate.edu%252Fcgi%252Fviewcontent.cgi%253Farticle%253D1019%2526context%253Dhistfacp%26ei%3D-yIBT_6MLea42gXUmqCxCA%26usg%3DAFQjCNHMyjv7SlxPTUCxkdnzJSXXknA14A#search=%22atchinson%20when%20every%20town%22) (accessed November 9, 2011); Dr. Everett Givens death certificate.

courteous smile. He was a friend to many, and Senator Lyndon Baines Johnson considered Dr. Givens, one of his dearest friends.<sup>319</sup>

The Mosbys lived on Chicon Street, the closest to Holy Cross Parish, one block from the parish. Eva hailed from Iberia, Louisiana. She had strong features and kind eyes, both matching her spirit. She had a loving presence about her that extended to whomever she came in contact with. She grew up Catholic and was baptized at St. Anne's Catholic Church in Youngsville, Louisiana.<sup>320</sup> She and her family moved to Beaumont, Texas where she attended a Catholic primary school and a secular high school.<sup>321</sup> During her high school years, Eva was involved in helping the community and worked at Hotel Dieu Hospital, the local Catholic hospital.<sup>322</sup>

In 1931, Eva arrived in Austin, Texas with only eleven dollars.<sup>323</sup> She took a job offered to her by Mary E. Branch, then president of Tillotson College.<sup>324</sup> Working her way through college, Eva graduated in 1935 and obtained a teaching position in San Marcos. She later received a Masters of Arts degree from Prairie View A&M University.<sup>325</sup> She, along with her husband Dr. James E. Mosby, Jr., believed in education and passed their desire to learn onto their eight children, all of whom graduated with advanced degrees.<sup>326</sup>

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<sup>319</sup> Larry Still, "Tale of Two Cities: Revealing Eyewitness Report," *Jet Magazine*, 27, no.2(October 15, 1964):22, Google eBooks, <http://books.google.com/books?id=48ADAAAAMBAJ&num=100> (accessed February 2011).

<sup>320</sup> Obituray of Eva Marie Mosby, Memorial Obituary, King-Tears Mortuary, (Austin, TX), April 23, 2007.

<sup>321</sup> Ibid.

<sup>322</sup> Ibid.

<sup>323</sup> Ibid.

<sup>324</sup> Ibid.

<sup>325</sup> Ibid.

<sup>326</sup> Ibid.

Mrs. Mosby desired an all-African American congregation, as she attended Our Lady of the Guadalupe, which was across the other side of East Austin. She also could not fully understand the sermons at Our Lady of Guadalupe. When asked why she did not attend the English services at St. Mary's with the other African American Catholics, Mrs. Mosby replied, "Because I will not worship in a church where I have to sit behind a sign."<sup>327</sup> This went against the teaching of one body of Christ, in her opinion. Therefore, the establishment of an African American Catholic parish and one that was in proximity to the Catholic families would allow them to practice their religion freely.

These three families, the DeBlancs, Mosbys, and Givens having grown up in the faith, knew what an African American parish could offer to the community. The Catholic Church could provide education, something important to all three founding members. Eva Mosby, having worked at a Catholic hospital, knew the benefits of having one in a community. The Givens, rooted in community building, certainly saw the potential for the East Austin community of an all African American Catholic church. With this in mind, the founders met with Father Weber and Mr. and Mrs. William Tears, who owned Tears Mortuary in East Austin. In the Tears' living room, Father Weber celebrated the first mass in the community on December 31, 1935, and thus began the Holy Cross Parish.<sup>328</sup>

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<sup>327</sup> Alfredo E. Cardenas, "Holy Cross is 'Mother Church' for Black Catholics," *Catholic Spirit*, November 2005, [http://www.austindiocese.org/newsletter\\_article\\_view.php?id=410](http://www.austindiocese.org/newsletter_article_view.php?id=410) (accessed March 1, 2011).

<sup>328</sup> Ibid.; For further reading on celebrating the mass, read "Celebrating the Mass: a pastoral introduction," published under the Catholic Truth Society and Colloquium. A online version may be found at: <http://www.liturgyoffice.org.uk/Resources/GIRM/Documents/CTM.pdf> (accessed October 14, 2011).

The five parishioners worked on bringing in more converts. Father Weber worked to obtain a building for his potential new parishioners. It was a painstakingly slow process. Eventually Father Weber bought a five-room frame house at 1608 East 11th Street in June of 1936.<sup>329</sup> Exchanging his cassock for overalls, Father Weber grabbed a saw and hammer, renovating the house into a small, temporary chapel and rectory using repurposed materials.<sup>330</sup> Eva Mosby stated that they had to do everything themselves to build the church. From floor to ceiling, the community furnished everything in the parish from the organ to the pews that were hewn benches.<sup>331</sup> It was indeed their church, and the Mosbys were the first to be married in the church on August 2, 1936.<sup>332</sup>

Eventually, Father Weber acquired a loan for \$2000 to buy property at 1610 East 11th Street and \$1400 through what he called “street-begging.”<sup>333</sup> He wrote the architect firm McGinnis & Walsh to draw blueprints for the larger church to include a basement for a school and social center.<sup>334</sup> The cost to build the church off the blueprints was approximately \$11,000.<sup>335</sup> Having had experience in building, Father Weber once again scoured the area for re-purposed and donated material to start building the larger church himself, under his own contract.<sup>336</sup> He borrowed a mule and a shovel and started digging

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<sup>329</sup> Howard, “The Architect of Austin,” 28; Hand drawn map of HCP property lines, Box 31.7, DOAC/CAT.

<sup>330</sup> Howard, “The Architect of Austin,” 29.

<sup>331</sup> Ibid.

<sup>332</sup> HCP, “Our Faith Story,” Mrs. Eva Marie Mosby’s obituary.

<sup>333</sup> Letter from Father Weber to Bishop Christopher Byrne of the Diocese of Galveston, June 22, 1936, Box 31.4, DOAC/CAT.

<sup>334</sup> Letter from Father Weber to Bishop Christopher Byrne of the Diocese of Galveston, February 1, 1937, Box 31.4, DOAC/CAT.

<sup>335</sup> “Work Under Way on New School and Clinic for Negroes in Austin,” *Southern Messenger*, May 4, 1939, CAT.

<sup>336</sup> Ibid.

the basement himself.<sup>337</sup> Father Weber also contacted Bishop Byrne who personally donated \$200. Using half of the \$1400, Father Weber hired a licensed plumber, electrician, and roofer to complete the building.<sup>338</sup> The total cost to build the church amounted to \$7000.<sup>339</sup> By 1937, Holy Cross Parish was complete, and it had grown to fifty-seven parishioners.<sup>340</sup>

As the parish and rectory were being built, the parishioners began to beautify the grounds. The Holy Cross Parish stuck out among the 11<sup>th</sup> Street shacks that it sat across from because of its brick façade and landscaped grounds. Seeing the parish as an example, the community around the parish began to clean its yards, repair the surrounding houses, and built street curbs. They plucked weeds and planted a garden.<sup>341</sup>

Following the construction of the parish, a school soon opened for the children. The cost to build the school was \$3500 and again, it was donated material and the labor of Father Weber, along with community volunteers, that built the school.<sup>342</sup> It began as a daycare and was co-religious.<sup>343</sup> No parent had to be Catholic in order for their child to attend allowing the entire East Austin community to participate. It was the first preschool in East Austin where parents could leave their children safely while they went to work. Wives, along with their husbands, could go to work which produced dual income

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<sup>337</sup> James Vanderholt, "Holy Cross One Hundred Years in Texas, 1874-1974," Box 39.9, DOAC/CAT.

<sup>338</sup> Ibid.

<sup>339</sup> "Work Under Way on New School and Clinic for Negroes in Austin," *Southern Messenger*.

<sup>340</sup> Vanderholt, "Holy Cross One Hundred Years."

<sup>341</sup> "Work Under Way on New School and Clinic for Negroes in Austin," *Southern Messenger*.

<sup>342</sup> Ibid.

<sup>343</sup> Sandra McCarthy, "Catholic Parochial Schools in the Austin Diocese from 1949-March 1985," bound compilation list with brief histories of each school, CAT.

households. Working single women had the opportunity to leave their child with an educator instead of a babysitter.

The first teacher was Mrs. K. Williams. By 1939, the school had 38 preschool aged children. The school had a kitchen where a hot, noonday meal was fed to the children. To some it was their only meal.<sup>344</sup> By 1941, the Fransiscan Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception from Patterson, New Jersey took over the school and expanded it to fifth grade.<sup>345</sup> The curriculum consisted of moral training, the basics of education such as math, science, and English, as well as citizenship.<sup>346</sup>

The Holy Cross complex also expanded because the nuns needed a place to live. Father Weber managed to purchase the property, known as the Schmidt House, at 1600 East 11th Street, which he renovated for a convent.<sup>347</sup> There, the nuns lived and worked. Eventually they expanded the school's program to a K-8 curriculum with over 220 children.<sup>348</sup>

The conundrum for African American Catholics was their parochial education. The Catholic education for African Americans usually stopped at the elementary level. Those African American Catholic children who were fortunate enough to have a parish school in their neighborhood that extended to the eighth grade could obtain a middle school education. Since the Catholic faith tied all its members to a Catholic education by Canon Law, the African American Catholic's education did not venture past either

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<sup>344</sup> "Work Under Way on New School and Clinic for Negroes in Austin," *Southern Messenger*.

<sup>345</sup> Cardenas, "Holy Cross is Mother Church."

<sup>346</sup> "Work Under Way on New School and Clinic for Negroes in Austin," *Southern Messenger*.

<sup>347</sup> Katherine Gregor, "Holy Uproar Over Eastside Teardown," *Austin Chronicle*, July 16, 2010, <http://www.austinchronicle.com/news/2010-07-16/1055898> (accessed September 23, 2011).

<sup>348</sup> McCarthy, "Catholic Parochial Schools."

elementary or middle school. There were no parochial high schools built for African Americans in the formative years, except in Galveston. Holy Rosary Parish is Galveston's and Texas' first African-American school, which opened in October of 1886. Some schools in the bigger metropolitan areas in Texas, such as Houston, Galveston, and San Antonio, eventually expanded their programs to the twelfth grade but that was not done until later if the funding allowed, nor was the secondary education a guaranteed process.

The fact that African American Catholic children had nowhere to obtain an education after leaving their parochial school left them with three possible outcomes. First, an African American Catholic child quit school and went to work for their family. Second, because the African American Catholic family was not sending their children to a parochial school, excommunication was often threatened or occurred which resulted in a loss of faith. Keeping the Catholic faith was in some instances more important than a higher education.<sup>349</sup> Third, and the one that seems to be more likely, is that the African American Catholic child graduated from either elementary or middle parochial schools and attended the African American public school.

In the case of Holy Cross Parish and School, a student graduating from the elementary course was admitted to the City Junior High, or as it is known now, Kealing Junior High.<sup>350</sup> Arguably, some parishes and prelates may have turned a blind eye to the African American Catholic child who chose to continue their education. Therefore,

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<sup>349</sup> Devout Catholics are fear excommunication and not following Church doctrine or law. To lose one's faith in the Catholic religion is to lose one's soul and the ability to ascend into Heaven after death. For further reading on Catholic beliefs visit: <http://www.newadvent.org>.

<sup>350</sup> McCarthy, "Catholic Parochial Schools."

within the public school were African American Catholic children who hid their faith to obtain an education. As in the case of Austin, this seemed to be the norm; however, there is no evidence that excommunication was threatened.

Perhaps the most influential and most needed Catholic institution built in East Austin was the Holy Cross Hospital. Two things were unique to this hospital. Built behind the church in 1941, it ran and operated under the first nun licensed as a physician, Sister Celine Heitzman of the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception.<sup>351</sup> Second, the Holy Cross Hospital was the first racially integrated medical facility in Texas as well as offering a trade school for medical care.<sup>352</sup> Sister Celine, whose position was voluntary, had a racially diverse staff. Dr. B.E. Conner, an African American doctor, was on staff. Dr. Samuel P. Todaro, a white surgeon, was also part of the staff.<sup>353</sup> African American nurses worked along with the nuns from New Jersey. The hospital began as a 22-bed facility with eight bassinets.<sup>354</sup> For the first time, East Austin women could have their babies in a hospital with supervised medical care. Over the years, it expanded and moved to 2600 E. Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard.<sup>355</sup>

In 1942, the Father Weber and the African American Catholic community opened another parish and school called the Holy Family Parish and School.<sup>356</sup> Organized to serve the South Austin community, it was run by Father Edwin Bauer, who recruited two

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<sup>351</sup> Gregor, "Holy Uproar."

<sup>352</sup> Ibid.

<sup>353</sup> Christopher O'Toole, "Holy Cross in the South, Southern Province, Holy Cross Fathers, 1982," Box 39.9, DOAC/CAT.

<sup>354</sup> Howard, "The Architect of Austin," 30.

<sup>355</sup> "Farewell Party Slated," *Austin-American Statesman*. The hospital remained on Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd. until 1990 when due to funding, it closed. With its closing it left East Austin residents without a medical facility that was close to their community.

<sup>356</sup> HCP, "Our Faith Story."



sisters from the order of the Servants of the Holy Ghost and Mary Immaculate and one lay teacher.<sup>357</sup> By 1951, the school held sixty pupils. Perhaps Father Weber and Father Bauer were overly zealous in their attempt to build a Catholic parish outside East Austin just six years after establishing Holy Cross Parish, and twelve years after the 1928 City Plan, because the City of Austin continued to stifle the existing African American communities outside East Austin. There was no room in these communities for new buildings as the community itself went without electricity and water. However, the attempt was made and Holy Family struggled to establish itself permanently in South Austin, eventually failing by the early 1950s. Shut down because of the dramatic decrease in African American population, the Holy Family Parish and School closed and the building was moved to the Holy Cross “complex” in East Austin in 1954.<sup>358</sup>

By the late 1940s shifts within the Texas Catholic Dioceses and national events regarding parochial desegregation were forming as the Holy Family shut down. In 1947, one hundred years after the establishment of the first diocese of Texas, Austin became its own diocese so that a “more satisfactory provision be made for the care of souls.”<sup>359</sup> It was carved out of the Diocese of Galveston, the now Archdiocese of San Antonio, and the Diocese of Dallas.<sup>360</sup> The new Austin diocese would become the seventh diocese in the state of Texas and would be a suffragan diocese to the Archdiocese of San Antonio.<sup>361</sup>

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<sup>357</sup> Nancy Kuhr, “Catholic Parochial Schools in the Austin Diocese,” Ph.D. diss, 1974, p. 135-136.

<sup>358</sup> Ibid.

<sup>359</sup> Pope Pius XII, *Acta Apostolicae Sedis Commentarium Officiale*, November 15, 1947, DOAC/CAT.

<sup>360</sup> Travis County Clerk Office Title Deed, Transfer of Property from Galveston to Austin, June 23, 1948; Travis County Clerk Office Title Deed, Transfer of Property from San Antonio to Austin, June 30, 1948, CAT.

<sup>361</sup> Pope Pius XII, *Acta Apostolicae Sedis Commentarium Officiale*.

Bishop Louis J. Reicher, who presided over the Diocese of Austin, became known as the “Builder Bishop.”<sup>362</sup> Reicher stated that “God gives every man certain talents and he taught me how to drive nails.”<sup>363</sup> Under Bishop Reicher, the Diocese of Austin’s Catholic parochial education expanded greatly. From 1948 to 1965, the elementary enrollment rose from 3,815 pupils to 6,825.<sup>364</sup> The secondary enrollment rose from 245 to 861 during the same years for a total of 4,060 pupils enrolled in 1948 to 7,686 in 1965.<sup>365</sup> Holy Cross Parish, school, and hospital also continued to serve the East Austin community under Bishop Reicher’s direction. He supported the African American Catholics through his trust fund established specifically for building the Catholic Church in his diocese.<sup>366</sup>

The attempts of such organizations as the FCC and the CIC to desegregate any area in Austin would not have been successful. Austin was unique. Not only did it abide by the State segregation laws, it abided by city segregation laws. Before the 1928 city plan, African Americans lived throughout different areas of Austin. Had it remained that way, perhaps the CIC could have promoted its agenda of education for better race relations under LaFarge. What the CIC was successful in doing, however, was opening the minds of certain individual prelates who opted to change their dioceses regardless of social custom and the hardships that came with changing ideologies. The CIC, despite not having a stronger stance in the South, was indirectly responsible for the desegregation

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<sup>362</sup> Ben Sargent, “The Builder Priest: Half-Century of Catholic History Ends as Bishop Louis J. Reicher ‘Retires’,” *Austin American Statesman*, Sunday, November 14, 1971, A-15.

<sup>363</sup> Ibid.

<sup>364</sup> Kuhr, 111.

<sup>365</sup> Ibid.

<sup>366</sup> Ibid.

process that transpired in southern Maryland, Louisiana, and eventually Texas. The CIC and its committed position on interracial views became the driving force for a spiritual awakening within five prelates that fostered a moral renewal.

East Austin became the focal point for African American spiritual, medical, business, and educational needs due to Austin's 1928 city plan. In addition, the establishment of an Austin diocese, and the African American parish and school fostered a beloved community.<sup>367</sup> East Austin was the location African Americans were segregated to, but they did not limit themselves to what the city gave them. Instead, they transformed what was given to them with the help of the Catholic Church, to make the community their own.

At the time of the creation of the Austin diocese in 1947, desegregation of parochial institutions began to formally take place within the Archdioceses of Indianapolis and St. Louis. This set the precedence for all other dioceses to follow, which affected Texas and its desegregation process. Two other archbishoprics and one diocese also officially desegregated before Texas. These prelates paved the way for ending segregated parochial education but it took some time to officially take effect in Texas. This is partly due to the mindset of Texas prelates. Their view regarding parochial education, was the same as others grappling with the decision to desegregate. Seeing other prelates in other dioceses struggle to desegregate gave Texas dioceses pause. With the example in New Orleans, where opposition was strongest and the most

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<sup>367</sup> This is not to say East Austin became the beloved community Martin Luther King, Jr. envisioned. His vision was to have a complete integrated society, a community of love and justice, with the true expression of Christian Faith. Most, if not all, of his speeches state the 'beloved community' and relate the context of the speech to that ideology.

persistent, it is not surprising to see that Texas prelates waited to make a move. In the case of Austin, however, the *Brown* decision would have more of an effect on the community than a call from a Catholic prelate to end segregation within the Church or its parochial schools. Other dioceses in parts of the South struggled to desegregate before *Brown* and were successful. Despite what is considered success, there emerges a pattern among parochial desegregation.

While the integration of parishes and schools occurred, the pattern of dissolving all-African American communities emerged. Without consulting African American Catholics on whether they wanted integration of their parish, some archbishops decided to promote what they considered the true doctrine of the Church. Of course, African Americans asked for better schools and education opportunities for their children. However they did not want to lose their community's identity in the process of integration. In the case of East Austin, gaining re-entry into the City of Austin meant a loss of almost their entire community.

## CHAPTER IV

### MORAL RENEWAL

*“But let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream,”—*  
AMOS 5:24

As the Church did not meddle in local affairs, but rather kept its focus on Church doctrine, certain individual prelates were allowed to make what they viewed as necessary changes within their dioceses. Since Markoe established his own organization in the Midwest and the CIC grew exponentially, both were influential in breeding the beginning of the Catholic desegregation movement. Though the Catholic desegregation movement was small, it no doubt caused an impact within not only the Catholic world, but the world in general. The Catholic desegregation movement caused a ripple effect in the segregation pond that challenged and changed people, along with African American communities.

These few individual prelates, the Right Reverend Archbishop Joseph Ritter of the Archdiocese of St. Louis, the Right Reverend Archbishop Patrick Alloysius O’Boyle of the Archdiocese of Washington, D.C., the Right Reverend Archbishop Joseph Francis Rummel of the Archdiocese of New Orleans, the Right Reverend Bishop Vincent S. Waters of the Diocese of Raleigh, and the Right Reverend Archbishop Robert E. Lucey of the Archdiocese of San Antonio, had indeed gone through a type of spiritual

awakening. They chose desegregation long before federal law mandated its rule, and in fact, influenced federal decisions. These prelates began to challenge not only themselves, but their parishioners, to view segregation as a sin. To these individual prelates, segregation was an unjust cause of separation that formulated a loss of unity within the Church. Catholic doctrine stipulates that God is one. The true Church must be unified through spirit which must also extend outward from the Church making it visible to the outside, and therefore, must unite its parishioners in a unity of doctrine.<sup>368</sup> Therefore, if the teaching of the Church contradicted the Scripture and the doctrine of unity, then segregation must be immoral.

Another factor that changed the mindset of certain prelates was WWII. Once African Americans returned from duty, they began to take a stronger stand against segregation at home. The irony of fighting Hitler's Nazi regime and returning to the segregated United States, did not escape the African American veteran. The military slowly began its desegregation policies through the efforts of A. Philip Randolph, an African American who organized the union Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters in 1925.<sup>369</sup> Randolph was considered a "militant" and "the most dangerous black in America" to whites because he was so effective in enacting change for African Americans.<sup>370</sup>

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<sup>368</sup> Charles Callan, "Unity (as a Mark of the Church)," *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, 15 (New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1912), <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/15179a.htm> (accessed January 30, 2012).

<sup>369</sup> Public Broadcasting System (PBS), "The Rise and Fall of Jim Crow," [http://www.pbs.org/wnet/jimcrow/stories\\_org\\_brother.html](http://www.pbs.org/wnet/jimcrow/stories_org_brother.html) (accessed January 31, 2012).

<sup>370</sup> A. Philip Randolph Institute, "Gentle Warrior: A. Philip Randolph (1889-1979)," <http://www.apri.org/ht/d/sp/i/225/pid/225> (accessed January 31, 2012).

In 1941, Randolph began to organize a March on Washington to protest discrimination in defense jobs. Before Randolph could enact his protest march, President Franklin Roosevelt signed Executive Order 8802 on July 25, 1941 ending discrimination by declaring, "there shall be no discrimination in the employment of workers in defense industries or government because of race, creed, color, or national origin."<sup>371</sup> Randolph continued his fight to end discrimination in the armed forces as well. Through his efforts, President Harry S. Truman signed Executive Order 9981 in July of 1948 to abolish racial discrimination in the armed forces.<sup>372</sup> By 1951, desegregation of military units was complete.<sup>373</sup>

In addition to WWII, an activist approach to the Civil Rights Movement began that emerged from different areas of the nation. In 1949 a lawsuit filed in Clarendon County, South Carolina brought forth a shift in social consciousness among at least one of the United States federal district judges in that county regarding segregation.<sup>374</sup> *Briggs v. Elliott* was the first case of its kind in the Deep South, one handled and lost at the district level by NAACP lawyer, Thurgood Marshall.

However, the case was not a complete loss. One of the three justices, J. Waites Waring, offered a groundbreaking dissenting opinion regarding segregation written in

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<sup>371</sup> Department of History of The George Washington University, Eleanor Roosevelt Papers Project, "Fair Employment Practices Committee," <http://www.gwu.edu/~erpapers/teaching/glossary/fepc.cfm> (accessed January 31, 2012); NAACP President Walter White and National Youth Administration (NYA) Minority Affairs Directory Mary McLeod Bethune assisted A. Philip Randolph in persuading President Roosevelt to sign the order.

<sup>372</sup> Steven Mintz, Digital History, <http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/historyonline/integrating.cfm>, (accessed January 30, 2012).

<sup>373</sup> Ibid.

<sup>374</sup> Richard Kluger, *Simple Justice. the History of Brown v Board of Education and Black America's Struggle for Equality*, (New York: Vintage Books, 2004): 3-25.

1951.<sup>375</sup> From Justice Waring's opinion came the testimony and foundation for the *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas* case in 1954, overturning the 1896 decision in *Plessy v. Ferguson* that separate was equal.<sup>376</sup>

The era of the 1940s was momentous as racial equality was seriously questioned, challenged and changed. Individual prelates simply had enough of promoting racism through segregation and began to examine if racism was truly a sin versus the old belief of it being a "social matter." An examination as to the separation of parishes and parochial schools for African Americans as a sin also began. The idea of having separate institutions did not make sense anymore. The original intent to promote separate institutions had become antiquated. Separation or segregation, along with racism, was indeed immoral.

This recognition of racism as a sin began a series of desegregation processes that changed the way Catholics worshipped and went to school. However, because Catholics worshipped and went to school together, it did not extend into the communities. Desegregation at the altar did not mean desegregation at the grocery store, local libraries, or the bus that took African American children to their Catholic integrated school. It was, however, a start to show a Catholic solidarity, at least within some dioceses, that racism and segregation were indeed both moral and social issues. The few prelates that espoused this ideology began merging it with Catholic doctrine forging a "social justice" that became part of the Church's modern vernacular in the 1960s. It was an attempt to make those parishioners who protested integration aware of the biblical sin that was

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<sup>375</sup> A digitized copy of the original dissent may be located at the National Archives Website at <http://www.archives.gov/southeast/education/resources-by-state/briggs-v-elliott.html>.

<sup>376</sup> Kluger, 3-25.



being imposed upon African Americans. Some of these prelates had to use force to make stubborn parishioners comply with integration, beginning in 1938 with Archbishop Ritter and the Diocese of Indianapolis.

Hailing from Indiana, Archbishop Ritter attended St. Meinrad's Seminary in southern Indiana where he was ordained in 1917.<sup>377</sup> He served as a priest within the Diocese of Indianapolis for sixteen years and then a consecrated bishop of the same diocese in 1933.<sup>378</sup> Archbishop Ritter was a champion for African Americans from the beginning and he worked hard within his dioceses to make sure their civil rights were not violated, at least within what state law allowed.

In 1937, the CIC suggested a method of action to educate all children, regardless of economics or race.<sup>379</sup> Abiding by this mandate, Archbishop Ritter formed a committee to assess the African American situation within his diocese.<sup>380</sup> One year later, in 1938, Archbishop Ritter formally desegregated the schools within his diocese to the shock of most of his parishioners. The Ku Klux Klan marched outside of St. Peter's and St. Paul's Cathedral claiming that both Catholics and African Americans were un-American.<sup>381</sup> Fellow clergy and some parishioners questioned Archbishop Ritter's directive, but he stood his ground. Not the federal government or local legislation, nor any other

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<sup>377</sup> Archdiocese of St. Louis, "1946-1994: The St. Louis Church in the Modern World," *Cardinal Ritter*, <http://www.archstl.org/archives/page/1946-1994-st-louis-church-modern-world> (accessed December 13, 2011).

<sup>378</sup> Ibid.

<sup>379</sup> Indiana Historical Bureau (IHB), "Cardinal Joseph E. Ritter," <http://www.in.gov/history/markers/537.htm> (accessed January 31, 2012).

<sup>380</sup> Ibid.

<sup>381</sup> Ibid.; Deanna Dewberry, "Cardinal Joseph Ritter: A Trailblazer for Desegregation in Indianapolis Catholic Schools," *Wishtv8*, February 12, 2010, [http://www.wishtv.com/dpp/news/local/marion\\_county/ritter-a-trailblazer-for-desegregation](http://www.wishtv.com/dpp/news/local/marion_county/ritter-a-trailblazer-for-desegregation) (accessed January 31, 2012).

ecclesiastical diocese had done what Archbishop Ritter had, and it shocked the Catholic community to its core. When Archbishop Ritter was relocated to another diocese, he took with him his desegregation motives and implemented them at his new location.

In 1944, Pope Pius XII elevated the Diocese of Indianapolis to an archdiocese, and installed Ritter as its first Archbishop.<sup>382</sup> Two years later in 1946, Pope Pius XII installed Ritter as the fourth Archbishop of the Archdiocese of St. Louis.<sup>383</sup> Archbishop Ritter's first act was to desegregate the parochial schools within the archbishopric.<sup>384</sup> He was met with protest again, but this time, it was by organized segregationists.

The premise for desegregating the schools in St. Louis came from the archdiocesan school authorities who brought to Cardinal Ritter's attention that the all-African American parochial schools of St. Ann's and St. Joseph's were inadequately equipped and overcrowded as enrollment climbed.<sup>385</sup> School officials asked Cardinal Ritter to build another segregated parochial school, but Cardinal Ritter decided that was preposterous given the fact there were already Catholic schools built in the area that African Americans could attend.<sup>386</sup> Thus, Cardinal Ritter directed his auxiliary bishop, the Right Reverend Bishop John Cody, to write a confidential letter to all the priests in the archdiocese on August 25, 1947.<sup>387</sup> It was subsequently made public and read at mass shortly thereafter. The letter read,

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<sup>382</sup> IHB.

<sup>383</sup> Ibid.

<sup>384</sup> Harold A. Buetow, "The Underprivileged and Roman Catholic Education," *Journal of Negro Education*, 40, 6(Autumn, 1971):384.

<sup>385</sup> Ibid., 207.

<sup>386</sup> Ibid.

<sup>387</sup> His Excellency John Cardinal Cody was born in St. Louis, Missouri in 1901 and became ordained a priest in the same city in 1931. In 1947 he became an auxiliary bishop of St. Louis. An auxiliary bishop is an assistant to the bishop of a particular diocese while holding titular status over another

...His Excellency has instructed me to advise you [parish priests] that in his mind [Archbishop Ritter's] there should be no discrimination and the same principals for admission are to be followed in admitting colored children as for others. This is in keeping with our Catholic teaching and the best principals of our American form of democratic government.<sup>388</sup>

Letters began pouring into the offices of Cardinal Ritter and Bishop Cody.

Cardinal Ritter's predecessor, the Right Reverend Bishop Glennon of the Diocese of St. Louis believed that the law of the land applied to Catholic schools. There was no such specific ruling in *Plessy* that stipulated the separation of parochial versus secular institutions. *Plessy* simply stated that separate was equal and Bishop Glennon abided by that ruling partly because Catholic doctrine stipulated that the, "unity of government, by which all its members are subject to and obey the same authority, which was instituted by Christ himself."<sup>389</sup> Therefore, Catholics must follow the law of the land as the government body was divinely formulated. However, if the consensus of an individual prelate was that segregation was an immortal sin then that overruled the law of the land, as it was now a factor of saving one's soul. Conversely, Glennon did very little to aid African American Catholics. By claiming that African Americans "tried to force their

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ecclesiastical territory. The auxiliary bishop embodies the full dignity of the Episcopal office. In 1954, Cardinal Cody was appointed bishop to Kansas City and then St. Joseph, Missouri in 1955. In 1956 he was appointed coadjutor archbishop of New Orleans becoming archbishop of the New Orleans archdiocese in 1964. A year later, in 1965, he was transferred to the Archdiocese of Chicago, Illinois where he served as archbishop. In 1967 he was elevated to Cardinal to St. Cecilia and served as such until his death in 1982. AASTL.

<sup>388</sup> Auxiliary Bishop John Cody to Reverends of the Archdiocese, August 25, 1947, Archives of the Archdiocese of Saint Louis, (referred hereafter as AASTL).

<sup>389</sup> Callan, "Unity (as a Mark of the Church).

way into white parishes instead of building churches of their own,” certainly did not show rectitude on Glennon’s part.<sup>390</sup>

White Catholic segregationists began to circle the wagons around Cardinal Ritter and Bishop Cody. Mrs. Obermeyer who represented the De Andreis High School Mothers’ Club spoke with Bishop Cody over the phone. He told Mrs. Obermeyer that “whether black, white, or yellow, they [African Americans] have an equal right to salvation and consequently to the means which would lead to that salvation—a good and thorough Catholic education,” which meant that integration, despite social customs, was the position of the Archbishop and one that certainly mirrored the influential CIC.<sup>391</sup> Mrs. Obermeyer did not relent. Her position was that the intermingling of the races was not something to be considered at this time and she wanted Cardinal Ritter to reconsider his motion to desegregate. Mrs. Obermeyer, along with sixty other women, signed a petition letter demanding Cardinal Ritter to recant his decision or they would remove their children from the Catholic schools.<sup>392</sup> The removal of their children, especially daughters, would, in the minds of the petitioners, protect white womanhood.

Other Catholics mobilized, taking a stronger stance towards Archbishop Ritter’s directive. These Catholics organized and formed the Catholic Parents Association of Saint Louis and Saint Louis County (CPASL) with John P. Barrett, a painter, serving as chairman. Because Cardinal Ritter refused to meet with the segregationists, it was the

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<sup>390</sup> William Barnaby Faherty, *The St. Louis Irish an unmatched Celtic community*, (St. Louis: Missouri Historical Society Press, 2001):206, Google eBooks, <http://books.google.com/books?id=GMcJGPSXkCsC> (accessed December 2011).

<sup>391</sup> R. Bentley Anderson, “Prelates, protest, and public opinion: Catholic opposition to desegregation, 1947-1955,” *Journal of Church and State*, (Summer, 2004), FindArticles.com, [http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi\\_hb3244/is\\_3\\_46/ai\\_n29124603/?tag=content;coll](http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_hb3244/is_3_46/ai_n29124603/?tag=content;coll) (accessed December 14, 2011).

<sup>392</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

duty of Chairman Barrett to request an audience with the cardinal so that they could have their opinions heard.<sup>393</sup> Chairman Barrett attempted an audience with Cardinal Ritter several times, but each time he was turned away. When Chairman Barrett reported his failed attempts to the group, they prompted him to try one more time. Again, the attempt failed.

Angry that their voices could not be heard, they voted within the group 697 to 3 to retain legal counsel.<sup>394</sup> They also threatened to file an injunction against Cardinal Ritter if he went through with desegregation, citing it was against state law. Two lawyers offered to take their case for free.<sup>395</sup> Perhaps the CPASL did not know they were violating canon law by threatening legal action against an ecclesiastical member. Nonetheless, the CPASL was adamant that they have an audience with Cardinal Ritter who instead, responded in another pastoral letter.<sup>396</sup>

On September 20, 1947, the letter was read to all parishioners at mass. Archbishop Ritter opened his letter by stating, "It has come to our attention that a small group of individuals have signified their purpose of taking civil action to restrain us from carrying out a policy which we consider our right and duty as chief pastor of the faithful of this Archdiocese, regardless of race or nationality."<sup>397</sup> While the CPASL was the only group who had contemplated litigation, the letter was directed to any other groups or

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<sup>393</sup> Faherty, 209.

<sup>394</sup> Bentley Anderson, "Prelates, protest, and public opinion," 3.

<sup>395</sup> Ibid.

<sup>396</sup> Pertaining to this study, Canon Law 140 and 142 from the 1604 Canons which were not revised in 1947 provide a means for maintaining the respect of ecclesiastical authority. Those that went against its teaching, discipline, or ruling faced excommunication. For further reading on the history of Canon Law and Canon Law read: Gordon Arthur's *Law, Liberty, and Church*.

<sup>397</sup> Archbishop Ritter to "The Reverend Clergy and Beloved Laity of the Archdiocese of St. Louis, September 20, 1947, AASTL.

individuals who were considering joining the segregationists. The letter continued, stating,

After mature deliberation, and fully confident of the loyalty of the faithful, we now deem it opportune to caution them publicly. By the general law of the Church, there is the serious penalty of excommunication, which can be removed only by the Holy See. This penalty was incurred automatically should an individual or group of individuals, without permission, in violation of Canon 2341, presume...to interfere in the administrative office of their Bishop by having recourse to any authority outside the Church.<sup>398</sup>

Anyone who called his bishop before a civil tribunal for any action taken in administering his office incurred automatic excommunication.<sup>399</sup> The acceptance of the policy was obedience to ecclesiastical authority and therefore, Cardinal Ritter warned those groups or individuals that brought legal action would be removed from the Church.<sup>400</sup> Chairman Barrett appealed the decision in writing to the Right Reverend Archbishop Amleto Cicognani, the Apostolic Delegate to the United States.

The CPASL believed they were not subject to excommunication as they were acting within the commands of the Church. Barrett explained in his letter they were frustrated at not being able to obtain an audience and that their legal action was at the investigative stage, not filed in court.<sup>401</sup> Barrett went on to explain to Archbishop Cicognani that there were second thoughts about investigating legal action and were meeting to discuss the matter when Cardinal Ritter's letter preceded their meeting.<sup>402</sup> Finally, Barrett explained that the CPASL would raise funds to build African American Catholic schools. Barrett then asked Archbishop Cicognani if they were subject to

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<sup>398</sup> Ibid.

<sup>399</sup> Ibid.

<sup>400</sup> Bentley Anderson, "Prelates, protest, and public opinion," 4.

<sup>401</sup> Ibid, 5.

<sup>402</sup> Ibid.

excommunication and would he please, “facilitate, through your intercession, an audience with Archbishop Ritter since we feel that this issue may be handled locally.”<sup>403</sup>

Archbishop Cicognani replied to Barrett that he read Archbishop Ritter’s decision and the September 20<sup>th</sup> letter and answered, “nothing could be added to the matter. I am confident that everyone will readily comply with what has been so clearly proposed by the ecclesiastical authority of the Archdiocese.”<sup>404</sup>

Chairman Barrett was shaken to his core at the threat of excommunication.<sup>405</sup> The thought of losing his religion and becoming a stranger to the Church weighed so heavily on him, that he tried to resign from CPASL. The members of CPASL would have nothing of it. They called him “yellow” and records intimated that there were threats. The pressure from the other members forced him to remain chair of the CPASL.<sup>406</sup> Fortunately, for Chairman Barrett, he was ultimately successful in disbanding the CPASL.

On October 5, 1947, the group met and this time, Chairman Barrett tearfully pleaded with the members to disband the organization telling them, “My religion comes first. If it gets to the point where I have to sit beside the Negro to keep my religion I’ll do

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<sup>403</sup> Ibid.

<sup>404</sup> Ibid.

<sup>405</sup> According to the Catholic Encyclopedia the definition of excommunication is meant to be a medicinal measure, rather than a penalty of punishment. In other words, excommunication is meant to give the guilty parishioner time to correct his ways, put he or she back on the path of righteousness, and making him see the errors of his faults against the Church. Excommunication is not a permanent exile, and the Church desires those that are excommunicated to return. There are different levels of excommunication. In this instance, the CPASL members would suffer a minor excommunication *ab homine*, incurred through an ecclesiastical prelate. It would also be *ferendae sententiae*, meaning the culprit is rather threatened with excommunication and punished once the crime against the Church is committed.  
<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/05678a.htm>.

<sup>406</sup> Bentley Anderson, “Prelates, protest, and public opinion,” 5.

it.”<sup>407</sup> Despite the derision, cooler heads prevailed and the motion passed to disband the group.

After the meeting, Barrett met with his pastor, Vicar General Monsignor Murray of St. Edward’s Parish who counseled Barrett on disbanding the CPASL and what it meant to become an advocate of racial justice.<sup>408</sup> The Catholics of St. Louis complied. The De Andreis Mother’s Club raised funds for the African American high school, St. Joseph’s. Father Edward Ryan at St. Matthew’s Parish, whose parishioners held the greatest number of protestors to desegregation, admitted African American students to his school but segregated them within the building. The parents notified Archbishop Ritter. Monsignor Charles Helmsing spoke to Father Ryan on Archbishop Ritter’s behalf, telling Father Ryan to challenge his priestly duties to see the opportunity for good in the situation.<sup>409</sup> The next day Father Ryan acquiesced to the Archbishop’s directives, phoning in his compliance.<sup>410</sup>

Letters flowed into the Archbishop’s office. Over 400 letters were in favor of the Archbishop’s pioneering decision to integrate his diocese. Only 71 people were against his decision. Walter White, executive secretary of the NAACP wrote and congratulated the Archbishop on his indisputable stand for integration.<sup>411</sup> Eleanor Roosevelt wrote that she was grateful for such actions as his as they are a reminder that things were moving in the right direction.<sup>412</sup> The former NAACP attorney Charles Hamilton Houston wrote

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<sup>407</sup> Ibid., 6.

<sup>408</sup> Faherty, 209.

<sup>409</sup> Ibid.

<sup>410</sup> Ibid.

<sup>411</sup> Bentley Anderson, “Prelates, protest, and public opinion,” 5.

<sup>412</sup> Ibid.



from his Washington, D.C. law office stated that he had been “profoundly stirred by the affirmation of faith which led you [Archbishop Ritter] to rule that the parochial schools of St. Louis should be open to all Catholic children.”<sup>413</sup> Houston continued stating that the Archbishop’s

stand and the position of the Catholic Church have given me additional hope that some of us now living may see all segregation and discrimination wiped out and equality of opportunity afforded all children of the United States, and progressively all children of the world.<sup>414</sup>

Other prominent Catholics and non-Catholics continued writing to the archbishop to show their support and admiration for him standing firm in his convictions. The parishioners of St. Louis escaped excommunication.

The following year, in 1948, Archbishop O’Boyle decided to desegregate his Washington, D.C. archdiocese, but in a different manner than Archbishop Ritter. Archbishop O’Boyle had taken the helm in 1948 when the archdiocese separated from Baltimore. Born in Pennsylvania in 1896, he was the son of an Irish steel mill worker who died when Archbishop O’Boyle was ten.<sup>415</sup> Upon moving south and becoming archbishop, he became dismayed at his Catholic schools following the Jim Crow laws.<sup>416</sup> He said he saw no reason why “a little black boy or girl doesn’t have the same right to a Catholic education as a little white boy or girl.”<sup>417</sup> African American children were given

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<sup>413</sup> Charles Hamilton Houston to Archbishop Ritter, October 30, 1947, AASTL.

<sup>414</sup> Ibid.

<sup>415</sup> “Cardinal O’Boyle, D.C. archbishop,” *Journal Tribune*, Tuesday, August 11, 1987, 2.

<sup>416</sup> Michael Farquhar, “At Gonzaga High, Crossing the Great Divide,” *Washington Post*, Monday, June 7, 1999, A1, WashingtonPost.com, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/local/2000/gonzaga060799.htm#TOP>, (accessed December 18, 2011).

<sup>417</sup> Ibid.

the right to a Catholic education; however, it was in a separate facility, in which Archbishop O'Boyle believed that separation of the races was "morally evil."<sup>418</sup> African American Catholic children were placed in the neighborhood parish school which often meant less money, substandard materials and staffing. Even so, this did not mean that the education was subpar than that received at a public institute built specifically for African American children. Those schools met only four months out of the year at the onset of public education, and later, six months in the year.

Conversely, a year round education was offered at African American Catholic schools. Therefore, Archbishop O'Boyle's statement implied that the quality of education in the Catholic schools, white and African American, held the same differences as the public schools. His idea was to bridge that gap, and offer the African American Catholic children the same opportunities that white Catholic children had in their schools. Archbishop O'Boyle wanted to try a different approach than Archbishop Ritter. As Reverend John Spence, the director of education within the archdiocese at the time, announced many years later at a conference that,

one or two efforts by brother bishops in other dioceses of the United States through edicts had stirred up more opposition than cooperation, and certainly had not been successful in begetting the results intended.<sup>419</sup>

Consequently, Archbishop O'Boyle wanted desegregation in his diocese done quietly and he knew that any publication about the matter would bring strong opposition. Therefore he issued no pastoral letter on his directives. Instead, he consulted with teachers, administrators, church councils, and clergy to discuss race relations and how to

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<sup>418</sup> Ibid.

<sup>419</sup> Ibid.

implement the change while asking for their cooperation.<sup>420</sup> No newspaper articles were printed on the subject, as journalists respectfully abided by Archbishop O'Boyle's request to not print anything regarding desegregation. As a result, there was no fanfare from the Catholic parishioners.<sup>421</sup>

Archbishop O'Boyle encouraged the members he met with to make the change based on Scripture alone. It was, according to Archbishop O'Boyle the righteous thing to do, citing something similar to the Declaration of Independence or the Rights of Man, by Thomas Paine. Reverend Spence recalled Archbishop O'Boyle's actions as being, "either personally or vicariously, he reminded them of the equal creation of all men by God, their endowment with equal rights as children of God; their equal salvation through the Redemption of Jesus Christ, and their common obligation of affording justice and charity to all men regardless of their race, color, or nationality."<sup>422</sup> This was as close to a pastoral letter as Archbishop O'Boyle would come regarding the matter.

Teresa Posey, an African American educator within the archdiocese recalls her meetings with the archbishop. "He would always question, ask for information...When he made up his mind, though, that was it...The schools of the archdiocese are desegregated. Period."<sup>423</sup> She was right. The schools were simply desegregated.

Archbishop O'Boyle's plan worked, as little opposition arose and no organized public

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<sup>420</sup> Ibid.

<sup>421</sup> Ibid.; as research indicates and proves, there is nothing written on the subject of Washington D.C. desegregating its parochial schools in any of the major or independent newspapers between the years of 1947-1950, the timeframe of the matter. The Archdiocese of Washington, D.C. houses no pastoral letter from Archbishop O'Boyle on the matter of desegregation as he did not write one which makes obtaining primary sources difficult. It is through interviews from Reverend Spence where most of the information comes from. Later, in a second wave of desegregation within his archdiocese, Archbishop O'Boyle did write a pastoral letter declaring integration.

<sup>422</sup> Ibid

<sup>423</sup> Ibid.

outcry was made. Archbishop O'Boyle started small, beginning in the lower grades in elementary, moving up to the secondary schools, and eventually the colleges and universities. Other bishops, whose dioceses or archdioceses remained segregated, looked on with great interest at Archbishop O'Boyle's continued success.

Chief Justice Earl Warren of the United States Supreme Court, the one who would rule on the *Brown* decision, found Archbishop O'Boyle's systematic desegregation tactics interesting, especially as he moved into the southern portion of Maryland where resistance was strongest.<sup>424</sup> Archbishop O'Boyle would not desegregate the schools or churches in southern Maryland until 1956, and he was strongly criticized by African American journalists for not doing so earlier.<sup>425</sup> When Archbishop O'Boyle reached southern Maryland to desegregate, his previously muted attempts at integration did not work, as white parishioners became adamantly opposed to his integration attempts. According to the Right Reverend Archbishop John Donoghue of the Archdiocese of Atlanta who was Archbishop O'Boyle's personal secretary in 1956, Archbishop O'Boyle met with several representatives from the Southern Districts to discuss the integration issue.<sup>426</sup> Archbishop Donoghue recalls that Archbishop O'Boyle listened intently, and with great patience, but they were never going to change his mind. Archbishop O'Boyle was determined to hold fast to his moral beliefs no matter the cost.<sup>427</sup>

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<sup>424</sup> Ibid.

<sup>425</sup> Ibid.

<sup>426</sup> Ibid.

<sup>427</sup> Ibid.

The only cost was biding time for southern delegates to change their mind. By the time Archbishop O'Boyle fervently charged school officials to desegregate parochial institutions, the ruling on the *Brown* case had been made.

The landmark decision of the United States Supreme Court to overturn its 1896 *Plessy v. Ferguson* ruling came with no stern execution from the Court on exactly what measures needed to be taken in order to desegregate. The first decision on *Brown* came from Chief Justice Earl Warren who read, in a firm, inexpressive voice the Court's unanimous ruling. He began at 12:52pm on May 17, 1954 reading to the crowded room beginning with why the *Plessy v. Ferguson* ruling could not help the modern Court due to the

primitive nature of public education at the time of its adoption. In the South, where the movement to free common schools supported by general taxation had not yet taken hold, the education of white children was largely in the hands of private groups, while education of Negroes was almost non-existent.<sup>428</sup>

Warren continued reading the Court's opinion citing case after case to support the Court's ruling. By 1:20 pm Warren read his conclusion to the awaiting press and lawyers. He stated, "We conclude, unanimously, that in the field of public education the doctrine of 'separate but equal' has no place. Separate educational facilities are inherently unequal."<sup>429</sup> That was *Brown I*.

The attorneys, in whose states required segregation or permitted segregation in public schools, gathered their arguments for the following US Supreme Court term to

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<sup>428</sup> Kluger, 706.

<sup>429</sup> Ibid., 710.

address any questions regarding the ruling.<sup>430</sup> The *Brown* lawyers did the same. Southern state executives were in an uproar. Georgia's governor, Herman Tallmadge, stated the ruling brought the value of the Constitution to a "mere scrap of paper."<sup>431</sup> Senator Byrd of Virginia called the decision a serious blow to state rights.<sup>432</sup> Governor Umstead of North Carolina was "terribly disappointed," while Governor Byrnes of South Carolina was simply "shocked."<sup>433</sup> A more vehement response arose from Mississippi Senator Eastland, who decreed that integration of Southern schools would be met with "great strife and turmoil."<sup>434</sup> Texas Governor Allan Shivers, a staunch segregationist whose son attended the integrated Saint Edward's in Austin, likened the ruling to a second Reconstruction. He further stated in a third term campaign for governor that, "All my instincts, my political philosophy, my experience, and my common sense revolt against this Supreme Court decision."<sup>435</sup> These were the reactions of the executives of states to whom the State Attorney's had to address the Court, and the reason why Warren placed no timeline on desegregation. *Brown II* made that decision.

When the *Brown* lawyers went before the Court, they provided reasons to immediately end segregation, at least by September of 1955.<sup>436</sup> The segregationist states lawyers, argued that sudden integration would cause hostility, racial tensions, violence, a loss of jobs, diseases, a mixing of lower IQs with the IQs of whites, and assuredly, there

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<sup>430</sup> Charles J. Ogletree, *All Deliberate Speed: Reflections on the First Half-Century of Brown v Board of Education*, (New York and London: W.W. Norton & Company, 2004): 127.

<sup>431</sup> Kluger, 713.

<sup>432</sup> Ibid.

<sup>433</sup> Ibid.

<sup>434</sup> Ibid.

<sup>435</sup> Patrick Cox, *Ralph W. Yarborough: The People's Senator*, (Austin: The University of Texas Press, 2001): 108.

<sup>436</sup> Ogletree, 9.

would be a destruction of the way of life as they knew it.<sup>437</sup> Texas lawyers brought in maps showing how each district contained a varying level of African Americans within their districts and therefore, the timeline of integration should be different according to the district's African American population. Thurgood Marshall, the NAACP lawyer who brought the *Brown* case to the US Supreme Court quipped, "I am sure that the State of Texas does not...administer their own constitution in varying [ways] in various sections of the country," but Texas stood its ground.<sup>438</sup>

The Court weighed the arguments of both sides and concluded on May 31, 1955, in another unanimous decision that the lower federal courts were to, "enter such orders and decrees consistent with this opinion as are necessary and proper to admit to public schools on a racially nondiscriminatory basis with all deliberate speed the parties to these cases."<sup>439</sup> The South, it seemed, had won in at least delaying the integration process. The State of Texas went so far as to ascertain that it was not part of the five cases brought before the Supreme Court, they did not have to abide by their ruling.<sup>440</sup> Even so, the NAACP lawyers were buoyed by the *Brown* decisions as were African Americans.

A year later, state troopers gathered at Flower Mound parochial school in Maryland. The school was opening its doors for the first time to African American children. As protestors gathered outside, so did the state troopers.<sup>441</sup> Every day for a week the troopers showed, protecting the African American children from the large mass

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<sup>437</sup> Ibid, 10.

<sup>438</sup> Kluger, 739.

<sup>439</sup> Ogletree, 10.

<sup>440</sup> Ibid.

<sup>441</sup> Ibid.

of protestors that gathered around the school.<sup>442</sup> Every day for a week, the protestors saw that neither the troops nor the African American children were leaving. Consistency and determination paid off and the protestors became complacent, eventually disbanding their cause to thwart integration. Flower Mound successfully integrated along with other southern Maryland parochial schools afterwards.<sup>443</sup>

Seeing the results of Maryland and its semi-peaceful desegregation of its parochial schools, the attempt to desegregate further south was at least now feasible, so thought the Right Reverend Archbishop Joseph Francis Rummel of the Archdiocese of New Orleans. However, Louisiana would have a different set of organized protestors. While Archbishop Ritter only threatened excommunication for legal ramifications that may have been brought against him, Archbishop Rummel excommunicated three of his parishioners for not following his directives. He also threatened excommunication for anyone who organized protest and he closed parishes for refusing an African American priest. If parishioners were not going to integrate willingly, Archbishop Rummel was going to make them.

On March 15, 1953 Archbishop Joseph Francis Rummel published a pastoral letter entitled, "Blessed Are the Peacemakers."<sup>444</sup> The letter states, "And now we call upon all the members of our beloved flock to exercise the role of peacemakers in our

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<sup>442</sup> Ibid.

<sup>443</sup> Ibid.

<sup>444</sup> The title of his pastoral letter is taken from Matthew 5:9 which states, "Blessed are the peacemakers for they will be called the sons of God."



intercourse with those who may differ from us by the characteristics of race, nationality, color of the skin, habits, or creed.”<sup>445</sup>

Rummel, who was born in Germany and raised in Manhattan, attended parochial schools, becoming Bishop of Omaha in 1928.<sup>446</sup> On March 9, 1935 Archbishop Rummel became the Archbishop of New Orleans expanding the diocese into one of the largest in the South. With this letter though, Archbishop Rummel ended segregation in the *parishes*, not the parochial schools. This meant the pews were desegregated and African American parishioners did not have to wait for the sacraments until all white parishioners had been attended. Though a committee formed in 1955 after the *Brown* decision called for immediate desegregation of parochial schools, the Archbishop was reluctant and wanted to move slowly.<sup>447</sup> After all, it was the Deep South and Archbishop Rummel had another obstacle that Archbishops Ritter and O’Boyle did not: the Louisiana Legislature.

By 1955 Rummel’s health was failing. He was seventy-nine years old, had glaucoma, nearly died of pneumonia, and was still healing from a fall that resulted in a broken arm and leg.<sup>448</sup> Despite his health issues, the organizing of Save Our Nation, Inc., and the barrier of the State Legislature, Archbishop Rummel’s eight year battle finally saw desegregation of New Orleans’ parochial schools.

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<sup>445</sup> “No Race Barrier, Catholics Urged, End Segregation in Church Life, Says Archbishop,” *Times-Picayune*, NOLA.com, [http://www.photos.nola.com/tpphotos/2011/11/175churches\\_5.html](http://www.photos.nola.com/tpphotos/2011/11/175churches_5.html), (accessed December 8, 2011).

<sup>446</sup> *Time Magazine*, “The Archbishop Stands Firm,” Friday, April 27, 1962:45-46.

<sup>447</sup> “Archbishop called for an end to segregation in New Orleans’ Catholic Churches,” *The Times Picayune*, Saturday, November 26, 2011, Nola.com, [http://www.nola.com/175years/index.ssf/2011/11/1953\\_archbishop\\_called\\_for\\_an.html](http://www.nola.com/175years/index.ssf/2011/11/1953_archbishop_called_for_an.html), (accessed December 8, 2011).

<sup>448</sup> *Time*, “Archbishop Stands Firm.”

The integration of parishes did not bring much, if any, protest. White and African American Catholics were fine worshipping together as they had been for quite some time. The protest from parishioners came from Jesuit Bend, a town twenty miles outside New Orleans, because of an assumed threat to the hierarchy of the Catholic Church.

Archbishop Rummel sent Reverend Gerald Lewis, S.V.D., an African American priest, to St. Cecilia's Chapel to fill a void of weekend priests. When Reverend Lewis arrived on October 2, 1955 the parishioners along with the police, met Reverend Lewis at the door. The parishioners told Reverend Lewis, "Father, we know you've come to preach the word of God, but we can't afford to have a colored priest preach to our congregation."<sup>449</sup> They thought Father Lewis had been assigned to head the local parish. Father Lewis could not explain the reason for the police making their presence, and he did not ask. He simply abided by the white parishioner's "request" and turned to inform the responsible pastor of St. Cecilia's who then informed Archbishop Rummel.<sup>450</sup>

Upon hearing of the incident, Archbishop Rummel issued a letter that called the incident a clear "violation of the obligation of reverence and devotion which Catholics owe to every priest of God, regardless of race, color or nationality."<sup>451</sup> He then closed the parish, and two others that were within the vicinity of St. Cecilia's "until the members of those communities express their willingness to accept for service in these churches

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<sup>449</sup> "Priest Denied Pulpit. Archbishop Suspends Services in Church," *Long Beach Independent*, October 15, 1955.

<sup>450</sup> "Louisiana Negro Priest Claims Cops helped Stop Mass Service," *The Florence Morning News*, Thursday, October 27, 1955.

<sup>451</sup> "Archbishop Acts to Aid Negro Priest," *Anderson Herald*, Sunday, October 16, 1955.

whatever priest or priests we find it possible to send them.”<sup>452</sup> The parishioners too, held their ground, and brought a petition against Archbishop Rummel.

The Catholic laymen formed a local chapter of the Citizens Council group, more commonly referred to as the White Citizen’s Council, to protest the assignment of Reverend Lewis to St. Cecelia’s. It was supported by none other than the Catholic, political, white supremacist, and pro-segregationist District Attorney Leander Perez, Sr. of Plaquemine Parish Archbishop Rummel excommunicated. However, Archbishop Rummel never wanted to assign Reverend Lewis or any other priest as a permanent fixture to St. Cecilia’s. He was simply sending a priest to fill the shortage in the area. Archbishop Rummel could not even send in an African American priest to say one mass; the parishioners refused to listen.<sup>453</sup>

The Citizens Council announced in their petition that “integration was contrary to church teaching and assignment of Negro priests was a step toward breaking down the segregation barriers.”<sup>454</sup> This “breaking down of segregation barriers” is of course what Archbishop Rummel had attempted to do, but the parishioners at Jesuit Bend were not, as one leader of the movement stated, going to have the prelates “compel us to go against the way we were raised and the things we believe in.”<sup>455</sup>

Archbishop Rummel, however, had the backing of the Vatican. It was unusual to have written support from the Vatican in cases such as Jesuit Bend. No other statement from the Vatican on integration was made prior to Jesuit Bend and no other formal

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<sup>452</sup> Ibid.

<sup>453</sup> “Catholics Protesting Negro Priests,” *Indiana Evening Gazette*, Thursday, November 11, 1955.

<sup>454</sup> Ibid.

<sup>455</sup> Ibid.

writing occurred until 1958. Rummel also had the strong backing from a Vatican newspaper, *L'Osservatore Romano* was certainly extraordinary. The editorial board stated in their paper, “[r]acial exclusiveness is a sin against the nature of Catholicism. It is a negation of it and a blasphemy against it.”<sup>456</sup> They continued to argue that there was no room for exclusion, and to deny a priest was sacrilege. They concluded that “all Catholics were obliged by their religion and patriotism to aid and cooperate in this struggle by all available means.”<sup>457</sup> However, this was not the pope speaking, nor was it a high ranking ecclesiastical member from the Vatican. It was the newspaper of Vatican City, which was not an obscure newspaper, but one not readily read either by everyday Catholics in New Orleans. In other words, it was not law handed down by the highest power within the Vatican and therefore, if even read, did not have to be followed in the South, where customs differentiated.

The stand in Jesuit Bend lasted for two years and the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) led its own investigation under the direction of United States Attorney General George Blue and the head of the FBI, J. Edgar Hoover until Leander Perez’s death in 1969.<sup>458</sup> In the meantime, the integration of parochial schools in Louisiana, even those that were integrated since 1916, were not immune to violent attacks.

In the town of Erath, Louisiana, a French-Catholic community, Lula B. Ortemond, a white teacher at Our Lady of Lourdes Church ventured out one crisp

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<sup>456</sup> “Touches of Color,” *L'Osservatore Romano*, English trans., Joseph H. Fitcher Papers, Box 52, Folder 20, Monroe Library (New Orleans: Loyola University Archives).

<sup>457</sup> Ibid.

<sup>458</sup> Federal Bureau of Investigation files on Leander Perez.

November morning to attend rosary. While heading into the church, three women approached. One stopped Lula Ortemond while the other two women, Ella Romero and Lota Menard, beat Mrs. Ortemond.<sup>459</sup> Lula brought charges against her two assailants, leaving out the third woman, but the Right Reverend Bishop Jules Jeanmard of the Diocese of Lafayette, where the incident occurred, excommunicated all three women. In the style of the German priest Martin Luther, Bishop Jeanmard literally nailed the excommunication letter to the door of Our Lady of Lourdes. It was to remain there under threat of immediate excommunication until Bishop Jeanmard removed the letter himself. Bishop Jeanmard also told the parishioners at Our Lady of Lourdes that if any more violence or threats occurred, then automatic excommunication along with the closing of Our Lady of Lourdes, would take place.<sup>460</sup>

The pastor, Reverend Emery Labbe of Our Lady of Lourdes Church along with the African American children in attendance there received death threats. The reverend took a personal body guard to church with him.<sup>461</sup> According to Reverend Labbe, Our Lady of Lourdes integrated in 1916 and there had been no disturbances until “recent weeks.” Assumedly, he meant the Jesuit Bend incidents. Reverend Labbe and the children were threatened with violence from pro-segregationists if the church did not segregate.<sup>462</sup> While these were two different dioceses, they were in the collective south and Our Lady of Lourdes was not immune to attacks being fueled from outside sources.<sup>463</sup>

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<sup>459</sup> “Segregation Disturbs Catechism,” *Fairbanks News-Miner*, Tuesday, November 29, 1955.

<sup>460</sup> “Catholic Priest Threatened After Church Racial Dispute,” *Las Vegas Daily Optic*, November 11, 1955

<sup>461</sup> Ibid.

<sup>462</sup> “Church Ousts Three for Beating Teacher,” *Oshkosh Daily Northwestern*, Monday, November 28, 1955.

<sup>463</sup> Ibid

Another reason that things became heated was that Reverend Labbe who also taught catechism classes, asked his students to sit in alphabetical order, regardless of race. This infuriated the pro-segregationists who did not like the reverend going against the southern cultural norm of having African American children sitting in the back of the classroom.<sup>464</sup> The southern Catholics of Erath did not mind if African American children attended class with white children, as long as they remained separated within the classroom.

No more violent attacks occurred within Erath. The excommunicated women began their slow pilgrimage to become full, functioning members of the Church once again by visiting with priests, repenting, and writing a letter of apology to the bishop. Bishop Jeanmard lifted the excommunication from the women on December 1, 1955.<sup>465</sup> Reverend Labbe resumed catechism classes at Our Lady of Lourdes on December 5, 1955. The classes were fully integrated.<sup>466</sup>

The pro-segregationist stance in Louisiana grew stronger as the Catholic Church stood its ground on racial justice and even more so after the *Brown* ruling. After Bishop Jeanmard lifted the excommunication on the three women, white men of Erath formed a pro-segregationist group called The Southern Gentlemen's Organization of Louisiana; a competitive offshoot of the White Citizen's Council.<sup>467</sup> The White Boss of the Delta Leander Perez, Sr. vowed to fight the integration process after three federal judges in Orleans Parish ordered the integration of public schools. Perez asked for "men in

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<sup>464</sup> Bentley Anderson, "Prelates, protest, and public opinion," 9.

<sup>465</sup> "Excommunication of Women Lifted," *The Rhinelander Wisconsin Daily News*, December 2, 1955; research does not indicate what happened to the assault charges filed against Ella Romero and Lota Menard.

<sup>466</sup> Ibid.

<sup>467</sup> Bentley Anderson, "Prelates, protest, and public opinion," 10.

responsible positions in the state government willing to be charged with criminal contempt in violation of one of the court orders,” and Perez was willing to face contempt because “no Southern jury would convict...for standing up for the rights of the people.”<sup>468</sup>

Perez continued to attack the Catholic press for reminding parishioners of excommunication if they supported pro-segregation legislation.<sup>469</sup> It seemed as long as Leander Perez was unofficially “in office” within the State of Louisiana, those that favored integration, especially Catholics, faced stern opposition from the pro-segregationist groups formed with his support. The battle raged between Archbishop Rummel and Leander Perez for six more years.

Following more in line with Archbishop O’Boyle’s style of desegregation, the Right Reverend Bishop Vincent S. Waters of the Diocese of Raleigh refused to answer questions from the press. He even closed the integrated churches to the press, not allowing them to be present during services.<sup>470</sup>

Bishop Waters, whose education came from universities in Baltimore, North Carolina, and Rome, held the belief that “souls have neither race nor color.”<sup>471</sup> It was his education in Rome that led him to educate of African Americans and their situation in the Southern United States. In Rome, African Americans freely mingled, were educated, and were allowed to attend seminary colleges without reprisal. The encounters Bishop Waters had with African Americans in Rome led to his conviction that society was

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<sup>468</sup> “Integration Fight Pledged by Perez,” *New Orleans States*, March 10, 1956; Leander Perez file, FBI.

<sup>469</sup> Ibid.

<sup>470</sup> “Church Will Be Closed to Press,” *The Gastonia Gazette*, Thursday afternoon, May 28, 1953.

<sup>471</sup> “Bishop Waters Dies in Raleigh,” *The Gastonia Gazette*, Wednesday, December 4, 1974, 6B; “Priest Sees No Trouble As Segregation Ends Sunday,” *The Gastonia Gazette*, Wednesday afternoon, May 27, 1953.

gravely ill in his southern home. To Bishop Waters, racism and segregation were a disease that could only be cured by unification of faith. Bishop Waters also believed that “separate churches and schools were built for Negroes several years ago ‘to give a special impetus to the missionary work among the colored people.’”<sup>472</sup> Since the missionary work grew into parochial schools and parishes of their own right, Bishop Waters did not see a need to keep them separated.

Bishop Waters decided to begin in a small town called Newton Grove. As custom had it, there were two Catholic churches in Newton Grove; Holy Redeemer for whites and St. Benedict’s for African Americans.<sup>473</sup> The two churches were less than 200 yards from each other. In April of 1953, Bishop Waters sent a pastoral letter to Father Timothy Sullivan, the pastor at Holy Redeemer. The letter stated that the “Negro congregation of St. Benedict’s should be absorbed with no restrictions.”<sup>474</sup> The reactions from the congregation were mixed. Some agreed to abide by the bishop’s directive while others requested an audience to speak to the bishop. Others wrote and signed a petition to protest the decision. One family removed their children from Holy Redeemer’s parochial school and placed them in public schools so they did not attend with African American children.<sup>475</sup> Some African Americans protested as well.

One African American stated that he was “satisfied with the present segregated status of the church and he expects to attend mass in another town...”<sup>476</sup> Bishop Waters

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<sup>472</sup> “Bishop Bans Segregation in Carolina,” *Mason City Globe-Gazette*, June 22, 1953.

<sup>473</sup> Lindsay Ruebens, “Black and Catholic in North Carolina,” *Endeavors Magazine*, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, [http://endeavors.unc.edu/black\\_and\\_catholic\\_in\\_north\\_carolina\\_0](http://endeavors.unc.edu/black_and_catholic_in_north_carolina_0) (accessed January 8, 2012).

<sup>474</sup> “White and Negro Congregation Told to Merge,” *Robesonian*, Monday, May 25, 1953.

<sup>475</sup> “Priest Sees No Trouble As Segregation Ends Sunday,” *The Gastonia Gazette*

<sup>476</sup> *Ibid.*



was going to close St. Benedict's and have the African American congregation move into Holy Redeemer. This came as a loss of what the African Americans built for themselves. Some saw it as loss of community. Still others attended the integration of the churches without saying anything negative about the situation.<sup>477</sup> Others did not feel welcome in the newly integrated church and left.<sup>478</sup>

It is probable that the African American community of Newton Grove protested Bishop Waters' decision because they were not given a say in the matter. It may have appeased some African Americans if the option to remain in their own church was offered by Bishop Waters. Another viable option would leave the decision to African Americans to attend the white Catholic church of Holy Redeemer, if they wished. Bishop Water's, however, saw the two churches as separate and not unified under Catholic faith. Without consulting the African American Catholic community of Newton Grove prior to merging the two churches was a sign of disrespect to the African American community. They did not want to be the "guinea pigs" of racial integration within the Diocese of Raleigh. Consequently, the African American community of Newton Grove began to disappear.

On Sunday, May 31, 1953, Bishop Waters arrived unannounced in Newton Grove to personally oversee the merger.<sup>479</sup> When he arrived at Holy Redeemer, he did not receive a cordial greeting. Mobs of angry white parishioners jeered at the bishop as he entered the church. African Americans, the ones that attended, stood quietly, as if reluctant to enter the church. Even though Bishop Waters' sermon was calm and

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<sup>477</sup> Ruebens, "Black and Catholic in North Carolina."

<sup>478</sup> Ibid.

<sup>479</sup> Ibid.

reassuring, the anger did not subside from the white congregation. After the homilies, Bishop Waters went to the second floor of the rectory of Holy Redeemer where he listened to the parishioners in pairs.<sup>480</sup> Once again, he reiterated to each of the couples that segregation and racism was a disease. Segregation was darkness and the time had come for it to end.<sup>481</sup>

In a pastoral letter read to the congregations on June 12, 1953, Bishop Waters made his position clear one more time.<sup>482</sup> His letter stated,

Let me state here as emphatically as I can, that there is no segregation of races to be tolerated in any Catholic Church in the Diocese of Raleigh. [A]ll special churches for Negroes will be abolished immediately as lending weight to the false notion that the Catholic Church, the Mystical Body of Christ, is divided.<sup>483</sup>

His letter continued with a patriotic flare, “[m]ay the example of American soldiers who died to stamp out a philosophy of ‘the Master Race’ in a war with Hitler in Germany prevent us from following a similar course.”<sup>484</sup> He continued stating that prejudice was a virus only curable by the light of faith and it was the Christian duty to help African Americans obtain better educational facilities, living conditions, and jobs.<sup>485</sup>

This too went for the parish schools of the diocese. No separation of the races was tolerated, period. African Americans were thankful for the opportunity to have a choice for education that was not previously offered before. However, the African

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<sup>480</sup> Ibid.

<sup>481</sup> Ibid.

<sup>482</sup> Vincent S. Waters, Pastoral Letter of His Excellency to the Clergy and Laity of the Diocese of Raleigh, *North Carolina Catholic*, Friday, June 19, 1953 courtesy of the Archives of the Diocese of Raleigh.

<sup>483</sup> Ibid.

<sup>484</sup> Ibid.

<sup>485</sup> Ibid.

American community of Newton Grove only stayed long enough to obtain their parochial education and then they moved on to higher education outside the town.<sup>486</sup>

The desegregation of the Catholic churches and schools from Saint Louis to Raleigh formed a pattern of not only a unification of race by faith, but a dwindling of African American Catholic churches and schools within their communities. Contrary to the claims of other researchers, Archbishop Lucey did not officially desegregate his archdiocese one full year before the *Brown* decision. Archbishop Lucey did desegregate higher education but waited until a little over a month before releasing a pastoral letter desegregating high schools on down.

In various ways, Texas has always advertised that Catholic schools and churches were desegregated. It seems that there was a need to show that Texas was a forerunner for integration when in fact their schools and churches were the same as other parts of the South. The first known article regarding African American Catholics attending St. Mary's in Austin began in the *Democratic Statesman*, which referred to a "colored woman" receiving her rites of confirmation.<sup>487</sup> The history section of St. Mary's University in San Antonio touts they had "from the first day...welcomed children of all nationalities and religions."<sup>488</sup> This vague statement implies, or at the very least intimates, that African American children could be allowed to enter the school. It is more probable that the term "nationalities" in the statement, applies to the strong French and

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<sup>486</sup> Ruebens, "Black and Catholic in North Carolina."

<sup>487</sup> "Local Matters," *Tri-Weekly Statesman*, printed in the *Democratic Statesman*, Thursday, September 19, 1871.

<sup>488</sup> Diane Abdo, "Our History," St. Mary's University Website, <http://www.stmarytx.edu/sesqui/?go=noble> (accessed February 17, 2011).

Irish in the region at the time when the school was built. As Amilcar Shabaaz proves in his book, *Advancing Democracy*, St. Mary's University did not desegregate until 1952.<sup>489</sup>

Another statement of integration of Catholic schools came from the president of St. Edward's University Brother Elmo Bransby. Brother Bransby declared in a 1954 *Austin American* article that "to his knowledge race has never been a determining factor in a student's being accepted or excluded from a St. Edward's school."<sup>490</sup> At the time of the article, Brother Bransby stated that, "three Negroes enrolled in the junior high last September [and] four other Negroes attend college classes at St. Ed's."<sup>491</sup> Another article reported that, "St. Edward's High School has two Negro boys enrolled and there were Negro students there last year (1953)."<sup>492</sup>

The article went on to state that those parochial schools that were admitting African American children were in the cities of San Antonio, El Paso, Marfa, Austin, Fort Worth, and Corpus Christi.<sup>493</sup> The Diocese of El Paso claimed to have admitted African American students to their parochial schools for over the last two years along with Mexican-Americans and white children.<sup>494</sup> Those dioceses whose parochial schools showed a zero admission rate of African Americans stated that there were no applications for African Americans received at the schools.<sup>495</sup> The cities with no African American applications were Dallas, San Angelo, Houston, Waco, Abilene, Sherman, and

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<sup>489</sup> Amilcar Shabaaz, *Advancing Democracy. African Americans and the Struggle for Access and Equity in Higher Education in Texas*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2004): 130.

<sup>490</sup> "Shivers' Son Attending Nonsegregated St. Ed's: No Problem, Reports Head of School," *Austin American*, Tuesday, May 25, 1954, p. 13.

<sup>491</sup> Ibid.

<sup>492</sup> "Many Parochial Schools Accepting Negroes in Texas," *The Corpus Christi Caller-Times*, Sunday, September 26, 1954.

<sup>493</sup> Ibid.

<sup>494</sup> Ibid.

<sup>495</sup> Ibid.

Gainesville. When asked if their schools would admit an African American student if they applied the answer was a resounding “yes” from the different officials.<sup>496</sup>

The reason for not applying may have been that it was not advertised. When the time came for school enrollment, the advertisements within the newspapers depicted nicely dressed Dick and Jane type characters. Nowhere did the advertisements suggest that an African American could attend. It is probable that African American parents assumed that Catholic parochial schools did not accept African Americans, just as secular ones did not, and they left it at that. It was not until Archbishop Lucey published his pastoral letter in the newspaper, did an African American family take notice and realize that the local parochial school in their city of San Antonio would allow their son to attend.

Hailing from California, Archbishop Robert Lucey arrived in the Amarillo Diocese in 1934 as bishop. Seven years later, he was named Archbishop of San Antonio. While in California, Archbishop Lucey served four years as director of the Catholic Charities, ten years as director of hospitals, two terms as the president of the California Conference of Social Work, and remained an active member of the executive board of California State Department of Social Welfare.<sup>497</sup> Archbishop Lucey’s mindset, belief system, and training all delved deep into social welfare, which carried over in his work within Texas. He became nationally known for his social work within Texas when President Harry Truman appointed him to the Commission of Migratory Labor.

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<sup>496</sup> Ibid.

<sup>497</sup> Saul E. Bronder, “Robert Emmet Lucey,” TSHA—*Handbook of Texas Online*, <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/flu14> (accessed June 28, 2011).

Later, when Archbishop Lucey gave the invocation at the inauguration of President Lyndon Baines Johnson, it started a friendship and political unity between the United States government and the Catholic Church in Texas.<sup>498</sup> While the Kennedy administration toyed with parochial educational funding on a Constitutional level, no doubt due to President Kennedy being Catholic, the two institutions together would later prove to be a formidable force when it came to parochial education in Texas. The Texas legislature and the Catholic Church under Representative Callan Graham would unite to form stronger parochial educational funding and programs. Archbishop Lucey became an incredible influence in not only Texas politics, but national politics for Catholics.

Upon Archbishop Lucey's arrival in San Antonio in 1941, he created the seminary for social justice, a center where clergy could come and learn about particular issues that pertained specifically toward southern social justice.<sup>499</sup> Social Justice from the Catholic Church would not become Church doctrine until the 1960s. Though the terms social and justice were used interdependently prior to 1960, the term "social justice" became mainstream after the Second Vatican Council (Vatican II) in 1962. Each archdiocese or diocese began operating social justice departments. In the 1980s, the department names would change to Office for Peace and Justice, or Department of Catholic Charities. Though some Catholic offices kept the term "social" in their name, the term takes on a different meaning in the Catholic world versus the American political world. Putting the words "social," "socialism," or "socialist," into American vernacular did not set well with Catholics who were politically swayed to one side. Nor did the

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<sup>498</sup> Ibid.

<sup>499</sup> Ibid.

terms appeal to non-Catholics who began to view the Church in negative terms with acts of socialism as it pertained to the Marxist theory. Archbishop Lucey, however, began using the term in Texas, replacing the CIC term of interracial justice.

The clergy at the social justice seminary could use their knowledge to better educate their parishioners on equality and integration. By 1947, Archbishop Lucey created the Archdiocesan School Office.<sup>500</sup> Until this time, there was no real parochial education office that held parochial schools accountable or provided better funding. If the Catholic school was tied to a parish, then that parish provided for the funding, building, maintenance, and staffing of the school. This is why ethnic parishes and schools were community driven. If the Catholic school was independent, say from such philanthropists as Mother Katherine Drexel, the schools were privately funded, maintained, and staffed. There was no higher authority that oversaw the schools. This explains the fluctuation of parochial schools' existence. The offices of education for Catholic schools set the standards of education from budget and staffing to curriculum and maintenance. The Archdiocese of San Antonio set the standard for other dioceses within Texas to follow, allowing a shift in the pursuance of Catholic education. Austin would have its parochial educational office in 1963 headed by Bishop Reicher.

Six weeks prior to the ruling of *Brown I*, Archbishop Lucey published his pastoral letter in the Catholic newspaper he created for the archdiocese, the *Alamo Register*. It read, “[h]enceforth no Catholic child may be refused admittance to any school maintained by the archdiocese merely for reasons of color, race, or poverty.

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<sup>500</sup> Ibid.

Students...may no longer be denied a Christian education because of their color.”<sup>501</sup> One African American boy, Thomas Jones, took Archbishop Lucey up on his offer.

Thomas Jones was fourteen when the edict passed. His mother read in the newspaper that the archbishop opened all parochial schools to African American children.<sup>502</sup> Knowing that her son now had an opportunity to receive a quality education she enrolled Thomas into Catholic Central High School. The building was a huge, southwest style of architecture with a portico that towered over the street in a majestic courthouse fashion. It intimidated the young Thomas Jones. The school originated in 1852 from the Maranist order through then Bishop Odin.<sup>503</sup> It was an all-male facility centrally located in San Antonio. Thomas’ mother and father gently nudged him into the school to meet the headmaster Brother Henry, who instantly calmed Thomas and inspired him as well.<sup>504</sup>

Thomas lived in the southwest portion of San Antonio directly due east of where Lackland Airforce Base currently sits.<sup>505</sup> Crossing over from that side of town and riding a segregated bus six miles north to attend an integrated school was something Thomas found customary and at the same time, unusual. He did not know what to expect from his white school mates and assumed the worst.<sup>506</sup> Thomas expected to be treated like any

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<sup>501</sup> “Color, Race, Poverty, Cannot Bar Children from School. Archbishop’s Pastoral States Archdiocesan Plants Are Open to All,” *Alamo Register*, Friday, April 9, 1954.

<sup>502</sup> “The Texas Archbishop and the Negro Boy: two explorers beyond the dark sea of prejudice. An interview with His Eminence, Robert E. Lucey, Archbishop of San Antonio,” (Detroit, Michigan: UAW-CIO Education Department, 1954):19-20, courtesy of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin.

<sup>503</sup> Central Catholic High School, “History,” <http://www.cchs-satx.org/vnews/display.v/SEC/About%20Us%3E%3EHistory> (accessed February 1, 2012).

<sup>504</sup> The Texas Archbishop, 21.

<sup>505</sup> Ibid., 18; Google Maps.

<sup>506</sup> Ibid., 22



other African American going into the white world, but soon found the Catholic world to be far different.

Everyone at Catholic Central High was pleasant to Thomas and spoke to him as an equal. However, it took Thomas quite a long time to build trust in his fellow classmates. What turned the corner for Thomas was trying out for the football team. At the coaxing of his neighborhood friends who knew Thomas was a quick runner, Thomas decided to try out for a position on the team. He was hesitant at first, thinking that he was “volunteering himself for a beating.”<sup>507</sup> To his surprise he was wrong. Thomas found that his teammates hit clean and lifted him up off the turf after he was tackled.<sup>508</sup> There was a sense of unity that Thomas did not know at the age of fourteen could exist between the two races.

Crossing back and forth between a segregated and integrated world was difficult for Thomas. He was hailed as a hero, an adventurer, in his neighborhood. His friends on the other side of the tracks bombarded him with questions about the “other side.”<sup>509</sup> They wanted to know everything about the other world where Thomas was allowed to go every day. He certainly enjoyed going to the new school. He enjoyed learning new subjects and having the materials that made it possible. Thomas, however, could never truly be with his new friends. Once outside the Catholic school, he was segregated. Thomas could not sit next to his friend on the bus. He could not go to the same movie or sit at a lunch counter with his Catholic friends. Even though the *Brown* rulings mandated that separate was unequal, the secular world did not change as fast as African Americans

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<sup>507</sup> Ibid., 25.

<sup>508</sup> Ibid

<sup>509</sup> Ibid., 24.

wanted. Lawsuits were filed to make business owners of segregated establishment comply with the federal ruling. Attending an integrated high school was “nice” as Thomas said, but the world outside was waiting to change which made Thomas feel nervous and unaccepted.<sup>510</sup>

Soon after Archbishop Lucey made the official declaration to desegregate, other dioceses within the State followed suit. The Dioceses of Dallas, Corpus Christi, and El Paso were three that followed. The Diocese of Austin passed no official edict announcing the end of segregation. One reason may be that since the Diocese of Austin sat under the Archdiocese of San Antonio, what Archbishop Lucey mandated was what Bishop Reicher followed and automatically implemented within his own diocese. There was no need to publish a desegregation edict as the archbishop had already written such a letter.

As Austin had an all-African American Catholic parish and school in a segregated portion of the town, East Austin was indirectly changed by Archbishop Lucey’s edict, but it was the *Brown* decision that altered East Austin the most. The Holy Cross institutions in East Austin exemplify sociologist Aldon Morris’s position that segregation ironically produced positive outcomes until segregation could be overturned. If, as Aldon Morris states, that the irony of segregation fosters some positive outcomes, then the irony of integration must be that it breaks down those positive outcomes.

Longtime East Austin resident and business owner Ben Longbranch states,

I almost want to state that integration kind of hurt us because they just scattered us through the city of Austin. But it didn’t really. It helped us. But it kinda seems like we lost our roots when integration came,

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<sup>510</sup> Ibid., 26.

because I guess we wanted to see something different, and in order for that, we have to move out of East Austin.<sup>511</sup>

It is true that integration broke the thriving, segregated East Austin community. Gentrification in later years, beginning in 1996, specifically hindered the East Austin community making it unrecognizable to its founders. However, the ideology of a close community was never lost, due in large part to the Holy Cross institutes. They were the “ties that bind” the people together, who then passed their faith out to the community, and eventually into Austin proper.<sup>512</sup> The community foundation built by such civic minded people as the DeBlancs, Givens and Mosbys certainly provided continuity in bettering the community in and out of East Austin.

When integration finally allowed African Americans to move out of East Austin, they took with them the process of building close knit communities into the larger areas of Austin. One example is the Meals on Wheels program, which began in the Holy Cross parish basement.<sup>513</sup> Eight volunteers began cooking meals to feed homebound elderly East Austin neighbors. The program expanded from 29 homebound seniors to

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<sup>511</sup> Andrew M. Busch, “The Bridge to Ben’s: Connecting City Politics to Neighborhood Barbeque,” in *Republic of Barbeque. Stories Beyond the Brisket*, eds. Elizabeth S.D. Engelhardt and Marsha Abrahams, (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2009), 50, Google eBooks, <http://books.google.com/books?id=hc0ULBqlgVgC&lr=> (accessed September 2011).

<sup>512</sup> Blest Be the Ties That Bind is a 1782 hymn written by Dr. John Fawcett. The hymn became famous in the 1940 movie *Our Town*. The words are as follows: “Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love; the fellowship of kindred minds is like to that above. Before our Father’s throne we pour our ardent prayers; our fears, our hopes, our aims are one our comforts and our cares. We share each other’s woes, our mutual burdens bear; and often for each other flows the sympathizing tear. When we asunder part, it gives us inward pain; but we shall still be joined in heart and hope to meet again. The glorious hope revives our courage by the way; while each in expectation lives, and longs to see the day. From sorrow, toil and pain, and sin, we shall be free and perfect love and friendship reign through all eternity.” Semblances of the East Austin community can be found in this hymn.

<sup>513</sup> HCP, “Our Faith Story.”

330 people in five years. Today, they serve over 4,000 homebound residents within the Austin city limits.<sup>514</sup>

Several highly respected parishioners are community leaders that continue to serve, change, and better the Austin community. Former State Representative Wilhemina Delco and first woman Speaker Pro Tempore of the House of Representatives improved the East Austin community. She graduated from Wendall Phillips High School in Chicago, Illinois and attended Fisk University in Tennessee majoring in sociology with a minor in economics.<sup>515</sup> While at Fisk, she met and married Dr. Exalton A. Delco. They moved to Austin in 1957.<sup>516</sup> She became involved in many educational founding and advisory boards and councils and is responsible for moving the airport out of East Austin.<sup>517</sup> Another respected civic leader and member of Holy Cross Parish is Gary Bledsoe, the Texas president of the NAACP.<sup>518</sup> His wife, Alberta Phillips is an editorial writer for the *Austin-American Statesman*.<sup>519</sup>

Since the *Brown* decision allowed African Americans to break out of East Austin and expand their horizons, the once densely settled, walk-able community became scattered. There was no longer a need to educate children locally, as busing programs slowly began the integration process. As with most of the African American parochial institutions built before the *Brown* decision, many were either altered such as St. Peter's

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<sup>514</sup> Meals on Wheels and More, "About Us," <http://www.mealsonwheelsandmore.org/about-us/>, (accessed November 3, 2011).

<sup>515</sup> Phyllis Earles, "Wilhemina Delco Biography", Prairie View A&M University, Wilhemina Delco Collection, <http://www.pvamu.edu/pages/3833.asp>, (accessed October 9, 2011).

<sup>516</sup> Ibid.

<sup>517</sup> Joan Bahner and Jennifer York, "Delco, Wilhemina R. 1929-," Contemporary Black Biography, *Encyclopedia.com*, 2002, <http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1G2-2873500024.html>, (accessed November 17, 2011).

<sup>518</sup> Gregor, "Holy Uproar."

<sup>519</sup> Ibid.

Claver which transformed into the Margaret Healy Center in San Antonio. Most of the smaller African American parochial schools closed altogether.

Before the *Brown* decision the business district of East Austin at 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Streets was, as Dr. Charles Urdy a former professor at Huston-Tillotson puts it, “the heart and soul of East Austin.”<sup>520</sup> Dr. Urdy also stated that the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Street district was where “most people spent their time outside of work. Most people only left East Austin to go to work.”<sup>521</sup> After *Brown*, the boundaries of East Austin were open, and the decline of the community began. This affected the public schools in East Austin as Anderson High School and Kealing Junior High both closed in order to force integration when the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW) filed suit against the Texas Education Agency.<sup>522</sup>

In addition, the Holy Cross Parish School was affected but not due to enrollment. The Sisters of the Immaculate Conception that had taught at the school from 1941 numbered only seven for 225 children making the class ratio of 32:1. The issue with the Sisters was that only forty of the 225 students were Catholic. They decided to leave the school because the Catholic influence in the community was dwindling. In addition to the lowering of Catholic presence, the population itself was diminishing due to integration and therefore, the Sisters decided to leave the school. Having no real means to sustain a school system, the parishioners and council members of the Holy Cross

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<sup>520</sup> KLRU Austin Now. “East Austin Gentrification.”

<sup>521</sup> Ibid.

<sup>522</sup> Nanette Arnold, “May Close: Anderson Faces Uncertainty,” *Austin Citizen*, Thursday, June 10, 1971, AHC; further reading on *United States v. Texas Education Agency* may be found at <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/jru02>.

Parish opted to drop the school from a K-8 facility to a daycare.<sup>523</sup> When the upper portion of the school disbanded, the children were admitted to Kealing Junior High or Allan Junior High. The elementary children were transferred out into other Austin elementary schools.<sup>524</sup>

The convent where the Sisters lived became neglected. An attempt to revitalize the community in the 1960s began the architectural remodeling of the house, causing the convent to become less of the original structure. This changed its historical status in the eyes of some members of the community. The Holy Cross Parish did not have the funds to keep the house in its original condition but the Blackshear Neighborhood Association and the Historic Landmark Commission continue the fight for the historic preservation of the convent.<sup>525</sup>

The shifts in the Catholic social consciousness along with the changes in the court system allowed modifications within parochial institutions. The mindset of some prelates, such as Archbishop Glennon's inability to separate church and state overflowed to parishioners who believed that separate parochial schools were state law. Those Catholic leaders who were not content with the law, but rather saw segregation as a morality issue, were able to separate church and state despite what Jim Crow stipulated, thus enacting change. Though the Catholic desegregation movement up until *Brown* was small, it enacted powerful changes not only socially, but politically. The Catholic desegregation movement before *Brown* influenced secular and federal decision processes.

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<sup>523</sup> Kuhr, 135.

<sup>524</sup> Texas Catholic Schools History Questionnaire, CAT.

<sup>525</sup> Gregor, "Holy Uproar."

It also affected the certain outcomes of African American communities such as Newton Grove and East Austin.

The prelates who altered their viewpoint of segregation from social to moral were successful in desegregating their dioceses. National affairs brought forth recognition to these prelates to reexamine the Church's view on segregation and racism. The realization that Scripture and the views of the Church contradicted one another made certain prelates realize that segregation was not just a social problem. The educational efforts put forth by the CIC on interracial justice also swayed these prelates to make a change. In addition, WWII and the modern Civil Rights Movement that was beginning to gain momentum in the 1940s, made the prelates realize that if indeed segregation and racism was a social problem, then to do nothing about it would make it a moral one.

Though opposition arose, New Orleans being the most prominent, change was still a viable option. Even if parishioners did not truly feel swayed by the prelate's preaching that segregation was a mortal sin, they still respected the Catholic Church and their faith enough to follow their leader. At times, they did want to be heard and felt that organizing an oppositional front was the only way. However, when the prelates threatened excommunication, cooler heads prevailed and the opposition subsided. Some, such as Leander Perez did not mind excommunication, believing more strongly in his political segregationist stance over keeping his faith and ties to the Church.

As the Catholic Church was slow to implement education for African Americans, the United States Supreme Court also took a cautious approach when ruling on the *Brown* case. In May of 1955, the US Supreme Court ruled to desegregate schools with "all

deliberate speed,” meaning to move slowly and cautiously.<sup>526</sup> The reaction from the Catholic Church however, was by no means cautious or slow. The heads of schools, local bishops, and archbishops did not hesitate to desegregate their schools choosing to take the law of the land in literal terms, abide by it, and set forth the ruling within their dioceses. They returned to the unity of government doctrine. The Southern clergy reacted much more quickly than the secular sector, which indicates that the Catholic Church had no desire to entertain Jim Crow anymore. They stood up to the morality of the issue.

They did not think, however, of how integration affected communities such as East Austin. The secular schools in East Austin, Anderson, Kealing, and Blackshear, underwent many changes after the *Brown* decision and some closed down. The Holy Cross Parish School also began to change. Other African American parochial schools within Texas in San Antonio, Dallas, Houston, and Galveston were greatly affected by *Brown* and either closed or transformed and merged into different schools

These changes made the Catholic Church in Texas turn towards its State legislators to find a way to keep the Catholic parochial educational system afloat. The combination of the Texas Education Agency, along with local State Representatives helped the Catholic Church in their efforts to educate. Therefore, not only did the *Brown* decision affect the secular school system, but the parochial one as well. While the Catholic Church backed the *Brown* decision, it meant they were also going to have to back the decision of African American Catholics who wanted to move forward to obtain a better life and education; even if that meant losing the parish school. This is certainly

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<sup>526</sup> Ogletree, 9.



what Archbishops Ritter, O'Boyle, Rummel, Lucey, and Bishop Waters desired the entire time.

The dissolution of African American parochial educational institutions did not mean a loss of education for African Americans, nor did it mean a loss of their faith. It was a sign of the times that change had finally come to the Jim Crow South. The closing of schools meant that African Americans were now truly allowed to begin their freedom of choice in education. The dissolving of parochial institutions became a symbol of a positive gain for an entire race.

## CONCLUSION

Parochial education for African Americans within Texas began and eventually was unified by the individual efforts of clergy who saw racism and segregation as immoral. At the start, parochial education was offered as a charitable source. It was also an alternative means to public education which floundered under oppressive state law. Federal help, under the Freedmen's Bureau, to establish education in Texas for African Americans was short lived. After 1884, Galveston Catholic clergy offered African Americans a choice to have an education. Though it may have been a paternalistic, charitable institution, the Catholic Church in the United States was at least willing to do something for the education of African Americans despite the discriminatory sentiments directed at both the Catholic Church and African Americans. Bishops Gallagher and Byrne, along with Margaret Healy Murphy, Katharine Drexel, and Father Weber in East Austin, were instrumental in bringing the Catholic parochial educational system to African American Texans. Their initiatives and commitments set the example for subsequent bishops to follow in other dioceses such as Bishop Neraz of the Diocese of San Antonio and Bishop Dunne of the Diocese of Dallas.

With the passing of the *Brown* decision, the African American parochial educational system began to flounder and the 1960s began to be a turning point for the Catholic Church in the United States. By 1958, the Catholic Church began to address racism as a church concern. Only three pastoral letters came from the Catholic

Church: *Discrimination and the Christian Conscience* in 1958, *The National Race Crisis* in 1968, and *Brothers and Sisters to Us* in 1979. About every ten years, the Catholic Church in the United States offered some statement regarding the social concerns of the U.S. and only one brought any effective change.

During April of 1968 with the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr. and the first annual meeting of the National Black Catholic Congress (NBCC), demands for change earnestly appeared within the United States Catholic Church. This came as a result of the NBCC meeting which blatantly stated that the Catholic Church was a “white racist institution.”<sup>527</sup> The response from the U.S. Catholic Bishops was the letter *National Race Crisis*, where for the first time the Catholic Church dropped its reluctant, cautious tone and put into action effective measures without the pious, doctrinal praxis statements of the Church. It was the year that formal segregation ended in all Catholic institutions within the United States without stating racism as a sin.<sup>528</sup>

More African American clergy were brought into the Church and several African American organizations were formed in accordance to the NBCC. These groups were: the National Black Sisters’ Conference, the National Black Lay Caucus, and the National Black Seminarians’ Association. The National Office for Black Catholics organized and headquartered in Washington, D.C. and it became the agency for advocating African American Catholic concerns within the United States.

By 1970, race issues regarding education were being brought to the forefront of American culture again when busing was instituted to make *de facto* segregation fall in

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<sup>527</sup> Bryan N. Massingale, *Racial Justice and the Catholic Church*, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2010): 58.

<sup>528</sup> *Ibid.*, 61-62.

line with *de jure* segregation. The result from the Church was a letter issued in 1979, *Brothers and Sisters to Us*. It was minimally reviewed and with little press coverage, most Catholic bishops and most lay Catholics were unaware of this letter's existence. It did little to help the educational dilemmas of busing and integration of schools. Though this was the first time the U.S. Bishops collectively declared racism as a sin, the letter did little to rally Catholics into action. Instead, the letter called once again, for *individuals* to learn about the effects of racism on economy, education, and social relativity concerning the economically disadvantaged. The Church's responsibility was to commit itself to self-renewal and inner reflection regarding racism.<sup>529</sup> Once again, the Church took a backseat, letting individual African American Catholic organizations enact and advocate for change.

Some prelates desegregated their institutions years before *Brown*, but Texas parochial schools only started truly practicing desegregation just weeks prior to the *Brown* decision. As the Dioceses of Indianapolis, St. Louis, Washington, D.C., New Orleans, and Raleigh began to desegregate their dioceses long before *Brown* it was still an influence to Texas prelates such as Archbishop Lucey. In Texas, the *Brown* decision had more influence on parochial education to desegregate even though Archbishop Lucey called for desegregation six weeks prior. It was the unification of government, the law of the land that Catholics adhered, which allowed change to occur within the African American parochial educational system in Texas.

After the *Brown* decision, more African Americans began to move out of their communities. This stressed the enrollment numbers at schools such as Holy Rosary in

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<sup>529</sup> *Brothers and Sisters to US*, the U.S. Catholic Bishops Pastoral Letter on Racism, 1979, CAT.

Galveston, St. Nicholas in Houston, and Holy Cross Parish in East Austin. Though the schools in these communities closed, all three parishes are operational today.

In Galveston, Holy Rosary, the first African American parochial institution built within the State of Texas operated as a K-12 facility until 1941, when it reduced to an elementary school. It operated as such until 1979, when decreased enrollment and desegregation forced the school to close. In Houston, St. Nicholas, the African American school that opened within months of Holy Rosary, decided to discontinue its high school program. Enrollment was down in both the parish and the school and funds could not be found from outside sources to keep the school afloat. The last eighteen students graduated on May 21, 1967.<sup>530</sup> As parents began sending their children to public schools due to desegregation, the funding of the school waned as tuition costs did not cover the expenses of the school. Father John Hardman, the pastor of St. Nicholas announced that the school would close its doors on May 27, 1971.<sup>531</sup>

Finally, in East Austin, Holy Cross Parish School operated until 1960. By 1952, the school had approximately 200 students, which was a large number considering the area. However, most all the students were non-Catholic and the sisters that ran the institution desired to be in a location that contained Catholic converts. They thought their services would be of better use somewhere else, and so they left the school. Not having any real funding to back the school, the decision was made to close the school entirely. Families chose not to have their children attend St. Mary's parochial school or St. Edward's High School for Boys partially because of tuition costs and partly because of

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<sup>530</sup> SNHC.

<sup>531</sup> Ibid.

pride. They kept their children in East Austin public schools because of the sense of community they had built. Other parochial schools in Austin desegregated immediately in response to the *Brown* decision, with the exception of one, St. Andrew's Episcopal School.

Other schools such as St. Peter's Academy in Dallas and St. Peter Claver Church and School in San Antonio became stable fixtures within the community, adapting to desegregation. Though today they no longer serve an all-African American community, they are still stable institutions that help educate the area.

St. Peter's Academy demolished its school in 1954 and through generous donations from various benefactors; a new building was erected, staffed by the Sisters of the Holy Spirit. By the mid 1980s the Polish community expanded into the area and the parish and school agreed to integrate both African American and Polish communities into one church. Today, a Polish priest heads the congregation.<sup>532</sup>

St. Peter Claver Church and School in San Antonio flourished throughout much of the twentieth century. After the *Brown* decision however, the need for St. Peter Claver diminished as the African American population decreased. The Sisters of the Holy Spirit reorganized the school's curriculum and ideologies. They transformed the school into the Healy-Murphy Center, named after the founder. The school kept its ideology of helping youth in crisis, but this time shifted its directive to pregnant teenagers, those at risk for dropping out of school, dropouts, and those that had difficulty in a regular school setting.<sup>533</sup> In essence, it was turned into an alternative school for teenagers.

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<sup>532</sup> Landregan, Catholic Schools, Diocese of Dallas, "About Us."

<sup>533</sup> Healy-Murphy Center, "About Us."

The alternative choice for education that the Catholic Church provided to African American Texans proved to be a more stable, organized institution than that of the African American public educational system. This is not to say that the Catholic Church's curriculum in their parochial schools surpassed that of the African American public system. Both educational systems engaged in classic curriculum and trade schools. In addition, the two educational systems were both self-sustained by the African American communities. What produced the African American Catholic parochial educational system into longevity was that the institutions had a triple commitment.

First, the clergy was committed to bringing in and sustaining the education program of African Americans despite racial ideology and anti-clericalism. Inside, the clergy were a stable, although at times, a paternalistic and discriminatory institution. They were able to access foreign sources to help fund the parochial institutions for African Americans. For example, Father Keller, the head of Holy Rosary Parish in Galveston, partially funded the school from the Ludwig-Missionsverein in Bavaria, Germany where he was born.<sup>534</sup>

Second, an ecclesiastical legislation with fixed decrees allowed prelates and laymen to follow the written directives from the Church. There was no re-writing of laws as seen in U.S. State and Federal governments to support and maintain the white planter class. What the Roman Curia stated was solid. Their decrees were meant to be implemented within the United States Catholic Church, but U.S. bishops often interpreted the decrees to meet their current situations, especially those in the South. U.S. bishops could choose to follow the written decrees, dismiss them, or pass them along to priests

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<sup>534</sup> Baker, "Holy Rosary School and Church," 23.

and parishioners to make their own decisions. Finally, there was the African American community. Communities in Dallas and East Austin knew the benefits of having a Catholic institution within their reach.

These members requested, sought after, and helped build the Catholic institutions that became vital components to their community. They instituted Catholic grass roots movement that brought forth services not being rendered by the State. It was this unshakable faith from the clergy, stable ecclesiastical law, and African American community support that allowed African American Catholic parochial education to remain intact in Texas until 1954.



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### **Periodicals**

*Endeavors Magazine*

*Jet Magazine*

*Time Magazine*

## **VITA**

Stephanie Suzann Sorensen was born in Lubbock, Texas on August 29, 1971 to Adrian Clinton Swafford and Kathleen Boyter. She married Greg Allen Sorensen on March 12, 1994. After the adoption of their two children, Erik and Joe, she enrolled in Austin Community College and completed her Associate of Arts in History in 2003. She then enrolled in St. Edward's University where she completed her Bachelor of Arts in History in 2005. In the interim, she applied and received an internship with the Texas State Cemetery in 2004. After graduation from St. Edward's, the Cemetery hired her full time as a historian for the State. Stephanie worked there for approximately two years.

In August of 2006, she entered graduate school at Texas State University-San Marcos and obtained a position as an instructional assistant in the history department. Upon completing a year of graduate work, Stephanie placed her graduate work on hold to have her first baby, Reagan. After he was old enough, Stephanie returned to Texas State in 2010 to complete her Master of Arts in History.

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