

# Urban Rifts and Religious Reciprocity: Chicago and the Catholic Church, 1965-1996

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URBAN RIFTS AND RELIGIOUS RECIPROCITY:  
CHICAGO AND THE CATHOLIC CHURCH, 1965-1996

by

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ABSTRACT  
URBAN RIFTS AND RELIGIOUS RECIPROCITY:  
CHICAGO AND THE CATHOLIC CHURCH, 1965-1996

Dominic E. Faraone

Marquette University, 2013

From the late 1960s onward, a sequence of unusually transformative, combustible, and sometimes alarming urban phenomena beset the city of Chicago and bred considerable turmoil and uncertainty: post-industrial transition; street gang activity and unprecedented levels of interpersonal violence; the political ascendancy in 1983 of African American reform candidate Harold Washington to the mayor's seat; gay liberation; and AIDS. Each accentuated a host of social and/or spatial rifts—between the deteriorating city and comparatively thriving suburbs; the economically impoverished, culturally alienated, and frequently isolated inner city and the rest of Chicago; machine and reform politicians; Black lawmakers and White “ethnics”; sexual majorities and minorities; and the physically sick and the healthy.

These developments also challenged the historic liberalism, confidence, and institutional breadth of Chicago Catholicism during the tenures of Cardinal Archbishops John Cody (1965-1982) and Joseph Bernardin (1982-1996). Fueled by diverse material and theological interests—such as the Church's immense human and financial investments in neighborhoods, the Second Vatican Council's teachings to engage the secular world and root out poverty and injustice, religious order charisms, and a strong heritage of social activism—the archdiocese and religiously-motivated Catholics marshaled a distinctive brand of *religious reciprocity*, which encouraged Chicagoans to recognize that they were interdependent and embedded within an urban and metropolitan community. Reciprocity also signified that it was the responsibility of the Church to recognize Chicagoans' common grievances, bring them to the fore, initiate dialogue among people, and encourage the mutual exchange of talents and treasure. Although sometimes stifled or camouflaged by Cardinal Cody's desire to centralize control of the archdiocese in his own hands, this impulse to foster discourse, collaboration, and interdependency was pivotal to a city wracked by social polarization and spatial segregation. Finally, reciprocity encouraged Catholics to be receptive to secular enrichment. A notable segment of the faithful reasoned that the daily experiences of city residents should inform Catholic pastoral practices, while others touted that urban trauma was not uniformly negative; spiritual renewal could blossom from witnessing or participating in human suffering.

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Dominic E. Faraone

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I have been blessed with a very warm extended family. The unflinching love, compassion, assistance, and encouragement of my parents, Bernard and Laurette, and siblings Katie, Ben, Tessa, and Juliette directly led to the completion of this project. They have never ceased sharing with me their joy, imagination, wonder, and song, as well as their irreplaceable gifts of perspective. Additionally, I am indebted to Stuart A. Green for his friendship, constancy, and wit. Finally, my language is incapable of describing the love and gratitude that I hold for my wife, Justine, and my children Gabriel and Elena. The lives of my Beloved are reaffirmations that God was never unaware of the silent longings of my heart; each of them has given clarity to the purpose of my earthly existence.

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## ARCHIVES/ABBREVIATIONS

ABPA	Alexian Brothers Provincial Archives
AAC	Archives of the Archdiocese of Chicago
ALUC	Archives of Loyola University Chicago
AULNU	Archives of the United Library of the Garret-Evangelical and Seabury-Western Theological Seminaries, Northwestern University
AUIC	Archives of the University of Illinois at Chicago
AUND	Archives of the University of Notre Dame
CHM	Chicago History Museum, Research Center
CPLHW	Chicago Public Library, Harold Washington Archives and Collections
CMA	Claretian Missionary Archives
WLALUC	Women and Leadership Archives of Loyola University Chicago



## COMMONLY USED NEWSPAPERS/ABBREVIATIONS

CC	<i>Chicago Catholic</i>
CDN	<i>Chicago Daily News</i>
CD	<i>Chicago Defender</i>
CNW	<i>Chicago New World</i>
CR	<i>Chicago Reporter</i>
CST	<i>Chicago Sun Times</i>
CT	<i>Chicago Tribune</i>
NCR	<i>National Catholic Reporter</i>
NYT	<i>New York Times</i>
WSJ	<i>Wall Street Journal</i>

## *Introduction*

### *Religion and American Life*

Religion has significantly influenced the physical and human development of urban areas in the United States. American cities have not exclusively been products of economic and demographic forces. Nor have historical actors made decisions based solely or even primarily on “secular” race, class, or gender considerations. As this dissertation argues, religious bodies and institutions have helped to determine how cities are built and maintained; theological traditions have informed the worldviews and motivated the every-day behavior of many individuals—“ordinary” city-dwellers as well as wielders of economic and political power. An honest appraisal of urban history, therefore, demands that religion be taken seriously as a category of analysis.

In a brief essay published in 1996, urban historian Kathleen Neils Conzen identified numerous ways that religious institutions and beliefs have, and continue to, shape city life. Conzen’s insights have informed this dissertation, which investigates the relationship between the city of Chicago and the Catholic Church between 1965 and 1996. Conzen offers a two-fold argument: first, that religion influences city development; and second, that urbanization has a significant bearing on how faith is practiced.

Conzen explains that “three foci tend to frame the urban history project: a concern with the city system and the concentrations of people and functions that define it; a concern with how the city as a corporate body maintains order and prosperity; and a concern with the way people live in cities and with the societies and cultures the people

construct.”<sup>1</sup> According to Conzen, religion has influenced all three facets of urban development. A few examples are illustrative.

Churches, parochial schools, hospitals, nursing homes, and other religiously-affiliated institutions perform the pivotal community-forming function of enticing to the city families and individuals such as students and job-seekers. Religious edifices also embody financial investments in the city, maintain or raise local property values, and thereby anchor urban neighborhoods. Church halls and school auditoriums help to preserve community amity, sometimes providing forums where diverse constituencies can meet to discuss and resolve neighborhood problems. City maintenance is also promoted by the voluntary charity of individual worshippers and church-established welfare agencies that supplement public provisions to the needy and impoverished. Finally, religion crafts worldviews—addressing the deepest dilemmas of human existence such as the purpose of this life, or what comes after it—and provides moral guidelines for individual behavior. Thus equipped, believers distinguish the moral from the immoral, establish criteria for public morality, and attempt to fashion civic culture to harmonize with a religiously-informed understanding of a “good society.” These are merely a handful of the ways that religion has shaped urban history in the United States. The other half of Conzen’s argument is equally important: urbanization has reciprocally altered how religion is practiced. Conditions peculiar to cities—such as limited physical space, or extreme demographic density and pluralism—have had a considerable bearing on how congregants understand and fulfill their religious obligations in the city. Conzen’s

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<sup>1</sup> Kathleen Neils Conzen, “The Place of Religion in Urban and Community Studies,” *Religion and American Culture: A Journal of Interpretation* 6, no. 2 (Summer: 1996): 111.

persuasive essay illuminates the intricate web of conspicuous as well as latent relations that mesh religion and urban life.

Naturally, the manifestation of religion in American urban history has varied widely across epochs and regions. A brief consideration of the contrasting historical experiences of worshippers in the American West and Midwest may demonstrate the point. The practice of religion in the West has been characterized as singularly “eclectic.” The region’s unique history of demographic migrations and conquest gradually encouraged coexistence among different faiths, such as Christianity, Native American spirituality, Buddhism, and eventually deinstitutionalized New Age spiritualities. Religious identities are “fluid;” in cities such as Los Angeles and San Francisco, residents feel “remarkably free to absorb aspects of other traditions into their spiritual lives.”<sup>2</sup> Religion in the Midwest, which is the region that concerns this dissertation, also embodies unique characteristics. According to Philip Barlow, these include very high rates of affiliation (at least 75 percent of the population) to a church or religion in a large vertical “suspender” of counties that descend from North Dakota to Kansas; substantial pockets of Lutherans in the upper Midwest; and a Methodist belt that runs east to west through the middle of the region. A fourth conspicuous feature of Heartland religion is the “dominating presence” of Roman Catholics. Heavy European immigration in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries transformed the Catholic Church into the largest denomination in every Midwestern state except North Dakota.<sup>3</sup> While Catholics form majorities in other U.S. regions, Jay P. Dolan has contended that the

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<sup>2</sup> Mark Silk, “Defining Religious Pluralism in America: A Regional Analysis,” *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 612 (July 2007): 71.

<sup>3</sup> Philip Barlow, “A Demographic Portrait: America Writ Small?,” in *Religion and Public Life in the Midwest: America’s Common Denominator?*, ed. Philip Barlow and Mark Silk (Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira, 2004), 24-31.

“type” of Catholics who settled in the Midwest distinguished the region. Large numbers of German Catholics populated the Heartland in the mid-nineteenth century. Midwest Catholicism thereafter developed “beyond the pale” of the Irish-dominated East Coast Church, which was characterized by an “intense institutional structure” and “legalistic mentality,” and was “less open to innovation.” The Midwest was fertile ground for ecclesial experimentation, adaptation, and reform, particularly in the twentieth century.<sup>4</sup>

### *Religion, Chicago-Style*

The “liveliness” of Heartland religion is unmistakable in Chicago, the most populous and demographically diverse urban center in the Midwest. Here, religion “spill[s] out of traditional forms,” historian John Kloos writes, and “into public life.”<sup>5</sup> Elfriede Wedam and Lowell W. Livezey agree that “religious institutions are active agents in the restructuring of the Chicago region, even as the many structures of the region alter the face of religion itself.”<sup>6</sup> That the area in and around Chicago has been the locus for national and international religious events, important personas, and denominations validates this dynamism. The city famously hosted the seventeen-day World’s Parliament of Religion in 1893 during the World’s Columbian Exposition; the first U.S. meeting of the World Council of Churches (Evanston) in 1954; and the Second Parliament of the World’s Religions in 1993. A handful of influential churchmen have

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<sup>4</sup> Jay P. Dolan, “A Different Breed of Catholics,” in *Religion and Public Life in the Midwest: America’s Common Denominator?*, ed. Philip Barlow and Mark Silk (Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira, 2004), 111-112. Dolan records that only 23 percent of the population in the Midwest is Catholic, which is “considerably less” than the New England Catholic population (42 percent) and the Middle Atlantic region (37 percent), and “somewhat less” than the Pacific Region (29 percent).

<sup>5</sup> John Kloos, “Chicago,” in *The American Midwest: An Interpretive Encyclopedia*, eds. Richard Sisson, Christian Zacher, and Andrew Cayton (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2007), 708-711.

<sup>6</sup> Elfriede Wedam and Lowell W. Livezey, “Religion in the City on the Make,” in *Religion and Public Life in the Midwest: America’s Common Denominator?*, ed. Philip Barlow and Mark Silk (Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira, 2004), 160.

operated in Chicago, such as Protestant revivalists Dwight L. Moody and Billy Sunday, who held massive evangelical gatherings there. Nearby Wheaton College educated evangelist Billy Graham, and Jesse Jackson founded Operation PUSH (People United to Save Humanity) in Chicago, which later became the Rainbow/PUSH Coalition. Today, a plethora of denominations are headquartered in the Chicago area, such as the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; the Nation of Islam, led by the outspoken Louis Farrakhan; and the U.S. offices of the Baha'i faith (Wilmette). Thirty-six Evangelical Protestant "megachurches" are also located in Cook County. Some of the largest and nationally-recognized are Willow Creek Community Church, which began in the 1970s and today weekly attracts over 17,000 congregants to its 155 acres in South Barrington, and Trinity United Church of Christ, pastored by Jeremiah Wright and formerly attended by current President Barack Obama.<sup>7</sup> All testify to the continuing effervescence of religion in Chicago.

Arguably, Catholicism has exerted a cultural and political influence on the city unrivaled by any other faith tradition.<sup>8</sup> Since the immigrant waves of the mid-nineteenth century, the Catholic Church has claimed the most adherents of any denomination. Fueled by fears of Protestant proselytism and the desire to maintain ethnic and religious

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<sup>7</sup> Barney Warf and Morton Winsberg, "Geographies of Megachurches in the United States," *Journal of Cultural Geography* 27, no. 1 (February 2010): 43.

<sup>8</sup> The legal boundaries of the City of Chicago are comprised of "community areas." In 1930, scholars at the Social Science Research Committee of the University of Chicago first delineated seventy five community areas. In defining boundaries, they considered: "1) the settlement, growth, and history of the area; 2) local identification with the area; 3) the local trade area; 4) distribution of membership of local institutions; and 5) natural and artificial barriers such as the Chicago river and its ranches, railroad lines, local transportation systems, and parks and boulevards." For census and government purposes, the contours of community areas have remained essentially unchanged to the present day, although two new community areas have been added. Scholars customarily conflate the community areas with the "central city." This dissertation does as well. Within the community areas are some one hundred and seventy neighborhoods. Neighborhood boundaries are more malleable than community areas. See The Chicago Fact Book Consortium, eds., *Local Community Fact Book, Chicago Metropolitan Area, 1990* (Chicago: University of Illinois, 1995), xvii.

identities in the New World, Germans, Irish, Poles, and others immigrant contingents constructed a massive institutional infrastructure, which bolstered Catholicism's public profile. As in other Midwestern cities, immigrants built parishes, elementary and secondary schools, colleges and universities, seminaries, hospitals, nursing homes, orphanages, cemeteries, and formed a host of ethnic and religious associations. Episcopal policies facilitated the vast institutional network. The Catholic Church is geographically organized—dioceses are typically divided into territorial parishes. Canon law, however, also allows the formation of national parishes that are defined by language rather than territory. Archbishop James Quigley (1903-1915) established a diocesan policy whereby one English-speaking territorial parish—which often served the Irish—would be constructed per square mile in the city. Sensitive to the fact that the Chicago diocese was demographically pluralistic, Quigley simultaneously permitted Chicago's many non-English speaking Catholics to establish national parishes. These were typically built in industrial areas, such as the stockyards and steel mills, which were immigrant entry points. Parishioners of a particular ethnicity could thereby worship together and listen to sermons in Old World languages, regardless of where they resided in the city. As a result, Chicago's inner city neighborhoods became home to multiple Catholic churches, territorial and national. For people with scarce financial means, the construction of hundreds of parishes was an impressive achievement.<sup>9</sup>

Parish life was central to residential neighborhoods. Schools and churches bound people together in an unfamiliar urban environment. Ellen Skerrett has commented that

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<sup>9</sup> Ellen Skerrett, Edward R. Kantowicz, and Steven M. Avella, "What Has Made Chicago Catholicism Distinctive," in *Catholicism, Chicago Style*, eds. Skerrett, Kantowicz, and Avella (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1993), xviii-xix; Ellen Skerrett, *Chicago's Neighborhoods and the Eclipse of Sacred Space* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1994).

the process of church building and fundraising translated into higher levels of commitment to the Church and hastened community formation. “Built with the nickels and dimes of poor people,” she writes, “Catholic parishes and schools offered incontrovertible proof that immigrants and their children had established a place for themselves in Chicago.” Gradually, Catholic parishes developed into community cornerstones, and were intimately woven with the culture of city neighborhoods and the self-awareness of local residents. Catholics interpreted their neighborhood—its streets, stores, and homes—as an extension of their local parish and therefore a “holy place.” The blurring of “secular” and “sacred” was evident when Catholics called their neighborhood by the parish name. Even non-Catholic residents recognized the ostensibly indissoluble bond. Dominic A. Pacyga has recently underscored that “Chicagoans have always identified themselves by their neighborhood and in many cases by their parish...Even Protestant and Jewish children often made reference to the local Catholic Church.” Newcomers to the city were routinely queried: “What parish are you from? What are you?”<sup>10</sup>

The Catholic, and especially the Irish American Catholic, influence on Chicago history has been patently political as well. English-speaking and familiar with democratic institutions, which were normative in their native land, the Irish swiftly became skilled political movers and shakers. They began voting in the 1840s for the Democratic Party, which generally sided with immigrants against an American Protestant majority that could be hostile to foreigners. As they grew in wealth, numbers, and prestige, Catholics of Irish descent came to dominate Chicago lawmaking. Between 1933

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<sup>10</sup> Skerrett, “Chicago’s Neighborhoods,” 4; Dominic A. Pacyga, *Chicago: A Biography* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 4; Eileen M. McMahon, *What Parish Are You From?: A Chicago Irish Community and Race Relations* (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 1995).



and 1976, all of Chicago's mayors were Irish and Catholic: Edward Kelly, Martin Kennelly, and Richard J. Daley, a daily Mass-goer.<sup>11</sup> Moreover, all hailed from Bridgeport, a neighborhood approximately three miles southwest of the Loop, and reputed to have produced more politicians and priests than any other Chicago neighborhood.<sup>12</sup> Daley's son, Richard M. Daley (1989-2011), was the fifth mayor born in Bridgeport. Although she hailed from Sauganash, former mayor Jane Byrne testified to Irish Catholic clout. She attended Queen of All Saints Basilica. Two of her uncles, Edward and Joseph Burke were priests, the former serving as the powerful Chancellor of the Archdiocese of Chicago.<sup>13</sup> At the zenith of their political power in 1969, that is before the strength of the Democratic "machine" noticeably declined in the wake of Richard J. Daley's death in 1976, Irish Americans astonishingly occupied eleven of the top sixteen government posts in Chicago and Cook County: Mayor, city collector, president of the Cook County board, county clerk, sheriff, assessor, state's attorney, and heads of the Chicago school, police, fire, and park systems.<sup>14</sup> Although Irish power was most conspicuous, other traditionally Catholic ethnic groups as they came of age had representatives that seized important political positions. During the years explored in this dissertation (1965-1996), among the most notable were alderman and Richard J. Daley's immediate successor Michael Bilandic (Croatian); and aldermen Roman Pucinski

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<sup>11</sup> Czech-born Democratic Mayor Anton Cermak, who preceded Kelly in office, was a Hussite, or follower of the fifteenth-century Czech Protestant reformer Jan Hus. Cermak, however, married a Catholic and raised his children in that faith. He was acutely sensitive to Catholic political power in Chicago. One legendary tale is particularly indicative. Reportedly, Cermak "calculated that having a Catholic family would be a huge political benefit in the heavily Catholic Chicago Democratic Party—or put another way, 'how many precincts could John Hus carry?'" The story is told in Paul M. Green, "Anton J. Cermak: The Man and His Machine," in *The Mayors: The Chicago Political Tradition*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., eds. Paul M. Green and Melvin G. Holli (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press), 100.

<sup>12</sup> Irving Cutler, *Chicago: Metropolis of the Mid-Continent*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 2006), 63.

<sup>13</sup> Jane Byrne, *My Chicago* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1992), 19.

<sup>14</sup> Cutler, 63.

(Polish), Edward Vrdolyak (Croatian), and Vito Marzullo (Italian). By 1965, there were Catholics at the top levels of Chicago's business, judicial, and labor establishments as well.

Twentieth-century Chicago prelates have exercised considerable influence on civic affairs and public policy, particularly on perceived "moral issues." The statement, however, should be qualified. First, as Peter W. Williams has pointed out, ethnic pluralism diminished Chicago bishops' "ability to act as a hegemonic presence." Unlike cities of the Atlantic seaboard—where Irish dominated City Hall and the Chancery Office—Germans, Poles, and others constituted substantial blocs in Chicago. Prelates were compelled to consider the sometimes conflicting desires of their multi-ethnic flock in supporting or opposing public policies.<sup>15</sup> And second, to report that important Chicago political figures were baptized Catholics is not to imply that their political agendas instinctively harmonized with the opinions and goals of archdiocesan leaders, who themselves were not always in agreement—nor is it to comment on their religious zeal. Bishops could influence civic affairs, first and foremost, because of the sheer number of Catholic voters who esteemed the prelate's office; and secondarily, because of warm and sometimes symbiotic relationships with co-religionists in City Hall. The existence of Catholic mayors, aldermen, and other political movers and shakers—as well as the centrality of Catholic institutions to Chicago neighborhoods and culture—*does*, however, indicate the Church's leading position in, and close identification with, the city. Edward R. Kantowicz, Ellen Skerrett, and Steven M. Avella have remarked that this relationship,

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<sup>15</sup> Peter W. Williams, "The Midwest: Conclusion," in *Religion and Public Life in the Midwest: America's Common Denominator?*, ed. Philip Barlow and Mark Silk (Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira, 2004), 221. Edward R. Kantowicz also examines Cardinal Mundelein's difficult task of conciliating various ethnic groups while simultaneously pursuing a comprehensive archdiocesan agenda. See Kantowicz, *Corporation Sole: Cardinal Mundelein and Chicago Catholicism* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1983), 65-83.

coupled with the lack of a strong and united opposition, has made Catholics “confident that Chicago was a ‘Catholic town.’” Catholics have felt secure walking Windy City streets with “easy arrogance” and a “distinctive swagger.”<sup>16</sup>

*Historical Overview of Chicago and the Catholic Church*

This dissertation investigates the city of Chicago and the Catholic Church between 1965—the year in which the Second Vatican Council concluded and John Cardinal Cody was appointed archbishop of the Chicago archdiocese—and 1996, the death of Cody’s successor, Joseph Cardinal Bernardin. As will be elucidated near the end of this introductory chapter, it emphasizes that a sequence of unusually transformative, combustible, and sometimes alarming and traumatic urban phenomena beset the city from the late 1960s onward, accentuated a host of social or spatial rifts, and challenged Chicago Catholics: post-industrial transition; street gang activity and unprecedented levels of interpersonal violence; the political ascendancy in 1983 of African American reform candidate Harold Washington to the mayor’s seat; gay liberation; and the AIDS epidemic. This dissertation argues that Chicago Catholics marshaled a distinctive brand of *religious reciprocity* to meet these challenges. Although reciprocity is clearly defined below, it broadly refers to an impetus within Chicago Catholicism to identify common grievances and kindle interdependency among Chicagoans, and encourage the Church to remain open to secular enrichment.

An overview of city and Church development from colonial origins to the mid-1960s is necessary to contextualize the period under study in this dissertation; the progression of the Church through time cannot be adequately understood apart from the

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<sup>16</sup> Skerrett, Kantowicz, and Avella, xvii, xxi.

development of the city. My treatment of the subject is informed by the insights of three of the most knowledgeable contemporary scholars of Chicago Catholic history, Kantowicz, Skerrett, and Avella, who have cogently posited that five outstanding sources have historically delineated Chicago-style Catholicism: ethnic diversity; a close identification between parish and neighborhood; able episcopal, clerical, and lay leadership; social and political liberalism; and “soaring self-confidence.”<sup>17</sup>

Therein follows mention of the principal historical events and trends that between 1965 and 1996 hastened an unsettled Church and troubled city. Historical motifs receive brief comment, as they are logically elucidated throughout the dissertation. A historiographical essay and explanation of the dissertation’s primary argument and outline close this introductory chapter. The former evinces that scholars of Chicago Catholicism between 1965 and 1996 have underscored the “confusion” and “decline” that stamped post-conciliar Church history. The historiography also indicates that a lengthy examination of the interaction between the city and Church from the mid-1960s to the mid-1990s is absent.

### *Colonial Origins to the Early Twentieth Century*

Ethnic diversity and a close identification between parish and neighborhood characterized the Chicago Catholic Church from its colonial origins to the early twentieth century.<sup>18</sup> Although Catholics were present when Chicago was discovered by French

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<sup>17</sup> The scholars structure their introductory chapter in *Catholicism, Chicago-Style* around these five themes. I found it reasonable to use the same sound organizing principles to briefly recount Chicago Catholic history.

<sup>18</sup> The following section that tracks city and Chicago Catholic Church history needs prefacing. First, as one may suspect, a mountain of scholarship exists that chronicles the city’s history. The following discussion of city development draws most heavily from the following illuminating and generally excellent accounts: Pacyga, *Chicago: A Biography*; Cutler, *Chicago: Metropolis of the Mid-Continent*; Harold M. Mayer and Richard C. Wade, *Chicago: Growth of a Metropolis* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press,

explorers in the seventeenth century, numbers drastically climbed in the mid-nineteenth century when immigrants from Northern, Central, and Western Europe were lured to the industrializing metropolis. A second mass immigration around the turn of the twentieth century, consisting principally of migrants from Southern and Eastern Europe, tremendously bolstered Catholic numbers and posed serious challenges to Church leadership. Eager to retain their cultural and religious identities, immigrants usually settled in ethnic enclaves and established parishes. Neighborhood life revolved around these parishes.

The Catholic presence in the area that is now Northeastern Illinois stretches back to 1673. Travelling up the Mississippi River by canoe to French Canada, Jesuit Father Jacques Marquette, Canadian explorer Louis Joliet and four others discovered the Chicago River. A Catholic mission was constructed in the area in 1696. Catholics maintained a constant presence, as the land was transferred to the British after the French and Indian War and then to the U.S. government following the American Revolution. In 1833, when Chicago was incorporated as a town, French, Irish, and British Catholics

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1969); William Cronon, *Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West* (New York: Norton, 1991); Dominic A. Pacgya and Ellen Skerrett, *Chicago: City of Neighborhoods* (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1986); James R. Grossman, Ann Durkin Keating, Janice L. Reiff, eds., *The Encyclopedia of Chicago* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004); Roger Biles, *Illinois: A History of Its Land and Its People* (DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 2005); Ann Durkin Keating, *Chicago Neighborhoods and Suburbs: A Historical Guide* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008); Melvin G. Holli and Peter d'A. Jones, eds., *Ethnic Chicago: A Multicultural Portrait*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1995); and John P. Koval et al eds., *The New Chicago, A Social and Cultural Analysis* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2006). Where direct quotes are used, or other monographs consulted, I include a citation. Second, I generally cite the books that have informed my discussion of Chicago Catholic Church development. I should mention here that the mammoth volumes edited by Monsignor Harry C. Koenig are particularly indispensable research tools. In regard to Koenig's history of archdiocesan parishes, Ellen Skerrett completed much of the research and writing. See Rev. Msgr. Harry C. Koenig, S.T.D., ed., *A History of the Parishes of the Archdiocese of Chicago* (Chicago: Catholic Bishop of Chicago, 1980); Rev. Msgr. Harry C. Koenig, S.T.D., ed., *Caritas Christi Urget Nos: A History of the Offices, Agencies, and Institutions of the Archdiocese of Chicago* (Chicago: Catholic Bishop of Chicago, 1981).

organized St. Mary's Parish. Chicago was declared a diocese in 1843 and Irish-born William J. Quarter was appointed bishop.<sup>19</sup>

At the time of Quarter's appointment, Chicago remained a frontier settlement; however, its salutary geographic position potentially promised economic and demographic growth. Irving Cutler explains that Chicago was surrounded by a hinterland remarkably abundant in natural resources, such as rich fields, vast forests, iron ore, lead, and coal. Chicago lay on a broad flat plain, and therefore these resources could be easily moved there. A network of waterways and the nearby Great Lakes also facilitated access to Chicago. Town businessmen and boosters soon took advantage of hinterland resources and the low transportation costs that waterways afforded. Grain, hogs, wood, and other commodities made their way to Chicago and fueled the town's first industries: milling, meatpacking, tanning, and woodworking. A "lucrative symbiotic relationship," Cutler writes, was firmly established. Chicago "received, processed, and distributed the products of the farms" and "produced and sent back to the farms clothing, furniture, and agricultural machinery and implements."<sup>20</sup> The opening of the Erie Canal in 1825 bolstered Chicago's economic and demographic growth. The canal connected New York City to the Great Lakes and the present-day Midwest. Westward traveling people and products flowed into Chicago's port, which sent goods east.

Railroads and immigrants were two other instruments of Chicago's economic and demographic growth. In the 1840s, investors and private businessmen realized the lucrative opportunities that new transportation technology afforded. Rail lines were laid

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<sup>19</sup> Kantowicz, *The Archdiocese of Chicago*, 1. Pope Gregory XVI created the Diocese of Chicago in 1843 to manage the entire state of Illinois. Since that time, a handful of new dioceses have been whittled from it. The last (Joliet) was created in 1943, and since that time, the Archdiocese of Chicago has consisted of Cook and Lake Counties.

<sup>20</sup> Cutler, 226.

and soon surged from the city. Four railroad lines were operating in Chicago by 1852. Connected to the American South and the Atlantic and Pacific Coasts, Chicago became the national center of the railroad industry. Railroads hauled people and goods safer and faster, and fueled a “market revolution.” An increasing number of Midwestern farms were tightly knitted into the new market system that was centered in Chicago, cementing the city’s status as the commercial hub of the Midwest. The flow of commodities into Chicago encouraged businessmen to construct larger factories. For instance, to process the mounting numbers of cattle and hogs, packers joined with Chicago railroads to form the Union Stock Yards, which eventually became the city’s greatest employer. By the time of the American Civil War, steam power and steel were transforming Chicago industry. Increasingly, machines were utilized for large scale manufacturing. In addition to livestock, grain, and lumber, Chicago became a center for the production of farm machinery, building materials such as brick, steam boilers and engines, and railroad cars.

Chicago’s economic success was dependent on millions of European immigrants and American in-migrants, who were “pulled” by brighter prospects to the burgeoning city. Arriving via waterways and railroads, immigrants sought familiarity in a foreign land and therefore customarily settled near people like themselves. They established ethnic enclaves and “transplanted” cherished Old World institutions such as churches. Significant numbers of Irish and Germans flowed into Chicago in the 1840s and 1850s. The failure of potato crops “pushed” the former from the Emerald Isle, while many Germans had fled their native land after the failure of the 1848 democratic revolution and subsequent autocratic repression. Chicago’s population jumped from about 30,000 in 1850 to 112,172 one decade later. On the eve of the American Civil War—an event that

would curtail immigration—more than half of all Chicagoans were foreign born. Another wave of immigration began in the 1880s. The *mélange* of “new immigrants” overwhelmingly hailed from Eastern and Southern Europe. Slovaks, Italians, Eastern European Jews, Lithuanians, Greeks, Ukrainians, Croatians, Serbians, Hungarians, and others peopled the industrializing city. Between 1880 and 1910, Chicago’s population swelled from 503,000 to 2.2 million. The advent of World War I swiftly curbed the number of newcomers, and subsequent federal government-implemented quotas in the 1920s slowed immigration to a trickle.

Chicago’s dizzying industrial and demographic growth triggered severe urban problems. Coal-powered factories and untreated industrial waste polluted the air and water, threatening the health of residents. The Great Chicago Fire of 1871 swept the city, destroying its commercial district and many neighborhoods. Around 100,000 people were left homeless. Although the city was impressively rebuilt, other calamities plagued Chicago. Immigrant gangs sometimes prowled the streets, the needs of immigrants taxed limited city services—gradually giving impetus to the formation of the Democratic political machine—and violent altercations occurred between “capital” and “labor.” In Chicago, the modern union movement began in the 1860s, first among skilled and then unskilled workers. Business owners who sought to maximize profits and expand production clashed with workers who labored for long hours in frequently dangerous conditions, and therefore demanded shorter work days and worker protections. The Haymarket Square and Pullman riots were only the most celebrated battles that took place between owners and city police on the one hand, and striking workers on the other.



Labor violence confirmed Chicago's status as the center of radicalism in the United States.

The problems of an urban, ethnically pluralistic, and industrial capitalist city provoked a "Progressive" response in the decades immediately before and after the turn of the twentieth century. Throughout the nation, middle-class Progressive reformers aspired to improve living and working conditions in cities. Individual rights must be balanced with a concern for the common good, they emphasized, and "experts" should guide social reform. Chicago was at the forefront of American Progressivism, in large measure because of the rapidity with which it industrialized and urbanized; the cacophony of immigrant peoples and subsequent middle-class fears that democracy, morality, and stability would be subverted; and the seemingly insoluble problems that the city faced. Political reformers lobbied municipal and state politicians, demanding city planning, better working and housing conditions, and court system reform, among other initiatives. Social Progressivism, on the other hand, was most famously embodied in Jane Addams. Along with Ellen Gates Starr, Addams established Hull House on the city's West Side to meet the needs of the immigrant poor and to assimilate them into American life.

Many of the "new immigrants" who flooded Chicago in the nineteenth and early twentieth century were Catholics. Their arrival transformed Chicago into the nation's most populous and ethnically diverse diocese. Protestants were not alone in confronting and responding to the social, economic, and religious needs of immigrants, as several historians have confirmed. Catholic Church leaders were also compelled to respond. Charles Shanabruch's *Chicago Catholics: The Evolution of an American Identity*, plumbs

how diocesan bishops—William Quarter, Thomas Foley, Patrick Feehan, James Quigley, and George Mundelein—between the 1830s and 1930s coped with the needs and tensions of a growing and ethnically-diverse flock. Bishops swiftly and effectively addressed immigrant needs, and thereby secured their loyalty. Prelates encouraged social and economic justice for poor newcomers and defended immigrant Catholics from anti-foreign and anti-Catholic animus in the city. Just as importantly, bishops acquiesced to non-English speaking immigrant demands for national parishes, which permitted Catholics of a particular ethnicity to worship together, regardless of where they resided in the city. Shanabruch concludes that these actions averted potential chaos. Remarkably, the Chicago Catholic Church withstood intense immigrant nationalism, forging first a supranational and then an American Catholicism.<sup>21</sup>

Parishes were vital to community life. Eileen McMahon, in her monograph chronicling the history of St. Sabina's Parish on Chicago's South Side between the early 1900s and 1965, perceptively explains that American parishes in an overwhelmingly Protestant culture were generally more important to maintaining the faith and culture of Catholics than their counterparts in the Old Country, where "religion and culture had been so intertwined that the local church was but one avenue among many for Catholics to partake of their faith."<sup>22</sup> Parishes divided an impersonal industrial city into neighborhoods. Although demographic density prohibited Catholics from completely insulating themselves from society, parishes did preserve traditional customs and generate and sustain communities. Ellen Skerrett and Stephen J. Shaw have

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<sup>21</sup> Charles Shanabruch, *Chicago's Catholics: The Evolution of an American Identity* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1981).

<sup>22</sup> Eileen M. McMahon, *What Parish Are You From?: A Chicago Irish Community and Race Relations* (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 1995), 2.

demonstrated that schools and churches also served an integrative function. Skerrett has reasoned that Irish parishes such as Annunciation on the Northwest Side and St. Patrick's in downtown Chicago furnished models of middle-class behavior, accustomed immigrants to American urban life, and therefore accelerated Irish acculturation. Shaw's analysis of German and Italian parishes in Chicago concludes that national parishes were "way stations," or "a necessary stop for the immigrant," between their ethnic heritage and American culture.<sup>23</sup>

The parochial school was perhaps the most important institution of the parish. James W. Sanders recounts that Catholics collectively built a vast educational complex that by 1965 had become the largest Catholic school system in the world, measured by enrollment and the number of parishes with schools. Sanders discovered that "social context" had a greater bearing on the "scope and nature of the effort" than did the directives of churchmen; immigration, urbanization, economic conditions, the size and demeanor of ethnic groups, and Protestant hostility principally fueled the growth of Chicago Catholic schools. A kaleidoscope of religious orders with the necessary staff and resources usually operated the schools. Not infrequently, orders from the Old Country established motherhouses in Chicago to meet the needs of immigrants. Irish Christian Brothers, Sisters of Mercy, and Sisters of Charity, for example, opened schools in Irish neighborhoods, while the Polish Felician Sisters, Sisters of the Resurrection, and

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<sup>23</sup> Ellen Skerrett, "The Catholic Dimension," in *The Irish in Chicago*, eds., Lawrence J. McCaffrey et al. (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1987), 22; Stephen J. Shaw, *The Catholic Parish as a Way-Station of Ethnicity and Americanization* (Brooklyn, NY: Carlson Publishing, 1991), 140.

Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth staffed most Polish schools. High schools, and then colleges and universities followed to instruct the educational elite.<sup>24</sup>

Churches and schools were simply the most important neighborhood institutions. Catholics expended immense resources and energy in constructing a phalanx of entities— orphanages, charitable organizations, youth groups, cemeteries—to meet other needs. Roger J. Coughlin explains that in the mid-nineteenth century, the parish was the locus of charitable work. Here, mutual aid and charities such as the St. Vincent de Paul Society offered succor to struggling parishioners. When needs overwhelmed the resources of individual parishes, or the disadvantaged had no parish affiliation, archdiocesan administrators and/or religious orders harnessed their resources. The orders were particularly crucial to Catholic health care. The Sisters of Mercy opened the first Catholic hospital in Chicago (Mercy Hospital). A few other orders followed, such as the Aachen-based Alexian Brothers, who established a hospital in Chicago in the 1860s to care for the city's cholera victims.<sup>25</sup>

Lay Catholics also acted as Progressive agents, as historian Deborah Skok has illustrated. She explains that, in the decades around the turn of the twentieth century, laywomen from all classes helped to establish and maintain numerous settlement houses and day nurseries for immigrant newcomers. Skok contends that settlement houses were mutually beneficial. Poor immigrants received social services, recreational opportunities, child care, and catechetical instruction. On the other hand, working outside the home offered laywomen new educational, leisure, and employment opportunities. Emerging

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<sup>24</sup> James W. Sanders, *The Education of an Urban Minority: Catholics in Chicago, 1833-1965* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977).

<sup>25</sup> Roger J. Coughlin, *Charitable Care in the Archdiocese of Chicago* (Chicago: The Catholic Charities, 2009), 5 and 61; Lawrence Davidson, *The Alexian Brothers of Chicago: An Evolutionary Look at the Monastery and Modern Health Care* (New York: Vintage, 1990).

middle class Catholic women, for example, acquired white collar administrative skills, while upper class Catholics secured “a larger role in the political and cultural leadership of the city.”<sup>26</sup>

### *Cardinal Mundelein to Vatican II*

Between the tenure of George Cardinal Mundelein (1916-1939) and the Second Vatican Council, three other characteristics stamped Chicago-style Catholicism: skilled leadership, social and political liberalism, and self-confidence. Mundelein, the third Archbishop of Chicago and the first American prelate west of the Atlantic seaboard named a Cardinal (1925), personalized all three traits. Mundelein’s ambitious expansionist and centralizing policies heightened the visibility and prestige of Chicago Catholicism. His successors, Samuel Cardinal Stritch (1940-1958) and Albert Cardinal Meyer (1958-1965), continued a policy of growth, particularly in the suburbs, where upwardly-mobile Catholics were migrating. During these years, the Chicago Church experienced an astonishing flowering of ministries and organizations generally designed to help Catholics grow in Christian charity and love or to alleviate the problems of an urban, demographically pluralistic, and industrial society. As Catholics made immense financial and personal investments in the city and its neighborhoods, the Church developed a mounting interest in Chicago’s stability and well-being. Catholics reacted vigorously when they discerned that this investment was threatened.

Race relations were the most intractable of Chicago’s social problems in the twentieth century. The Great War accelerated Black migration to Chicago and

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<sup>26</sup> Deborah A. Skok, *More Than Neighbors: Catholic Settlements and Day Nurseries in Chicago, 1893-1930* (DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press), 4. For a personal account of the history of one settlement house on the Near West Side, see Mary Agnes Amberg, *Madonna Center: Pioneer Catholic Social Settlement* (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1976).

consequently fueled White anxiety.<sup>27</sup> The war, and America's entrance in 1917, curtailed European immigration but offered new opportunities to Chicago industries on which the war effort in part relied, such as steel mills and packinghouses. The paucity of new immigrant workers could not meet industry's demand for unskilled labor. African Americans south of the Mason Dixon line migrated to Northern cities, pushed by poverty and intense racial discrimination and beckoned by jobs, wages, and promises of social mobility. Many traveled by rail and approximately fifty thousand settled on Chicago's South Side. Between 1910 and 1920, the city's Black population jumped from 44,103 to 109,458.<sup>28</sup> The influx of African Americans and their natural desire for housing and jobs exacerbated White Chicagoans' anxiety, fostered racial tensions, and sometimes touched off violence between Blacks and Whites, evinced by the notorious riots of July 1919, which killed twenty-three African Americans and fifteen Whites, and injured 537. White hostility and the unwillingness of financial institutions to lend money to Blacks prevented ambitious African Americans from escaping Black "ghettos." African American neighborhoods on the South Side were therefore in place when a second significant Black migration to Chicago occurred during World War II. The African American presence ballooned there, and another settlement on the West Side sprouted. Once again, Chicago benefited from its industrial capacity and its strategic location as a transportation hub. Although the American West received the bulk of federal government defense contracts—a phenomena that would drain industries, jobs, and people from the Midwest in the postwar era—nearly 65,000 more African Americans from the rural South

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<sup>27</sup> One of the most helpful books on the Great Migration is Nicholas Lemann, *The Promised Land: The Great Black Migration and How It Changed America* (New York: Vintage, 1992). The term "White" is not intended to obscure the real cultural differences among Euro-American ethnic groups.

<sup>28</sup> Roger Biles, *Richard J. Daley: Politics, Race, and the Governing of Chicago* (DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 1995), 85.

thronged to Chicago factories and settled on the South and West Sides. Black ghettos were bursting at the seams when the United States Supreme Court outlawed racial covenants in 1948, rendering it illegal for landowners to refuse to sell or rent housing to African Americans. In Chicago, racial boundaries grew progressively porous. African Americans on the South Side began to move “block by block” from the ghetto into hitherto all White neighborhoods such as Woodlawn and Englewood. Often, Whites who had been unable or unwilling to migrate to suburbs resisted racial integration; they feared that Black settlement translated into lower property values and a loss of their personal and financial investment in their communities. Some whites were simply racists. Sporadically, violence or “border wars” ensued in areas where the ghetto abutted White neighborhoods. Whites goaded by real estate “panic peddlers”—who encouraged and exploited White fears, purchased their homes at low prices, and then sold them at higher prices to incoming African Americans—generally departed the neighborhood when Blacks gained a foothold in the area.<sup>29</sup>

Centrifugal movement had been occurring since the early 1900s, when new transit lines connected the central business district, or the Loop, to growing neighborhoods outside the industrial core such as Gage Park, Austin, Chicago Lawn, and Portage Park. Here, a “bungalow belt” emerged—mass produced, single family dwellings—that circled the city center. Transportation improvements again fueled suburban growth in the years during and after World War II. Automobiles and trucks, federal government housing policies, and federally-funded expressways fostered factory relocation and residential mobility. Beginning in the 1950s as part of the federal government’s Interstate Highway

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<sup>29</sup> The best account of World War II era African American migration and settlement remains Arnold R. Hirsch, *Making the Second Ghetto: Race and Housing in Chicago, 1940-1960* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

Act (1956), major expressways—such as the Edens (1951) to the north, the Congress or Eisenhower to the west (1955), Kennedy (1960) to the northwest, the Dan Ryan (1961) to the south, and the Stevenson (1964) to the southwest—provided direct routes from the city to the suburbs. No longer exclusively reliant on mass transit and railroads, factories migrated to the edge of the city, enticed by cheaper land, lower taxes, decreased congestion, and the possibility of constructing single-story rather than multistory plants, which facilitated assembly-line production output. Workers and then retailers followed factories to outlying municipalities such as Evanston and Skokie, which burgeoned in population. Farmland in Chicago’s “collar counties” of Cook, Lake, DuPage, Kane, Will, and McHenry was bulldozed for new communities. Chicago’s population climaxed in the 1950s at 3.7 million people, but bled for the next three decades. Suited with manufacturers, retailers, and a middle-class tax base, suburbs refused to be annexed by the city. Chicago subsequently faced a loss of revenue, as low income in-migrants replaced substantial taxpayers. Harold M. Mayer and Richard C. Wade accurately summarize that “the city had to do more than ever before—in the way of housing, education, and welfare—with less money.”<sup>30</sup>

Factory de-centralization, population de-concentration, racial animosity, and new road projects that carved up the city and dramatically altered the composition of some neighborhoods obliged Chicagoans to seek solutions to re-stabilize and revitalize community life. In the neighborhoods, “community organizations” formed, comprised of residents and representatives of local institutions such as churches and businesses. Although community organizations were diverse in membership and aims, their cardinal goal was to improve living conditions. Organizations held meetings wherein neighbors

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<sup>30</sup> Mayer and Wade, 275.



resolved to heal local problems and counteract instability that changes in the community fostered. Saul Alinsky, founder of the Industrial Areas Foundation, was arguably the most active community organizer operating in Chicago between the 1930s and 1960s. Alinsky's philosophy held that by working together ("united action"), ordinary people could affect their own future, fortify their political power, better negotiate with "the powers that be" in the community, and therefore secure a heightened degree of dignity, independence, and freedom.<sup>31</sup>

The political establishment also diagnosed city-wide ills and proposed solutions. Arguably, no city politician was more powerful in the postwar period than Richard J. Daley, chair of the Democratic Party's Cook County Central Committee, master of the patronage system, and mayor for six consecutive terms beginning in 1955. Thanks to a coalition of Irish Americans, African Americans, and Southern and Eastern Europeans and their children, the Democratic Party had dominated Chicago politics since the election in 1931 of Czech-born Anton Cermak. Three Irish Americans from Chicago's Bridgeport neighborhood succeeded Cermak: Edward Kelly, Martin Kennelly, and then Daley.

Infrastructural and downtown redevelopment were the cornerstones of Daley's civic revival. A flush national economy and the availability of federal funds abetted the mayor's plans, as we have seen with regard to expressway development, much of which occurred under Daley. Other major infrastructure projects included the O'Hare Airport, opened in 1959 on Chicago's Northwest Side, a branch campus for the University of Illinois on the Near Southwest Side, and new public housing. The Depression and WWII had stalled residential construction in Chicago, and by the mid-1950s new structures were

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<sup>31</sup> P. David Finks, *The Radical Vision of Saul Alinsky* (New York: Paulist Press, 1984), xi.

desperately needed. Intent on enticing suburbanites back to the city and stanching the exodus of White Democrats, Daley encouraged the construction of high rise apartments and residential skyscrapers for upper and middle class urbanites. The scarcity of housing for the poor, and African Americans in particular, was a greater exigency. Between 1955 and 1966, Daley consented to the Chicago Housing Authority's construction of fifty one public housing sites. Bowing to the pressure of aldermen representing White districts, the CHA ensured that nearly all edifices were confined to Black residential areas. As a result, public housing essentially became part of a segregated and increasingly crowded racial ghetto. Some residential complexes were imposing high rises, such as Stateway Gardens and the Robert Taylor Homes; the CHA argued that "vertical development" would save the city on land costs. High rise maintenance was neglected and structures progressively deteriorated in the next few decades, becoming notorious havens of crime, street gangs, and narcotics.

Downtown redevelopment constituted the second prong of Daley's civic revival. To entice potential investors, appeal to Chicago's business community, and draw visitors, the mayor embarked on an unprecedented program of Loop redevelopment. The Prudential Building, completed in 1955, was the first office building constructed in downtown Chicago since 1934. Other edifices followed, which, as Daley anticipated, promised to widen Chicago's white-collar tax base and revitalize the central business district.

Outstanding leadership, confidence, and social and political liberalism also characterized the Chicago Catholic Church during the tenures of Cardinals George Mundelein, Samuel Stritch, and Albert Meyer. It was not coincidental that the Irish

Democratic political ascendancy was concurrent with the expansion and growing self-assurance of the local Church. Mundelein was one member of a generation of Roman-trained bishops who were appointed to large American dioceses in the years around WWI. By building, consolidating, and enriching the archdiocese, Mundelein put Chicago “on the maps” of non-Catholic Americans as well as Vatican authorities. Building and centralizing were also dominant motifs of the Stritch and Meyer episcopacies. “If Mundelein put the Church on the map,” Steven M. Avella declares in *This Confident Church: Catholic Leadership and Life in Chicago, 1940-1965*, “Stritch and his associates hoisted the map higher for all American Catholics to see.”<sup>32</sup>

Between 1915 and 1965, the Chicago Church grew in size and archdiocesan administration was steadily centralized. Explosive demographic growth occurred in suburbs, which initially lacked the infrastructure of urban Catholic neighborhoods. Building therefore occupied Mundelein, Stritch, and Meyer. To heighten the number and competency of future priests, Mundelein ordered the construction of Quigley Preparatory Seminary in downtown Chicago, and the palatial and expensive St. Mary of the Lake Seminary, which was situated nearly forty miles to the north of the city. The latter in particular—along with the Twenty-Eighth International Eucharistic Congress in 1926 that was attended by illustrious international churchmen and attracted hundreds of thousands of Catholics—signaled that Catholics could go “first class” and infused his flock with social confidence. Mundelein also prioritized parish construction; he ordered the completion of many partially-finished parish plants, and the construction of forty-two new parishes, which expanded the number of parishes in the Chicago archdiocese to 257.

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<sup>32</sup> Steven M. Avella, *This Confident Church: Catholic Leadership and Life in Chicago, 1940-1965* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1992), 3.

Elementary schools were built alongside most of these. Nearly half of the new parishes were built outside the city. In raising funds for building projects and charity work, Mundelein exhibited acumen unmatched by predecessors. First, he encouraged more parish special collections. Second, he ordered parishes with an annual surplus to invest in “Catholic Bishop of Chicago” bonds. Third, the Cardinal opened a several million dollar line of credit with downtown Chicago banks. Each of these actions procured capital for Church expansion. Mundelein fully exploited his power over archdiocesan assets as a “corporate sole.” According to historian Edward R. Kantowicz, he thereby “remove[d] all crucial brick and mortar decisions from pastors and centraliz[ed] them in the chancery office and in the board of consultants, a senate-like body composed of important priests.”<sup>33</sup>

Parish building, particularly in the suburbs, was also a dominant motif of the Stritch and Meyer reigns. Mass migration from the central city to outlying areas profoundly reshaped Catholic life, most noticeably in the post-World War II era. Catholics who were collectively wealthier, dwelling in single-family homes, and residing among non-Catholics found it impossible to replicate the comparatively homogeneous and tight-knit nature of urban neighborhoods. Avella aptly records that “The yesteryear’s ties that bound—ethnicity, common employment, common religion as well as sheer physical proximity—did not carry through to suburbia.”<sup>34</sup> Be that as it may, Catholics needed parishes. Of the seventy parishes completed under Stritch, twenty-four were within the city, and only four of the thirty parishes Meyer founded were in the community areas. High schools were also required, no more so than in the suburbs of

<sup>33</sup> Kantowicz, *Corporation Sole: Cardinal Mundelein and Chicago Catholicism*, 35.

<sup>34</sup> Avella, *Confident Church*, 84.

Cook, Lake, and DuPage counties. William E. McManus, appointed superintendent of schools in 1957, spearheaded the effort. Millions of dollars were spent to update existing structures and construct new ones. The Our Lady of the Angels School fire in December 1958, which killed eighty-nine pupils and three Sisters of Charity, horrifyingly exposed the dangers inherent in out-of-date physical plants.

The period between 1915 and 1965 also witnessed a good deal of consolidation and centralization of sprawling archdiocesan administrations. In this regard, according to Kantowicz, Mundelein's chief task was rationalizing the diffuse system of "ethnic leagues," in which "every aspect of Catholic life and worship was subdivided along ethnic lines."<sup>35</sup> The Cardinal curtailed the construction of new national parishes, and ordered that English-language instruction be normative for most subjects in schools. These actions deliberately fostered Americanization, and earned the admiration of non-Catholic Chicagoans. To centralize a parochial system in which each school more or less operated independently, Mundelein implemented a Superintendent and a School Board to standardize curriculum. Encouraged by the local St. Vincent de Paul Society and wealthy Chicagoans who were increasingly hard-pressed to satisfy the material requests of poor co-religionists, Mundelein spearheaded the creation of a central charitable organization for the archdiocese, which became Catholic Charities. The centralizing impetus continued under Stritch. Much more so than Mundelein, however, Stritch trusted his subordinates to run day-to-day archdiocesan operations. Centralization was left to individuals such as George J. Klupar, who as Executive Director of the Cemeteries

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<sup>35</sup> Kantowicz, *Corporation Sole*, 72.

organized and professionalized the cemetery system by implementing central planning of finance and management.<sup>36</sup>

In addition to capable leadership and self-confidence, liberalism was a third hallmark of Chicago Catholicism during the era of Mundelein, Stritch, and Meyer. Kantowicz explains that Mundelein himself, while a defender of Catholic morals on social issues, espoused a particular brand of “non-ideological and practical” political and economic liberalism. Witnessing the Great Depression and its catastrophic human devastation fueled the Cardinal’s liberalism. Mundelein became a consistent and public supporter of New Deal welfare policies, backed Franklin Roosevelt’s foreign policies, and carefully cultivated a personal rapport with the president.<sup>37</sup>

Other religious and lay figures, as well as a flowering of innovative Catholic-led social ministries—engendered by the permissive style that began during the second half of Mundelein’s tenure and continued through Stritch and Meyer—enhanced Chicago’s reputation as a national leader of social and political liberalism. Auxiliary Bishop Bernard J. Sheil (1888-1969) and Monsignor Reynold Hillenbrand (1903-1979) were perhaps the best known priestly embodiments of Chicago Catholic liberalism in the 1940s. The charismatic Sheil built the highly successful Catholic Youth Organization, which countered delinquency and crime by offering programs to Chicago’s youth, such as boy scouting, day camps, and organized sports. Sheil’s espousal of interracial and social justice, as well as his friendship with FDR and other New Dealers, earned him liberal stripes. The bishop was also involved in organizing residents of the heavily Catholic and working-class Back of the Yards neighborhood. He labored closely with the

<sup>36</sup> Avella, *Confident Church*, 101-108; Coughlin, 9-10.

<sup>37</sup> Kantowicz, *Corporation Sole*, 204.

Back of the Yards Council's Irish Catholic Executive Director, Joseph Meegan, and community organizer Saul Alinsky; publicly endorsed the CIO's attempt to organize Chicago's meat-packers; and assisted fundraising efforts.<sup>38</sup>

Hillenbrand, rector of St. Mary of the Lake seminary between 1936 and 1942, was the second major figure in Chicago social action in the 1930s and 1940s. Unlike Sheil, Hillenbrand's brand of social activism was "more intellectual" and "less flamboyant." Like Sheil, Hillenbrand sought to reconstruct the social order. To that end, he encouraged priests to study disciplines in addition to theology and philosophy, such as sociology, education, economics, and literature, "first in order to effect even more changes in the seminary system and then in society at large."<sup>39</sup> Influenced by papal social encyclicals, the Catholic Worker Movement, and the Jocist Movement of young Christian workers led by Belgian canon Joseph Cardijn, Hillenbrand vigorously encouraged, instructed, and inspired laypeople to Christianize society. "Specialized Catholic Action," or specialized "cells" of small study circles of Christian workers or students, was Hillenbrand's vehicle to effect this transformation. Specialized Catholic Action "was an apostolate of like to like: students vied to transform the school, workers to Christianize the factory, and so on." Members followed a three step process: observe, judge, and then act.<sup>40</sup>

The scope and longevity of Hillenbrand's influence was remarkable. The ministries that he kindled and the individuals he inspired imbued Chicago Catholicism with a vibrancy perhaps unmatched by any other American diocese. A sampling of Hillenbrand-inspired ministries in Chicago includes Pre-Cana and Cana Conferences, the

<sup>38</sup> Kantowicz, *Corporation Sole*, 173-188; Avella, *Confident Church*, 109-149.

<sup>39</sup> Kantowicz, *Corporation Sole*, 197; Avella, *Confident Church*, 5.

<sup>40</sup> Kantowicz, *Corporation Sole*, 198-9.

former to prepare engaged couples for Christian marriage and the latter to fortify existing marriages; the Christian Family Movement, which ambitiously sought to Christianize the social order and to make it easier for families to be “good, human, and healthy”; the Catholic Labor Alliance; Young Christian Workers; the Young Christian Students; and the pro-integrationist Catholic Interracial Movement.<sup>41</sup> Hillenbrand protégés included Monsignor Daniel Cantwell, chaplain to the Catholic Labor Alliance, Catholic Interracial Council, and Friendship House, and advocate of social justice, particularly for justice in housing; Edward Marciniak, a staff member in the city’s first Catholic Worker House of Hospitality, editor of the Catholic Council of Working Life’s monthly magazine *WORK*, director of the city’s Commission on Human Relations under Mayor Daley, Deputy Commission in the Chicago Department of Development and Planning, and director of the Institute of Urban Life at Loyola University; and CFM architects Patrick and Patricia Crowley, a married couple. It was Hillenbrand’s former student, Monsignor John J. Egan, who arguably best embodied Chicago Catholic social and political liberalism in the 1950s and early 1960s. Among his many accomplishments, Egan transformed Pre-Cana and Cana into national movements; unsuccessfully testified at City Hall in 1958 against the University of Chicago-led Hyde Park-Kenwood redevelopment project, which Egan argued would use federal money to demolish nearby substandard residences and leave dislodged inhabitants with no housing alternatives; and convinced Cardinal Meyer in 1959 to place him in charge of the Archdiocesan Office of Urban Affairs (formerly Conservation Committee), which Egan upgraded and professionalized to better grapple with city problems. Finally, Egan teamed with Alinsky to form the Organization for the

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<sup>41</sup> The quote can be found in Jeffrey M. Burns, *Disturbing the Peace: A History of the Christian Family Movement, 1949-1974* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1999), 7.



Southwest Community to halt blockbusting in the area, encourage civil rights, and help residents cope with changing neighborhoods. Although ultimately unsuccessful in preventing racial turnover, the OSC received Cardinal Meyer's strong endorsement, as did other community organizations in the Northwest Community and the heavily Protestant Woodlawn area.<sup>42</sup>

Despite the liberalism of important churchmen and lay Catholics, racial change in the neighborhoods posed knotty challenges to Church leadership, individual parishes, and lay Catholics. Certainly, a handful of organizations of which Catholics were leaders or important members existed to foster racial justice. These included Friendship House; the National Catholic Conference for Interracial Justice, which was headquartered in Chicago; the Chicago Conference on Religion and Race; and the Catholic Interracial Council (CIC) of Chicago. One of the most active and vocal pro-integrationists was layman John McDermott, who spearheaded the CIC during the 1950s and early 1960s, and was a lifelong proponent of racial equality. Others who sympathized with the plight of African Americans included priests Martin "Doc" Farrell and Joseph Richards, who under Meyer actively labored for the conversion of African Americans to Catholicism. Be that as it may, a greater number of Catholics—including prelates and religious, as well as laypeople, and particularly those in city neighborhoods—were reluctant to encourage interracial justice and the integration of neighborhoods, parishes, and schools. Of the three Chicago prelates, only Meyer unequivocally supported African American civil rights, forbidding racial discrimination in Catholic parishes and schools. Mundelein and the Southerner Stritch held more conventional attitudes on race relations; both believed

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<sup>42</sup> For Egan's exploits, see Margery Frisbie, *An Alley in Chicago: The Ministry of a City Priest* (Kansas City: Sheed and Ward, 1991).

African Americans should remain in established Black parishes, and both focused on Black conversions.<sup>43</sup>

White Catholics in the neighborhoods, particularly on the South and West Sides, generally resisted the integration of their communities and institutions. John T. McGreevy's sophisticated *Parish Boundaries* addresses the puzzling co-existence in Chicago of Catholic liberalism on the one hand, and unswerving antagonism to African American encroachment in White Catholic neighborhoods on the other. Contending that "American Catholics frequently defined their surroundings in religious terms," McGreevy explains that despite "the nation's most vigorous liberal Catholic traditions, the Chicago Church also served as a defining institution for fiercely cohesive and heavily Catholic neighborhoods." In juxtaposition to other religious groups, Catholics had larger families, lower incomes, a much more extensive institutional presence, and therefore a deeper attachment to the neighborhood. Unwilling to live side by side with African Americans, Catholics were also understandably reluctant to relocate to the suburbs; individual Catholics and the collective Chicago Church had made immense financial and personal investments in the city. McGreevy pointedly writes, "Exactly at the point of triumph, having weathered the Depression, built the school, and finished the church, Catholic parishes in the northern cities confronted the possibility that generations of painstaking work might be rendered obsolete in a few years."<sup>44</sup> Catholic affection for parish and neighborhood, then, helps to explain Catholic anti-integrationist sentiment and racism.

<sup>43</sup> Avella, *Confident Church*, 281-8, 249-322.

<sup>44</sup> John T. McGreevy, *Parish Boundaries: The Catholic Encounter with Race in the Twentieth-Century Urban North* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 4, 84-5.

*Post-Industrial City and Post-Conciliar Church*

The year 1965 is an excellent chronological starting point for this dissertation, as two ecclesial events occurred of considerable consequence to Chicago Catholicism. First, the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) concluded. Religious and laypeople in Chicago, generally enthusiastic about the Council and its emphasis on a new openness to secular life, attempted to interpret and implement Vatican II's documents, priorities, and "spirit." Second, former bishop of New Orleans John Cody was installed as the eleventh prelate of Chicago. He replaced Meyer who succumbed to a brain tumor shortly after returning from the Third Session of the Council. Turmoil and controversy dogged Cody's tenure. His autocratic administrative style and seemingly *ad hoc* and secretive decision making alienated priests and some laity. He was succeeded by Joseph Bernardin, previously bishop of Cincinnati, who immediately worked to mend divisions among Chicago Catholics. Bernardin's episcopal style was much more collaborative, although his tenure was not without controversy. Bernardin's death in 1996 makes the year a convenient terminus for scholarly analysis. Cody and Bernardin's respective biographies and episcopal styles are explored in depth in the next chapter.

Neatly summarizing Chicago Catholicism between 1965 and 1996 is difficult for two reasons. First, the historiography of the period is still in its infancy, as we shall see below. Second, a few of the features of Chicago-style Catholicism that have thus far steered our overview of the Church's history—a close identification between parish and neighborhood; able episcopal, clerical, and lay leadership; social and political liberalism; and self-confidence—were sometimes obscured. The explosive growth of Latino communities in the central city, Poles in the suburbs, and a resurgent ethnic-awareness

among other groups such as Irish, Lithuanian, and African Americans, ensured the persistence of ethnic pluralism. Undeniably, fewer and fewer Chicagoans identified with the local parish, as Catholic migration to the suburbs continued apace, urban renewal projects rearranged communities, and immigration exacerbated religious pluralism. Although attenuated, the bonds between parish and neighborhood remained in some sections of the city, particularly where ethnic loyalties persisted.<sup>45</sup> Able leadership and social and political liberalism continued as hallmarks of Chicago-style Catholicism, despite the controversies surrounding Cody, intra-Catholic bickering, and the confusion and frustrated hopes of the post-conciliar and post-*Humanae Vitae* period. Cody did implement several Vatican II-mandated reforms, and advanced the racial integration of parishes and schools. Bernardin, much more so than his predecessor, shaped the trajectory of American Catholicism, and brother bishops prized his leadership. Bernardin's intellectual contributions to the pastoral letter on war and peace secured him a liberal reputation. Articulate and resolute lay Chicago Catholics also furnished leadership, guiding at least two movements that gained traction in other dioceses and attention from the national media: Chicago Call to Action and the 1977 *Chicago Declaration of Christian Concern*. The former, inspired by Vatican II and the 1976 bishops' sanctioned Call to Action conference in Detroit, urged prelates to re-think methods of family planning, clerical celibacy, and the male priesthood, among other proposals. The Chicago Declaration, on the other hand, essentially argued that the post-conciliar Church hierarchy undervalued lay Christian vocation in the secular world, instead underscoring that the exclusive duty of the laity was to "accept responsibilities for

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<sup>45</sup> Pacyga, *Chicago: A Biography*, 406.

Church-related activities” that had hitherto been “the exclusive role of the priest.”<sup>46</sup> Race relations continued to challenge Chicago Catholic liberalism, even if episodes of blatant prejudice—for a variety of reasons—dwindled after the stormy 1960s. Animosity did seethe when African Americans moved into White neighborhoods, and during African American Harold Washington’s successful mayoral campaigns in 1983 and 1987. Finally, self-confidence did persist, although the trials that the Chicago Church encountered should not be discounted. For example, Cody’s episcopal style certainly bred a measure of animosity between the prelate and his priests, and a cash-strapped archdiocese in the 1980s and 1990s closed or consolidated over one hundred churches and schools—a belated response to the migration of Catholic people and wealth from the central city to the suburbs.

This dissertation reveals that Catholics were also seriously tested by social, political, and economic transformations that occurred in the metropolitan area. The conclusion of the Second Vatican Council and Cody’s appointment occurred just a few short years before Chicago, in the words of Janet L. Abu-Lughod, became “a very troubled city.”<sup>47</sup> Three catalysts with origins that antedated 1965 were principally responsible for the incipient urban cauldron: political divisions and uncertainty, race relations, and tectonic economic shifts. In hindsight, the decade’s first half seemed to presage a surprisingly promising future. Mayor Daley’s plan to modernize Chicago did, as we have seen, have some success. Chicago benefited from federal government largesse and in particular the domestic program of Democratic president Lyndon

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<sup>46</sup> Russell Barta, “Introduction,” in *Challenge to the Laity* (Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor, 1980), 9. For Call to Action, see Bernard J. Cooke, “Call to Action: Engine of Lay Ministry,” in *What’s Left: Liberal American Catholics*, ed. Mary Jo Weaver (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1999), 147-154.

<sup>47</sup> Janet L. Abu-Lughod, *New York, Chicago, Los Angeles: America’s Global Cities* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), 321.

Johnson, the Great Society. To develop a “coordinated vision” for metropolitan planning, Johnson funneled millions of dollars into American cities through programs such as the Community Action Program (CAP) and Model Cities (MC). An offshoot of Johnson’s “War on Poverty,” CAP was designed to marshal community resources and encourage participatory democracy to fight poverty and foster social change. CAP mandated recipients’ “maximum feasible participation”; the poor themselves should assume roles in fighting poverty, distributing federal money, and making decisions that affected their neighborhoods. MC, sponsored by the newly-created Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development, was a second Great Society plan to help metropolises. It focused on impoverished sections of cities, and directed for the mobilization and concentration of resources to alleviate problems. In some respects, MC contradicted CAP principles; the former relied on city government—which CAP was intended to bypass—to coordinate inner city rehabilitation and distribute federal funds, and thereby detached community development from community action. In Chicago, both programs struggled and thorny social problems remained unsolved. Circumventing Johnson’s designs, Daley demanded full control over the distribution of CAP funds to safeguard his political power; and MC suffered from scarce resources and political will. For the next twenty years, a bearish economy and contrasting political solutions regarding what was best for American cities—Republicans dominated the White House save one-term Jimmy Carter—translated into diminishing federal aid to urban programs.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> Especially helpful to my understanding of the Great Society and American cities were John A. Andrew III, *Lyndon Johnson and the Great Society* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 1998), 56-94 and 131-162; Robert Halpern, *Rebuilding the Inner City: A History of Neighborhood Initiatives to Address Poverty in the United States* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 83-126.

Political divisions became a seriously destabilizing force in Chicago in the late 1960s. Some critics of America's escalating military involvement in Vietnam mobilized on Windy City streets. They were overwhelmingly White, middle-class young people. Angry protests reached their zenith in August 1968 during the calamitous Democratic National Convention. To pacify the streets and control antiwar protesters, nearly ten thousand of whom had gathered across the Convention site at Grant Park, Mayor Daley called upon Chicago police and the National Guard. Provoked Guardsmen began beating protesters, which television cameras captured. The episode, according to David Farber, "marked a crisis in the nation's political and cultural order."<sup>49</sup> One year later, local and federal law enforcement thrice raided the headquarters of the Black Panther Party of Chicago to uncover illegal weapons. Police killed two Panthers in the final raid, infuriating Black activists. Also in 1969, the Weatherman faction of the Students for a Democratic Society organized a four-day demonstration to "bring the Vietnam war home." A few hundred protesters, some wielding lead pipes and clad with football helmets, smashed the windows of retailers, destroyed vehicles, and scuffled with police. With its heated demonstrations against the war, violent social radicalism, and police brutality, Chicago had become a visible token of all that was wrong in American cities.

Race remained a distressingly explosive issue, particularly during the 1960s. Civil rights advocates targeted a host of interrelated problems: neighborhood and school segregation, injustice in housing, and unequal employment opportunities for minorities. In the neighborhoods, a familiar pattern recurred: African Americans spilled over from ghettos into White communities, offering a powerful motive for White suburbanization. Residential segregation translated into mono-racial public schools. In the early 1960s, 90

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<sup>49</sup> David Farber, *Chicago '68* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), xiii.

percent of Chicago's school age African American children attended all-Black schools.<sup>50</sup> That some White schools contained empty classrooms while Black schools were poorly maintained and overcrowded was particularly grievous for Black parents. Together with sympathetic Whites, they demanded the resignation of Superintendent Benjamin Willis, whose policies they alleged had promoted segregated schools. African Americans also blamed Daley; hitherto key components of the Mayor's electoral success, Blacks "began to see Daley as increasingly hostile to civil rights and full integration of blacks."<sup>51</sup>

African Americans' second class social status attracted the attention of the nation's preeminent advocate of African American civil rights, Martin Luther King, Jr. Exhorted by the local Coordinating Council of Community Organizations, King and his organization, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, vowed to transform Chicago into the epicenter of a northern campaign. King was determined to use his brand of nonviolent direct action to highlight social and economic inequalities; destroy racial injustice, particularly in housing; improve the quality of life for African American residents; and "prod the nation as a whole to combat urban ills."<sup>52</sup> In the summer of 1966, King addressed a crowd at Soldier Field and then led a protest march to City Hall to vocalize the Black Freedom Movement's demand. King also conducted open-housing marches through Chicago's South Side, triggering angry and occasionally violent rejoinders from White residents. Scholars generally agree that King's visit did not dampen racial divisions, nor prompt municipal government to root out racial injustice. Mayor Daley gave public lip-service to King's demands, but was privately reluctant to

<sup>50</sup> David Burner, *Making Peace with the 60s* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996), 180.

<sup>51</sup> Pacyga, *Chicago: A Biography*, 350.

<sup>52</sup> James R. Ralph, Jr., *Northern Protest: Martin Luther King, Jr., Chicago, and the Civil Rights Movement* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993), 1; Thomas J. Sugrue, *Sweet Land of Liberty: The Forgotten Struggle for Civil Rights in the North* (New York: Random House, 2009).



implement them. King's assassination in April 1968 capped a racially charged decade. Poor African American neighborhoods on the West Side exploded. Looting and rioting ensued. A vexed Daley called troops to end the carnage. His order to "shoot to kill" arsonists and "shoot to maim" looters, however, only amplified strains. Wisely, sitting Chicago police Superintendent, James Conlisk, refused to follow them. The National Guard ultimately restored calm.

Powerful changes in the local, national, and international economy also destabilized Chicago communities. Deindustrialization, or the "systematic disinvestment" of "basic productive capacity," and a tumbling economy beset Chicago and much of the nation in the early 1970s.<sup>53</sup> Deindustrialization had a few roots. Managers of private enterprises were steadily diverting capital (financial resources and physical plants) from productive investment in basic industries to "unproductive speculation, mergers, acquisitions, and foreign investment."<sup>54</sup> New communication and transportation technologies abetted central management's decisions. Employers found that they could increase productivity using less manpower, coordinate far flung operations, shift capital and products across the world, and centralize control in fewer hands. Power and wealth became more concentrated. Internationally, the mounting productive capacities of countries like Germany and Japan challenged America's manufacturing supremacy, and the latter's percentage of the world's manufactured exports tumbled. In Chicago and other "rustbelt" cities, managers who wished to remove capital from the city and invest it elsewhere refused to make improvements to aging factories, or dismantled them entirely—sometimes relocating to suburbs but more often

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<sup>53</sup> Barry Bluestone and Bennett Harrison, *The Deindustrialization of America: Plant Closings, Community Abandonment, and the Dismantling of Basic Industry* (New York: Basic Books, 1982), 6.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*

to other regions of the country or abroad. In this decision, managers considered expensive land costs and taxes, congestion, racial conflict, pollution, and the utilization of automobiles and trucks rather than railroads to haul materials and goods. No longer able or willing to continue their “social contract” with labor—e.g., paying for fair labor standards, health and safety provisions, or extended unemployment benefits—managers desirous to maintain profit levels relocated to “union free” environments, such as the Sun Belt, the South, or abroad, which undercut organized labor’s bargaining power. Between 1969 and 1983, the number of manufacturing jobs in Chicago plummeted from nearly one million to less than 600,000—a thirty two percent loss.<sup>55</sup>

After a quarter century of unprecedented growth, the nation’s economy soured in the 1970s and did not revive until the 1990s. In Chicago, deindustrialization underlay the bleak economic landscape and exacted a depressing human toll: un- and underemployment, the loss of income and employer benefits such as medical insurance, slumping retail purchases, layoffs in other sectors, the depletion of savings, home foreclosures, a swelling reliance on public welfare, blows to individual self-esteem, and sometimes unmanageable stress on families. Unemployment and economic insolvency particularly afflicted African Americans and Latinos, racial minorities who were concentrated in hard-hit manufacturing industries, and often unequipped with marketable skills. Once vibrant neighborhoods imploded as managers shuttered factories, such as the Union Stock Yards and Wisconsin Steel. Stores, bars, and shopping centers closed. Many residents who possessed the means to relocate did so. Impoverished neighborhoods could become increasingly nightmarish. Media reports yielded that some

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<sup>55</sup> John P. Koval, “An Overview and Point of View,” in *The New Chicago: A Social and Cultural Analysis*, ed. John P. Koval et. al. (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2006), 8.

streets were awash in gang bangers, guns, and narcotics, a cocktail that seemed particularly endemic in public high rises. The number of homicides in the city escalated. In 1965, there were on average thirty murders per month; at the end of 1974, that number had jumped to 75. Even in the downtown area, “patrons no longer felt safe” to wander the streets after dusk.<sup>56</sup> Chicago’s “industrial era” was indeed coming to a painful conclusion.

City political leaders formulated plans to uplift the local economy, stanch the continued outward flow of the tax base, and revive Chicago. Revenue shortfalls hampered their designs, and translated into ebbing municipal services and immense disarray. City Hall in the 1970s, Pacyga writes, was hard pressed to meet “basic city functions, such as street cleaning, pothole repair, and garbage pickup.”<sup>57</sup> While still in office, Mayor Daley passed away in 1976. A string of Democrats succeeded him: Michael Bilandic, Jane Byrne, Harold Washington, Eugene Sawyer, and Richard M. Daley, the son of the former boss. Bilandic and Byrne were machine candidates.<sup>58</sup> Washington’s election clearly signaled a transformation in Chicago politics. He was an African American and won despite negligible backing from the Democratic machine. His support came from African Americans, “Lakeside liberals,” and some Latinos determined to sweep away the machine’s vestigial influence. Washington’s strategy to revive Chicago also departed from his predecessors. Daley, Bilandic, and Byrne had allocated money to large downtown projects, encouraged investors to do likewise, and banked on centrifugal prosperity. Washington’s “redistributive economic development

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<sup>56</sup> Homicides statistics are in Carolyn Rebecca Block, *Homicide in Chicago* (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1987), 3. The quote is in Pacyga, *Chicago: A Biography*, 367.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, 373.

<sup>58</sup> Byrne campaigned as a reformer but became the machine candidate while in office.

agenda,” on the other hand, funneled money into local neighborhoods and supported community organizations.<sup>59</sup> Progressives like Washington had long complained that city government favored downtown. For the first three years of his tenure, Washington met stiff opposition from twenty nine White City Council members, many of whom were members of the machine. Following the mayor’s unexpected death in 1987, Richard M. Daley defeated interim mayor Eugene Sawyer.

Publicly separating himself from the remnant Democratic machine, Daley nonetheless reverted to the growth policies of his father, channeling money and encouraging investment in the downtown. Like his father, Daley benefited from a bullish economy. Additionally, the policies of his predecessors were bearing fruit, and for the first time since the 1960s, business and retail activity in the Loop flourished. After hitting bottom, Chicago’s population also rebounded in the 1990s. The number of inhabitants in the central city had been shrinking since the 1950s and would have hemorrhaged were it not for migrants from Latin America, principally from Mexico, Puerto Rico, and Cuba, and to a lesser degree, Asia. Few newcomers from Europe arrived, apart from a heavy influx of Poles in the late 1980s and early 1990s. The turmoil that engulfed their nation following the collapse of Soviet communism was the chief “push” factor.

The truth of the matter was that, by Richard M. Daley’s first term, Chicago was experiencing another economic transition which, while ushering new jobs to the area, was socially wrenching and potentially ruinous to the social fabric of communities. On the heels of de-industrialization came “post-industrialization,” which John P. Koval

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<sup>59</sup> Pierre Clavel and Wim Wiewel, eds., *Harold Washington and the Neighborhoods: Progressive City Government in Chicago, 1983-1987* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1991), 1.

provocatively suggests was “as momentous as the Industrial Revolution in terms of its transformative power.”<sup>60</sup> Despite its currency, “post-industrialism” is a deceptive moniker, as the manufacturing sector continued to flag but did not disappear.<sup>61</sup> It principally refers to the birth of a computer-driven, knowledge-based, white collar information and service sector as the economy’s strongest force. “Post-industrialism” has come to encompass an assemblage of secondary social meanings as well: an economic hierarchy wherein an individual’s position is largely determined by educational credentials; geographic mobility of whole populations and spatial dislocation; a starkly “bifurcated labor force”—closely tied to race and ethnicity—consisting of those with pertinent knowledge and training and those without; and economic polarization, or wage gaps, increased inequality, and the thinning of the middle class. In Chicago, post-industrialism signified four other concrete developments: first, decentralized employment and commercial concentrations materialized throughout the metropolitan area, giving rise to so-called “edge cities” and rendering outdated the dichotomy of “city and suburb”; second, the Loop became a “global matrix of capital and information flows,” as national and multinational corporations were no longer necessarily wedded to immense physical plants; and third, no single “public authority at the metropolitan level” emerged to “match the metro reach of the economy.”<sup>62</sup> Finally, post-industrialization fueled gentrification in some community areas, such as the near Northwest Side and the South Loop. Service- and information-based corporations demanded a highly educated workforce. For this white collar cohort, urban developers converted old industrial

<sup>60</sup> John P. Koval, “An Overview and Point of View,” in *The New Chicago*, 3.

<sup>61</sup> Koval thinks that “hyper industrial” is a more apt description, as computer-based technology infiltrated all sectors, such as agriculture and industry.

<sup>62</sup> Lowell W. Livezey, “The New Context of Urban Religion,” in *Public Religion and Urban Transformation: Faith in the City*, ed. Lowell W. Livezey (New York: New York University Press 2000), 7, 9.

buildings into upscale housing, and worked to build safe residential areas that would ultimately include good schools, clean parks, and many cultural amenities.

Gentrification, however, had an unsettling downside: working-class residents could be driven from renovated areas, no longer able to afford the higher costs of living.

*Chicago Catholic Confusion and Transformation: A Historiography*

Significant social, political, and economic developments in Chicago between 1965 and 1996 potentially present historians of Church/city interplay with many intriguing investigatory avenues. However, an overview of the existing scholarship of Catholicism in Chicago during the years 1965 and 1996 yields four conclusions. First, the historiography is in its infancy. As the period recently elapsed, and some archival collections remain closed to researchers—most notably Cardinal Joseph Bernardin’s personal papers at the Archdiocese of Chicago Archives and Records Collection—sociologists rather than historians have been the principal investigators. Very few scholars of any discipline have published monographs that systematically probe Church/city interplay in Chicago between 1965 and 1996 and proffer interpretations. There are slightly more dissertations, and a few dozen isolated chapters and journal articles that mine the topic. Second, Catholic historians and sociologists in the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s—with the important exception of Edward Marciniak—were more preoccupied with developments within the Church, such as conflicts among the Chancery Office and local pastors, or the personas and activities of leading churchmen and influential laity. This scholarship exhibits two common and interrelated understandings: controversy, confusion, and a general dwindling of confidence settled among Chicago Catholics in the late 1960; and Cody’s episcopal style significantly departed from his

predecessors. In this regard, discontinuity rather than continuity stamped pre- and post-1965. A third conclusion that can be drawn from scholarship that centers on Catholicism in Chicago between 1965 and 1996 is that the privileging of intra-church developments to account for ecclesial shifts, particularly before the 2000s, has camouflaged to a degree Catholicism's interaction with the changing urban environment. Happily, a small but growing number of scholars—principally sociologists and doctors of education but also a few historians—have started to systematically study Chicago Catholics from an urban historical perspective, that is, tracking how a unique urban context (Chicago) altered Catholic practices, and how Catholicism mutually influenced the human and physical development of the city. I adopt the format for this dissertation. Finally, irrespective of these promising turns, this scholarship generally does not convey the uncertainty, fear, and trauma that many Chicagoans suffered. Economic upheaval, interpersonal violence and street gangs, racial animosity, political uncertainty, and AIDS were “secular” ordeals that Chicago Catholics negotiated.

That the local Church suffered from confusion, dissension, and a flagging will to transform itself and society during the Cody era surfaced as the first dominant historiographical motif. Gradually, some scholars who were disenchanted with the Church's contemporary trajectory began implicitly and explicitly characterizing the decades that preceded the mid-1960s as a “golden age” in Chicago Church history.<sup>63</sup> Although scholars concurred that Catholic zeal had declined, they were not in uniform

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<sup>63</sup> Paraphrasing Monsignor John J. Egan, Margery Frisbie uses “golden age” in *An Alley in Chicago*, 3. It is perhaps not coincidental that scholars of Chicago's “secular” history have also created a niche that emphasizes the nostalgic in 1940s and 1950s Chicago. See, for example, Alan Ehrenhalt, *The Lost City: Discovering the Forgotten Virtues of Community in the Chicago of the 1950s* (New York, Basic Books, 1995); Ray Suarez, *The Old Neighborhood: What We Lost in the Great Suburban Migration, 1966-1999* (New York: Free Press, 1999).

agreement about the principal culprit. In some cases, a thinly-veiled presentism tinged their conclusions—that is, they hoped their analysis of the past would influence the future Chicago and American Church. Msgr. George A. Kelly was one of first to systemically investigate “what went wrong.” Although a sociologist rather than a historian, Kelly devoted an entire chapter in *The Battle for the American Church* (1979) to “The Battle for the Catholic Family, or the Siege of Chicago.” He portrays an archdiocese embroiled in confusion and controversy, and specifically centers on the Catholic family values and the once vibrant Chicago family apostolates. Cana and the Christian Family Movement gradually drifted from their founders’ visions, he posits: they shifted from stressing God’s revelation concerning marriage to underscoring human experience; became a “sociological enterprise” rather than theologically determined; and exhibited anticlericalism and “anti-Magisterium.” Kelly also indicts Chicago priest-sociologist Andrew Greeley for sowing confusion among Chicago Catholic families. Greeley’s faulty sociological methods and conclusions—Greeley’s *Catholic Schools in a Declining Church* blamed *Humanae Vitae* for the “decline in Catholic adherence”—undermined Church authority. Finally, Kelly insists that priestly challenges to Cody’s authority hastened unsettlement. While acknowledging that Cody’s “personality and leadership style” may have exacerbated sour relations with some clerics, Kelly insists that “the seeds of confrontation were already planted there”; under Stritch and Meyer, Chicago pastors had come to expect “freedom,” and were rankled when Cody curbed it.<sup>64</sup>

Sociologist Charles W. Dahm’s *Power and Authority in the Catholic Church: Cardinal Cody in Chicago*, published in 1981 during the sunset of Cody’s tenure,

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<sup>64</sup> Msgr. George A. Kelly, *The Battle for the American Church* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1979), 199-234.



implicitly challenged Kelly's interpretation. The book is the most systematic indictment of the Cardinal's complicity in Chicago Church decline, and remains the lengthiest if one-sided monograph of intra-Catholic developments in the Windy City between 1965 and the late 1970s.<sup>65</sup> A Dominican priest serving in the Archdiocese of Chicago, Dahm conducted interviews and personally attended meetings of the Association of Chicago Priests (ACP), a *de facto* union of clerics that formed in 1966. He centers on the "inner politics of the Church" and specifically follows priests' progressive disillusionment with Cody's high-handed and paranoid episcopal style; the formation of the ACP; the organization's successes and failures; and Cody's reaction to the plummeting revenues of inner-city churches and schools. Dahm notes that "As a relatively progressive diocese in a mostly Catholic city, Chicago should have been well-qualified to rapidly implement the reforms of the Second Vatican Council"; however, this proved to be "a delusive hope" largely as a result of Cody's generally ineffective leadership.<sup>66</sup> The archbishop regularly made critical personnel and institutional decisions without consultation and centralized power under his authority, which his "corporation sole" status amplified. This ultimately hastened the formation of the ACP. The ACP, which initially numbered several hundred pastors, was a bid to assert their collective interests, secure bargaining power with the archbishop, foster shared responsibility in Church decision-making, decentralize archdiocesan structures to make them more "responsive to local needs," and acquire more autonomy over their personal and professional lives. Cody initially made public, if half-hearted overtures to meet ACP demands, and the organization had some success,

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<sup>65</sup> Charles W. Dahm in collaboration with Robert Ghelardi, *Power and Authority in the Catholic Church: Cardinal Cody in Chicago* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1981). Dahm has an extraordinarily negative view of Cody. His excoriation of the Cardinal reaches a fever-pitch on page 265, where he calls Cody "arrogant, supercilious, condescending, compulsive, and suspicious." Kantowicz dubbed Dahm's book a "hatchet job." See Kantowicz, *Corporation Sole*, 288, fn. 6.

<sup>66</sup> Dahm, 258.

primarily in its early years. For example, an Office of Conciliation and Arbitration was established to resolve disputes between priests or between priests and archdiocesan administrators; and ACP members persuaded the Cardinal to establish a democratically-elected Personnel Board, which made personnel appointments—a former privilege of the Cardinal. Divisions, however, stalked the ACP, most noticeably between a “liberal establishment” of older priests who favored negotiation and were averse to public confrontations, and a younger cadre of brash “street wise” inner-city pastors who were trained in Alinsky-style principles of community organization and favored pressure tactics. The latter in 1971 successfully pushed through a measure in the ACP to censure Cody and his auxiliary bishops. After the unprecedented measure, many clergymen cooled to the organization. Membership dropped, and ACP bargaining power with the Cardinal ebbed.

Continuing, Dahm insists that Cody’s arbitrary decision-making alienated the laity. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, Cody closed nine parishes and twenty-nine elementary schools in the inner city, and slashed subsidies to parishes. Dahm admits that circumstances demanded archdiocesan action in the inner city, where the number of Catholics had been dropping for decades and some parochial schools educated as many Protestant pupils as Catholic. It was the Cardinal’s methods—his unwillingness to consult advisors or provide advance warning that institutions would be closed—that incensed parents, teachers, and priests. Throughout the book, Dahm underscores that Cody was not solely to blame for the debacle in Chicago. Catholic hierarchical structures were also guilty, as they bred “authoritarian decision making,” and bishops with few checks on their power.

Historians writing after Dahm who mine developments within the Church have uniformly recognized Cody's insensitive leadership style; however, they have also identified the Cardinal's achievements and pinpointed additional causal factors for ebbing morale. Toward the end of their respective monographs, Avella and Kantowicz both underscore the confusion in the Chicago Church and Cody's impersonal and authoritarian episcopal leadership. Avella mentions the archdiocesan "disarray and division" during the immediate post-conciliar years, abetted by birth control debates, the distrust between pastors and their prelate, and Cody's penchant for centralizing power in his own hands. In the epilogue to *Corporation Sole*, Kantowicz offers a frank indictment of Cody's persona, remarking that "In my wanderings about Chicago, interviewing priests for this book, I did not encounter a single clergyman of the archdiocese, old or young, who respected Cardinal Cody."<sup>67</sup> Avella and Kantowicz, however, both acknowledged Cody's achievements. The Cardinal completed a process of administrative consolidation and centralization that Mundelein had launched; instituted life and health insurance plans for priests; funded a pension plan for lay and clerical employees; consented to the Personnel Board's formation; reorganized the seminary curriculum and liberalized the rules; promoted the formation of permanent deacons; implemented Vatican II-inspired liturgical reforms; and strongly supported the desegregation of archdiocesan churches and schools. Eight years later in an essay that compares and contrasts the personas, episcopal styles, and policies of Cardinals Mundelein and Cody, Kantowicz again noted Cody's failures and successes. Notably, Kantowicz vigorously rebuts the charge that Cody "abandoned" inner city parishes. The archbishop in fact allocated almost three million dollars to poor minority parishes—even when it came at the expense of new parish

<sup>67</sup> Kantowicz, *Corporation Sole*, 240.

construction in the suburbs. Kantowicz explains that historical context and personal aims and goals differentiated the two Cardinals. While both were “Romanist, triumphant, and centralizing” bishops, Mundelein helped usher in the period in Church history when these characteristics were becoming vogue. Cody continued to practice an “imperial style”; sadly for him, however, it had become anachronistic in the years after Vatican II, when American Catholics urged democratic reforms and assertive priests were unwilling to “defer to authority unquestioningly.” Cody’s “secretive” and “obsessive” management style, his desire to have absolute control over money matters in particular, and his appointment of “yes men, cronies, or soulless bureaucrats” as subordinates, departed from Mundelein. Kantowicz cannily reasons that Cody “seems to have lost track of the distinction between ends and means.” Whereas Mundelein used money and power to advance the Church and its spiritual mission, Cody “seems to have pursued power largely for its own sake.”<sup>68</sup>

Some scholars in the early 2000s continued to privilege intra-church developments in delineating shifts in Chicago-style Catholicism. In a 2004 interpretive essay exploring the characteristics and singularity of Catholicism in the American Midwest, Jay P. Dolan insisted that the “energy for reform” that stamped 1950s and 1960s Catholicism in the region “has dissipated” and “Catholicism has adopted a more rigid character.” Dolan pinpoints four culprits that stifled the “spirit of innovation” in the Midwest and the Chicago Archdiocese: the aging of activists; the elevation to the Chicago See of John Cody, who was “not open to change or innovation” and who destroyed the “climate of optimism” that Vatican II had fueled; the election in 1978 of

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<sup>68</sup> Edward R. Kantowicz, “The Beginning and the End of an Era: George William Mundelein and John Patrick Cody in Chicago,” in Skerrett, Kantowicz, and Avella, *Catholicism, Chicago Style*, 136.

Pope John Paul II, who thereafter endeavored to “fashion a culture of authoritarianism and rigid adherence to orthodox Catholic teaching”; and finally, the politically rightward drift of suburban Catholics.<sup>69</sup> Notably, Dolan’s interpretation underemphasizes urban life—e.g., the density of space; the racial, religious, ethnic, or class pluralism of inhabitants; the local political culture—and more specifically the unique history of the city, as causal factors for the flagging of innovation and reform.

While scholars debated archdiocesan decline and Cody’s complicity in it, other historiographical categories surfaced. Joseph Bernardin’s appointment to the Chicago See in 1982 was one stimulus. Journalists and historians in particular began to recognize the archbishop’s vital role in American Catholic public policy-making. It must be stated that the books they wrote were not exclusively devoted to Bernardin, nor essentially concerned with Chicago-style Catholicism or Bernardin’s leadership within his archdiocese. Rather, investigators such as journalist Jim Castelli and historian William A. Au were interested in Bernardin’s chairmanship of the Bishops’ War and Peace Committee. For his part, historian John T. McGreevy incorporated Bernardin’s intellectual contributions as chair of the Bishops’ Pro-Life Committee in his analysis of Catholic and American ideas of “freedom.”<sup>70</sup>

Castelli and Au individually explain that Bernardin helped draft the Pastoral Letter on War and Peace, which examined the morality of modern war and the challenge of peace.<sup>71</sup> Drafted by subcommittee, reviewed by Catholic and non-Catholic experts

<sup>69</sup> Dolan, “A Different Breed of Catholics,” 119.

<sup>70</sup> Bernardin’s national leadership has been fleetingly mentioned in a good number of books. Therefore, the publications mentioned here dwell on the Cardinal’s actions at length.

<sup>71</sup> Jim Castelli, *The Bishops and the Bomb: Waging Peace in a Nuclear Age* (Garden City, NY: Image, 1983); William A. Au, *The Cross, the Flag, and the Bomb: American Catholics Debate War and Peace, 1960-1983* (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1985). For an overview of the Pastoral Letter on War and Peace, see Thomas A. Shannon, “Catholic Social Teaching in America,” in *The Encyclopedia of American*

from a variety of fields, and thrice revised, the Letter argued, “Under no circumstances may nuclear weapons or other instruments of mass slaughter be used for the purpose of destroying population centers” or civilian targets; there was no situation “in which the deliberate initiation of nuclear warfare...can be morally justified”; and proposed a “strictly conditioned moral acceptance of deterrence.” Castelli notes that the American hierarchy’s direct criticism of the federal government—an unprecedented action for the formerly “scorned and despised” minority—signaled that Catholics had become ensconced in American life. Others and most notably McGreevy have underscored the importance of Bernardin’s work as chair of the Bishops’ Pro-Life Committee in the mid-1980s. The Cardinal, according to McGreevy, was an “adroit bureaucrat” who “specialized in mediation” and embodied a “new Catholic style”—one in which bishops strove to shape and engage society, rather than to simply fortify the American Catholic subculture. Sensitive to threats on human life in the womb, as well as issues such as poverty and nuclear war, Bernardin fashioned and articulated a “consistent ethic of life” or “seamless garment,” which “knit the disparate threads of Catholic social thought into a coherent whole.”<sup>72</sup>

Biography was a third historiographical category to emerge. Already in the late 1970s, writers documented the lives of leading religious and lay figures who operated in Chicago between 1965 and 1996, which suggests the number of influential Catholics who labored in Chicago during those years. Cardinal Bernardin has received the most attention. A handful of biographies appeared after he was appointed to the Chicago See.

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*Catholic History*, eds. Michael Glazier and Thomas J. Shelley (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1997), 298.

<sup>72</sup> John T. McGreevy, *Catholicism and American Freedom: A History* (New York: Norton, 2003), 285.

Most were published toward the end of his tenure and in the immediate aftermath of his death in 1996. Penned by individuals who personally knew him, such as Eugene Kennedy and former editor of the archdiocesan newspaper A.E.P. Wall, biographies offer sympathetic portraits of the Cardinal—his family background, personal characteristics, sacerdotal responsibilities, ascension up the ecclesiastical ladder, and national leadership—personal anecdotes, and generally center on intra-Church developments, rather than Bernardin’s attitudes toward city evolution.<sup>73</sup>

Biographers also chronicled the lives of other influential Chicago priests. Journalist Margery Frisbie extensively interviewed Monsignor John Egan. Her book illuminates Egan’s indefatigable apostolate as a priest and advocate of urban social justice. Afflicted with heart problems exacerbated by a hectic schedule and pained by Cody’s closure of the Office of Urban Affairs, Egan left to serve as assistant to the president of the University of Notre Dame in 1970. After Cody’s death, Bernardin immediately recalled Egan to the archdiocese, appointing the priest in charge of the Office of Human Relations and Ecumenism. Ann Dempsey Burke chronicled the life and exploits of her brother, Michael Ryan Dempsey. Dempsey was a well-known Chicago priest who pastored at Our Lady of Lourdes, an African American parish in the Lawndale neighborhood, between 1964 and 1974. He was an advocate for Black civil rights and integral to the success of the Conference on Religion and Race. Sensitive to the plight of poor people, he was assigned national director of the Bishop’s Campaign for Human Development. Cody appointed him vicar delegate (Region IV), and then auxiliary

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<sup>73</sup> Eugene Kennedy, *Bernardin: Life to the Full* (Chicago: Bonus, 1989); A.E.P. Wall, *The Spirit of Cardinal Bernardin* (Chicago: Thomas More Press, 1983). Eugene Kennedy, *This Man Bernardin* (Chicago: Loyola Press, 1996) includes many photos of the Cardinal and about 100 pages of text. Eugene Kennedy, *My Brother Joseph: The Spirit of a Cardinal and the Story of a Friendship* (New York: St. Martin’s, 1997) offers a character sketch of the Cardinal.

bishop. Father Andrew Greeley has published his memoirs in two volumes. A central thread running throughout the second volume is that a post-Vatican II “Confused Catholic Church” supplanted the pre-conciliar “Confident Catholic Church,” a transformation that Greeley posits has been salubrious to Church life. Greeley is also the subject of John N. Kotre’s *The Best of Times, the Worst of Times: Andrew Greeley and American Catholicism, 1950-1975*. Kotre centers on the priest-sociologist’s personal background and prolific scholarly output. Kotre has also chronicled the lives of admired Chicago laypersons, Patrick and Patricia Crowley. He delves into their backgrounds, work as architects of the Christian Family Movement in the 1950s and 1960s, and contribution to Pope Paul VI’s papal birth control commission. The Crowleys supported the unsuccessful majority report urging that the Church revise its traditional ban on artificial birth control, and publicly dissented when the Holy Father promulgated *Humanae Vitae*.<sup>74</sup>

During the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s, scholars of Chicago Catholics generally privileged intra-church factors to explain shifts in Chicago Catholicism. Diagnosing the confusion and flagging innovative spirit was one dominant theme of the historiography. After Bernardin’s accession, journalists and historians explored the Cardinal’s role in national Catholic public policy-making. Biography comprised a third historiographical category, although few writers expressed a direct interest in systematically evaluating how urban forces shaped Catholicism between 1965 and 1996, and vice versa. Be that as

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<sup>74</sup> Frisbie, *An Alley in Chicago*; Ann Dempsey Burke, *The Bishop Who Dared: A Biography of Bishop Michael Ryan Dempsey* (St. Petersburg, FL: Valkyrie, 1978); Andrew M. Greeley, *Confessions of a Parish Priest: An Autobiography* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1986); Andrew M. Greeley, *Furthermore!: Memories of a Parish Priest* (New York: Tom Doherty Associates, 1999), 15-17; John N. Kotre, *The Best of Times, the Worst of Times: Andrew Greeley and American Catholicism, 1950-1975* (Chicago: Nelson-Hall, 1978); John N. Kotre, *Simple Gifts: The Lives of Pat and Patty Crowley* (Kansas City: Andrews and McMeel, 1979). Jeffrey M. Burns’ hitherto mentioned *Disturbing the Peace* also examines the Crowleys.



it may, sociologists, education specialists, and historians have begun to fill in the gap. The historiographical genre noticeably gained steam in the early 2000s, although the important work of Edward Marciniak—president of Loyola University’s Institute of Urban Life and longtime Catholic activist—in the 1980s and 1990s anticipated the development. Marciniak exhibited an unusual sensitivity, in his unpublished work in particular, to Catholicism and urban life in Chicago. The chief themes of his published books were Chicago’s infrastructural decline and redevelopment.<sup>75</sup>

The scholarship that analyzes the interaction between the city of Chicago and the Catholic Church has been almost exclusively essay-length, appearing either in scholarly journals or book compilations. A handful of trends encouraged scholars’ interests such as ongoing bids to weave Catholicism into the tapestry of American history; the recognition among ethnographers and sociologists that Catholicism and the parish in particular have vitally alleviated immigrant disorientation and helped acculturate them to urban America; and the establishment of the Religion in Urban America Program at the University of Illinois at Chicago, which is directed by Lowell W. Livezey, conducts field research in Chicago, and studies congregations, neighborhoods, and local religiously-informed organizations. Two innovative books, Steven M. Avella’s *This Confident Church* and John T. McGreevy’s *Parish Boundaries*, also merit credit for developing the genre for historians of Chicago, although they chiefly investigated the period preceding 1965. Avella allotted four chapters to “urban issues” and explored Catholics and housing, race, urban renewal, expressway building, suburbanization, and community organizing.

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<sup>75</sup> Particularly insightful was “Project: The New Inner City,” which consisted of three unpublished studies that Marciniak conducted in the mid-1990s at Loyola’s Institute of Urban Life. These examined how three Chicago parishes were dealing with neighborhood change. They are titled “Precious Blood and the Five Neighborhoods,” “St. James Church and Chicago’s Near South Side,” and “Holy Innocents Church and the Future of River West.” The studies can be found in the Edward Marciniak Papers, Box 22, AAC.

McGreevy traced the “threads connecting religion, race, and community” in Chicago and other northern cities. Despite these promising shoots and the small but growing historiography, many important topics and trends regarding Chicago and the Catholic Church remain underexplored or entirely unearthed. This dissertation seeks to fill some of the gaps.

Three subtopics have principally engaged scholars who adapt an urban historical perspective to study Chicago Catholics: ethnicity/immigration, race relations, and the interaction between parish and neighborhood. Of Chicago’s ethnic and historically Catholic groups, Latinos have received most coverage. Interest in Latino Catholics and the city stems from the aforementioned interest of ethnographers and sociologists, the mounting number of Latinos earning graduate degrees, and perhaps because of the low number of Latino priests and archdiocesan decision-makers; adopting an urban historical perspective does more to illumine the Latino Catholic experience than does probing the deeds of non-Latino prelates and priests.

Two monographs extensively explore Latino Catholics and developments in the city during the years 1965-1996: David A. Badillo’s *Latinos and the New Immigrant Church* (2006), and Wilfredo Cruz’s *City of Dreams: Latino Immigration to Chicago* (2007).<sup>76</sup> Badillo examines twentieth-century Mexican-American, Puerto Rican, and Cuban Catholicism in San Antonio, New York, Miami, and Chicago. He reasons that “to fully understand Latinos in the United States today, one must understand their unique,

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<sup>76</sup> David A. Badillo, *Latinos and the New Immigrant Church* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 2006); Wilfred Cruz, *City of Dreams: Latino Immigration to Chicago* (Lanham: University Press of America, 2007). One dissertation that admirably plumbs the interaction between Latino Catholics and the archdiocese of Chicago is Thomas G. Kelliher, Jr., “Hispanic Catholics and the Archdiocese of Chicago, 1923-1970” (PhD. Diss., University of Notre Dame, 1996).

complex, and ever-evolving relationship with the Catholic Church.”<sup>77</sup> Immigration from Latin America compelled the American Church to adopt a hemispheric consciousness. Understanding Latin American history is essential to understanding, and adequately ministering to, Latinos.

The local American Catholic parish was crucial to migrants’ acculturation, Badillo continues. Latinos’ ties to the institution—if weekly Mass attendance was the measurement—were historically weaker than Catholics of European ancestry. That Latinos customarily depended on the parish for support during hard times and celebrated vital rites of passage, such as baptism and marriage, at the local church belied that Latinos were unattached to the parish. In Chicago, episcopal decisions sometimes hindered Latinos’ Catholic practices. In the 1920s, Cardinal Mundelein restricted the formation of new national parishes just as Mexican migrants were settling in Chicago communities. Latinos who attended White churches could be disparaged. Whites who felt threatened by Latino requests for Spanish-language Masses left Latinos little choice but to celebrate services in church basements. Today, many Latinos whose territorial parish is predominantly non-Latino willingly travel to Latino sections of the city to attend Mass. Cardinal Bernardin’s rather unexpected decision in 1994 to close St. Francis of Assisi Church in the heavily Latino Near West Side was another episcopal hurdle. Badillo explains that in the 1960s, urban renewal programs and expressway building tore through the area, and many Mexicans relocated to the adjacent southwestern Pilsen neighborhood. Latinos successfully protested the archbishop’s decision, and Bernardin in 1996 announced that the church could stay open.

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<sup>77</sup> Badillo, xi.

Latino Catholicism is not merely practiced in the center city. In the past few decades, Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, and Cubans have followed the precedent set by European Americans, migrating from the central to the outer city. Jobs pulled blue-collar Latino workers to the commercial strips and industrial warehouses. Their movement ballooned several Catholic parishes—now predominantly Latino—in the western suburbs of Cicero, Berwyn, and Melrose Park in particular. Badillo concludes that the parish was not the sole forum where Latinos expressed their religion. Public displays of religion on city streets, most colorfully the *Via Crucis* (Way of the Cross), which is annually celebrated in Little Village on Good Friday, and ministries such as the wildly popular three-day *Cursillos de Cristiandad*, circumvent the parish.

Journalist Wilfredo Cruz's account of the Chicago Latino past relies extensively on oral interviews with contemporary Latinos. Cruz argues that few books chronicle the social histories of major Latino groups in Chicago. His book thus considers Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, Cubans, and migrants from Central America. Throughout, Cruz underscores the importance of religion, and Catholicism in particular, to Latino migrants. He explains that Mexicans traditionally settled in Pilsen on the Lower West Side, nearby South Lawndale (the Little Village or La Villita), and New City or Back of the Yards. Claretian Father Peter Rodriguez, who ministered to the Mexican congregation of Holy Cross Parish, was one popular priest in the Yards. Rodriguez recalls the painful racial changes in the 1960s and 1970s, when parishes and neighborhoods shifted from White to Latino. Puerto Ricans also experienced inhospitality when they tried to attend White churches. Many sensed that the Chicago Catholic Church was "cold and distant" and a

startlingly high number of Puerto Ricans and Mexicans drifted to smaller and more intimate Protestant Evangelical or Pentecostal churches.

Chicago Latinos also helped themselves by drawing on their Catholic faith and Catholic institutions. The Resurrection Project, a conglomeration of seven Catholic parishes in the Mexican American Pilsen community that banded together in the 1990s to revive the neighborhood and improve their lives, is one example. Several writers, such as Dominican Charles W. Dahm and Nile Harper, have recounted the history, methods, and goals of the project.<sup>78</sup> As pastor of St. Pius V parish, Dahm himself was an integral formulator of the Project. Dahm and Harper explain that Mexican migrants typically bring to the city several presuppositions about religious and social norms that were inculcated in their native land, and hamper “organized community action for justice.” These include the ideas that “suffering is good”; “the kingdom of God is in heaven”; “politics is evil”; ordinary people have no power to effect change; and life in Mexico is poorer than life in the U.S. As pastor of St. Pius, Dahm challenged these presuppositions, telling congregants that Christ was “an affirmation” of human dignity, rejected inequality, and that He commissioned the Church to ceaselessly restate the message.

The Resurrection Project was an offshoot of the Pilsen Neighborhood Community Council (PNCC), formed in the 1960s to pressure government and business institutions to be accountable for the common good. As partners in the PNCC, local churches helped identify and train leaders, and organize members. However, priests’ displeasure mounted when they realized that paid professional staff, rather than neighborhood residents,

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<sup>78</sup> Charles W. Dahm, O.P., with Nile Harper, “St. Pius V Roman Catholic Church and the Pilsen Area Resurrection Project,” in *Urban Churches, Vital Signs: Beyond Charity toward Justice*, ed. Nile Harper (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1999). Another essay that explain the origins and goals of the Resurrection Project are William P. Bolan, “The Resurrection Project,” in *Living the Catholic Social Tradition: Cases and Commentary*, eds. Kathleen Maas Weigert and Alexia K. Kelley (Lanham, MD: Sheed and Ward, 2005).

directed the organization; contact between PNCC leadership and local churches melted; the mass of members were uninvolved; and the PNCC developed independent sources of funding. Priests also averred that the organization needed to more noticeably reflect members' theological traditions. To that end, a new organization, the Catholic Community of Pilsen (CCP), formed which collaborated with pastors and congregations to ensure a "broad participant base." CCP members devoted energies to multiple community improvement projects, such as better housing, garbage cleanup, and communication with police to alleviate crime. CCP twinned with the two-year old Pilsen Resurrection Development Corporation—a "non-profit entity for economic housing development"—in 1994, and the new corporation became "The Resurrection Project." The project strengthened the community fabric, facilitating block clubs, offering day care and family education, helping abused and abandoned women, and dialoguing with local banks, businesses, foundations, and government agencies to form partnerships to solve local problems.

Other scholars have adopted an urban historical perspective to grapple with Chicago Catholics and race relations. The most systematic treatments appear in John McGreevy's *Parish Boundaries*, Suellen Hoy's *Good Hearts: Catholic Sisters in Chicago's Past*, and Robert McClory's recent biography of outspoken Catholic priest and social activist Father Michael Pfleger.<sup>79</sup> Three chapters in *Parish Boundaries* explore Catholics and race from the mid-1960s to the mid-1970s. McGreevy explains that two coterminous events, the African American Civil Rights Movement and the Second Vatican Council, encouraged a heightened sensitivity to racial issues and urban poverty.

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<sup>79</sup> McGreevy, *Parish Boundaries*; Suellen Hoy, *Good Hearts: Catholic Sisters in Chicago's Past* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2006); Robert McClory, *Radical Disciple: Father Pfleger, St. Sabina Church, and the Fight for Social Justice* (Chicago: Lawrence Hill, 2010).

In northern cities such as Chicago, liberal priests and nuns publicly marched in civil rights demonstrations through unwelcoming Catholic neighborhoods. The Catholic Interracial Council, as a member of the Coordinating Council of Community Organizations, encouraged Martin Luther King's northern freedom struggle. Having established a reputation in New Orleans as an interracialist, Cardinal Cody publicly vowed to desegregate Catholic institutions and encouraged open housing—although he personally distanced himself from King.

The Civil Rights Movement and Vatican II “widened the cultural divide” between two “Catholic peoples”: “liberal Catholics” who denounced racism, and those living in neighborhoods threatened by racial change. McGreevy explains that the former adopted a vocabulary that laid stress on “freedom,” which soon found new applications. Liberals took the hierarchy to task and questioned ecclesial organizations, rituals, and structures, all of which they perceived as oppressive and outmoded. Catholics in the neighborhoods accused liberals of undermining not simply the local racial, but moral order as well. Paradoxically, the same liberal interracialists who before the 1960s had buttressed their positions by appealing to the hierarchy and who had blamed “timid bishops, recalcitrant laypeople, and ignorant priests” for obscuring Catholic teaching on human equality, now called Church authority into question. Continuing, McGreevy identifies that pre-Vatican II liberal bids to downplay racial and ethnic differences in the Catholic liturgy, which they charged injured Christian unity, were scuttled by Vatican II and the Black Power movement. The former's implicit stress on “pluralistic uniformity” in the Church, and the latter's emphasis on a distinctly “Black theology,” no longer encouraged uniformity “across time and culture” in liturgical forms.

Hoy's collection of essays examines the Sisters of Mercy in Chicago.

Admonishing that the “agency and activism” of nuns remains “an unwritten chapter in the history of American women,” the author contends that female religious exercised a surprising capacity to influence the Church and the city.<sup>80</sup> The final chapter in *Good Hearts* examines nuns' roles in the Chicago Civil Rights Movement. Hoy explains that nuns had marched in public demonstrations as early as 1963, strongly supported King's efforts in 1966, and were active in community organizations. Some nuns had supported Black equality for at least two decades prior to the 1960s, she argues, and their marches through Chicago streets for racial justice represented a culmination of their efforts, rather than a beginning. The racial prejudice that nuns saw daily on Chicago streets energized their activities, to be sure. So did Belgian Cardinal Leon Joseph Suenen's *The Nun in the World* (1962), which envisioned the entire world as a convent; Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique*; and the social consciousness evoked by Vatican II. Hoy concludes that during the era, “sisters sought to redefine for themselves what it meant to be modern women in the American Catholic Church.”<sup>81</sup>

Journalist McClory's *Radical Disciple* chronicles the life and priestly ministry of Father Michael Pflieger. In spite of its unambiguous sympathy for the subject, the book is an admirable example of how a biography of a theologically motivated individual can consider urban context. Since 1981, Pflieger has been pastor of the predominantly African American parish of St. Sabina parish in the Auburn Gresham neighborhood. McClory considers Pflieger's background, growing interest in African American civil rights, and his role in stabilizing the parish and neighborhood. Additionally, he

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<sup>80</sup> Hoy, 3.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid., 152.



chronicles how Pflieger, often alongside brother priest George Clements, pastor of Holy Angels parish, waged a “war” to extricate drug paraphernalia, dealers, and guns from the neighborhood, and protested alcohol and cigarette billboards.

The tie between Catholic parishes and Chicago neighborhoods is a third historiographical subcategory that has attracted scholars and sociologists in particular. Chicago neighborhoods in 1965 were replete with Catholic parishes; it followed that community alterations impacted the Catholic Church. Scholars probing neighborhood/parish interaction have essentially considered two phenomena: neighborhood and parish decline, particularly as a result of deindustrialization, and subsequent “community loss”—i.e., when communities perceived by residents to be fairly static undergo unsettling or disintegrative demographic, economic, or cultural shifts; and gentrification and the re-establishment of communities or human associations.

The migration of people and money to the suburbs emptied some neighborhoods of Catholics, and was a principle cause for the school and church consolidations and closings in the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. The most drastic cutback took place in 1990, when Cardinal Bernardin shuttered thirty five parishes and missions. Historians have debated the wisdom of this decision. In a provocative and critical essay published in 1994, Ellen Skerrett argues that, in spite of the archdiocese’s good intentions to balance debits and credits, the closings nonetheless represented “a radical departure” in the history of the Chicago Church. Doubtlessly, schools and churches in the past had shut down for a variety of reasons—but the deliberate “destruction of sacred space” had never occurred “on this scale.”<sup>82</sup> Skerrett points out that, historically, central city parishes were crucial to neighborhood cohesion, had helped the Church maintain an urban identity in

<sup>82</sup> Skerrett, *Chicago’s Neighborhoods*, 8.

spite of Catholic suburbanization, and were instruments that had transformed the Chicago Archdiocese into “the powerful institution it is today.” Skerrett takes to task Catholic leaders who think that the Church would be healthier without so many city churches and schools; and those whose “post-Vatican II sensibilities” lead them to believe that ethnic and territorial churches are embarrassing “vestiges of an impoverished past.”<sup>83</sup> Historian Peter D’Agostino, on the contrary, has underscored that the closings were products of de-industrialization and the shift of power and wealth from the central city to the suburbs, rationally-planned by the Cardinal and his advisors, and necessary.<sup>84</sup> Bernardin encouraged “pan-parochial planning” and greater coordination among parishes. To enhance fiscal soundness, he mandated that each parish evaluate its own financial situation. According to D’Agostino, the Cardinal’s decisions generated resistance among Catholics who subscribed to the “myth” of Chicago Catholicism: the “story of tight-knit neighborhoods and struggles of proud ethnic groups for local democracy, land ownership, and political clout.” In this myth, the parish “symbolized the neighborhood community.” These Catholics were suspicious that pan-parochial planning was “a subterfuge to legitimate parish closings.”<sup>85</sup>

Recently, scholars Margaret F. Brinig and Nicole Stelle Garnett examined the implications of Catholic elementary school closings on Chicago neighborhoods. They tout their important article as “the first of its kind.” Brinig and Garnett explain that, since

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<sup>83</sup> Ibid., 11.

<sup>84</sup> Peter R. D’Agostino, “Catholic Planning for a Multicultural Metropolis, 1982-1996,” in *Public Religion and Urban Transformation: Faith in the City*, ed. Lowell W. Livezey (New York: New York University Press, 2000). A brief summary of the closings in Chicago can also be found in Thomas Rzeznik, “The Church in the Changing City: Parochial Restructuring in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia in Historical Perspective,” *U.S. Catholic Historian* 27, no 4 (Fall 2009): 73-90. Closings were not restricted to Chicago. For the impact of urban change on another Midwestern city, see Thomas G. Welsh, *Closing Chapters: Urban Change, Religious Reform, and the Decline of Youngstown’s Catholic Elementary Schools, 1960-2006* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2012).

<sup>85</sup> D’Agostino, 271, 276.

1984, 148 schools have been closed in the archdiocese—most of them in the central city. Closings have a significant bearing on the neighborhoods, because Catholic schools are stabilizing forces and crucial generators of social capital. When they close, social disorder, e.g., gang membership, public intoxication, and prostitution, increases while social cohesion and “collective efficacy”—or “the ability of neighborhoods to realize the common values of residents and maintain effective social controls”—decrease. Neighborhood health declines.<sup>86</sup>

Sociologist Elfriede Wedam’s work on shifting Chicago neighborhoods cautions against an exclusive preoccupation on the closing of Catholic schools and churches. Demographic and economic transformation also afforded opportunities for new human relationships and community organizations. In one essay, Wedam examines community and culture in blue-collar Southwest Side communities like Gage Park, Chicago Lawn, and West Lawn. When residents began filtering out of the area in the 1970s, she explains, “strong moral communities” were initially weakened. However, the arrival of immigrants bore new opportunities to interact, re-establish community cohesion, and “redraw the boundaries of the insider group.” The archdiocese and local Catholic parishes were central in fostering a sense of community among strangers negotiating a pluralistic moral order. In 1988, the archdiocesan Office of Peace and Justice spearheaded the formation of the Southwest Catholic Cluster Project, which was eventually re-named the Southwest Organizing Project (SOP). Wedam believes that SOP is a “values-oriented community organization that aims to create meaningful cross-racial, cross-ethnic, cross-generation, and cross-religious relationships for the purpose of

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<sup>86</sup> Margaret F. Brinig and Nichole Stelle Garnett, “Catholic Schools, Urban Neighborhoods, and Education Reform,” *Notre Dame Law Review* 890, 905.

creating a viable urban community.” In another essay, Wedam probes how gentrification has altered parish life at the popular St. Patrick’s Catholic Church on the West Side of Chicago’s business district. She explains that, in the 1980s, the pastor transformed the parish from a territorial into a regional or magnet church, which the 1983 Revised Code of Canon Law made possible. The decision was popular in an era when more Catholics consciously “chose” a parish to attend and thus “created” a Catholic identity, rather than simply attending the closest nearby parish. Within walking distance of the Loop, St. Patrick’s grew in popularity among young and middle-aged White and white-collar professional and business people. Wedam argues that the parish wisely shifted its ecclesiology to fit “new urban realities,” such as the kinetic movement of people in and out of the area. St. Patrick’s offered parishioners and non-parishioners many opportunities to volunteer and socialize, and encouraged “values spirituality over dogma, experience centeredness rather than rule centeredness, and presence in this world more than preparation for the next.” While St. Patrick’s approach may not foster “the old moral construction of community as a relationship among intimates,” it does create associations among transient urban people.<sup>87</sup>

### *Rifts and Reciprocity*

This dissertation analyzes how social, economic, and demographic changes in Chicago between 1965 and 1996 altered the Catholic Church and Catholic life, and how

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<sup>87</sup> Elfriede Wedam, “‘God Doesn’t Ask What Language I Pray In’: Community and Culture on Chicago’s Southwest Side,” in Livezey, ed., *Public Religion*, 107-132; Wedam, “Catholic Spirituality in a New Urban Church,” in Livezey, ed., *Public Religion*, 213-238. Wedam examined similar themes in Wedam, “If We Let the Market Prevail, We Won’t Have a Neighborhood Left: Religious Agency and Urban Restructuring on Chicago’s Southwest Side,” *City and Society* 17, no. 2 (2005): 211-233.

Catholics harnessed their theological traditions to shape the city.<sup>88</sup> It explains that the traditional liberalism and historic confidence of Chicago Catholicism was challenged between the late 1960s and the 1990s. Ironically, both were marked in the mid-1960s, in spite of the relentless exodus of White Catholics from the city to the suburbs. The archdiocese was gifted with a cadre of erudite and energetic priests, nuns, religious, and laypeople who were attentive to city developments and knowledgeable of the local political culture. They were also willing to address residents' material and spiritual needs, and articulate the privations of the disadvantaged to business and political elites—behavior seemingly endorsed by Vatican II Council Fathers, particularly in the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, *Gaudium et Spes* (Joy and Hope), who appealed to Catholics to engage the secular world and root out poverty and injustice. Importantly, a good number of Chicago religious and theologically motivated laypeople were remarkably well-versed in the inner-workings of individual neighborhoods—a fluency, however, threatened by rapid shifts in the demography and culture of some areas.

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<sup>88</sup> There are many potential avenues of investigation, and naturally I do not pretend to plumb them all. Recently, historians Kevin M. Schultz and Paul Harvey observed that Catholicism “remains the most understudied [religious] tradition in American history,” in spite of the fact that Catholics comprise one quarter of the nation’s population. Noticeably absent from the historiography is “work that engages Catholicism within the greater story of American history.” At its broadest, the dissertation is part of an ongoing project to embed Catholicism within American history and life. Throughout, I keep in mind Lowell W. Livezey’s helpful conclusions about post-WWII urban religion. Livezey, who is one of the foremost intellects of the interaction between religion and urban life in Chicago, suggests that scholars of urban religion need to consider the fundamental “restructuring” of cities, religion, and society. De-industrialization and post-industrialization fundamentally rearranged how cities functioned; denominations fissured and realigned into “liberal” and “conservative” camps; and the swelling “presumption of individual autonomy” and the “moral legitimacy of personal choice” encouraged people in the 1960s and 1970s to question or reject traditional values and collective authorities, such as church and neighborhood. See Kevin M. Schultz and Paul Harvey, “Everywhere and Nowhere: Recent Trends in American Religious History and Historiography,” *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 78, no. 1 (March 2010): 152; Lowell W. Livezey, “The New Context of Urban Religion,” in *Public Religion and Urban Transformation: Faith in the City*, ed. Lowell W. Livezey (New York: New York University Press 2000), 6-14.

Although Vatican II-accelerated optimism was by no means extinguished, confusion, controversy, and dissension were already by the late 1960s noticeably embroiling the archdiocese. Intra-Catholic developments were partly to blame. These have been well-rehearsed by many others, but necessitate brief recounting. Although shifts in Catholic practice were “already under way as a result of indigenous processes internal to the American Church before the Council,” Vatican II in the words of Philip Gleason “shook everything loose.” Council Fathers undertook a formidable and somewhat startling task: to “bring the Church to a new understanding of itself, of its forms of worship and discipline, and of its relation to, and responsibilities toward, other Christian churches, non-Christian believers, and the whole modern secular world.” Ecclesiological redefinitions unsettled some Catholics, and in Chicago and elsewhere, the “correct” implementation of Vatican II polarized the faithful into “liberal” and “conservative” camps. Paul VI’s *Humanae Vitae* was another catalyst of dissension. The encyclical reaffirmed the Church’s traditional ban on artificial contraception, thereby upsetting many reform-oriented Catholics who had been encouraged by Vatican II-accelerated changes and who were subsequently disinclined to accept papal decisions.<sup>89</sup> Third, the number of priests, nuns, and other religious declined. The social and spiritual convulsions of the era encouraged a considerable number of them to pursue fulfillment in the secular world. New vocations dwindled. In Chicago, influential and irreplaceable movers and shakers like Monsignor Daniel Cantwell, Monsignor John Egan, and John McDermott aged and moved from the area or for years redirected their energies away

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<sup>89</sup> Philip Gleason, *Keeping the Faith: American Catholicism Past and Present* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1987), 88, 86.

from undertakings exclusively associated with the local Church.<sup>90</sup> Fourth, the heavy-handed leadership of Cardinal Cody sowed confusion. Cody's bid to centralize control in his own hands and covert decision-making rankled priests and laity alike. His indecision, particularly with respect to the maintenance of deficit-running churches and schools that relied on archdiocesan subsidies, was equally debilitating to Catholic morale, and undermined his authority as archbishop of Chicago. Finally, a handful of other potentially antagonistic dichotomies were apparent in the post-conciliar Chicago Church: between the "prophetic" and the institutional arms of the archdiocese; between new medical/psychological claims and Catholic moral theology; and between "relevance" and ministry to socially marginalized individuals or groups.

Chicago Catholics' unsettlement did not exclusively derive from ecclesiastical decisions. This dissertation emphasizes that a sequence of combustible and sometimes harrowing phenomena beset the city from the late 1960s onward and challenged Chicago Catholicism's confidence, liberalism, and the breadth of its institutional presence. Chapters center on what I contend are five such instances: post-industrial transition; street gang activity and unprecedented levels of interpersonal violence; the political ascendancy in 1983 of African American reform candidate Harold Washington to the mayor's seat; gay liberation; and the AIDS epidemic.

These transformative events and trends bred a good deal of turmoil and uncertainty among Chicagoans, and antagonism between population segments. Each accentuated a host of social and/or spatial rifts—between the deteriorating city and the comparatively thriving suburbs; between the economically impoverished and frequently

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<sup>90</sup> Jerry DeMuth, "Catholic Activists Quit Chicago," *NCR*, 4 July 1975. The number of civic and political organizations in which religious and ex-religious participated was not small.

isolated “inner city” and the rest of Chicago; between machine and reform politicians; and between neighborhoods, races, sexual majorities and minorities, and the physically sick and the healthy. Aggravated by national and local political decision-making, de- and post-industrialization and a sluggish economy widened income disparities between classes in Chicago and between the city and collar counties, fostered occupational obsolescence in some industries, and fundamentally reconfigured the physical and human landscape. The blue-collar city of manufacturers and “big shoulders,” in the words of David Moberg, metamorphosed into the “metropolis of the big question mark.”<sup>91</sup> The linkage between economic well-being and race/ethnicity was amplified; through the 1980s, Chicago remained the most segregated of the nation’s large cities, despite the territorial and demographic expansion of minority neighborhoods. In the poorest of these during the 1970s and 1980s, spatial concentration, social segregation, and cultural estrangement intensified. Neighborhoods flush with alienated youth and handguns became seedbeds for distressingly well-armed street gangs. Homicide rates reached historic levels—startling when one recalls how remarkably violent and lawless was 1920s Chicago. The racially-charged 1983 Democratic primary and general election, which ultimately generated Chicago’s first African American Mayor Harold Washington, polarized the electorate and kindled anxiety in White “ethnic” neighborhoods on the Southwest and Northwest Sides; some residents forecasted that Washington would facilitate racial turnover in their neighborhoods, ignore White middle and working class needs, and divest them of city jobs. Racially charged rhetoric among lawmakers in particular intensified after Washington was in City Hall. White pro-machine political adversaries locked horns with the administration, repeatedly thwarting legislation and

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<sup>91</sup> David Moberg, “Work,” in *The Encyclopedia of Chicago*.



earning Chicago the infamous moniker “Beirut by the Lake.” Homosexuals by the late 1960s protested that they were unrecognized by the cultural mainstream—and excluded by the city’s political establishment. Gay rights activists thenceforward initiated a “liberation” movement to secure individual rights and anti-discrimination legislation. The AIDS epidemic of the 1980s and 1990s was a final episode that wrought uncertainty and division. The deadly syndrome also heralded a good deal of foreboding and fear of contagion, thereby threatening to physically and spiritually sequester the afflicted, as well as perceived high-risk groups.

Although this dissertation underscores that “secular” trends and events challenged Chicago Catholic confidence, liberalism, and the Church’s institutional presence, qualifications must obviously be made. First, it would on the one hand be naïve to assume that all Chicago Catholics were equally exposed or similarly responded to these events and trends. On the other, however, all directly or indirectly experienced them, or absorbed media coverage that steadily called into question Chicago’s reputation as “a city that works.” Second, Chicago’s experience was not necessarily singular, even if unsettlement and social division were pronounced in the Windy City. Jon C. Teaford has tracked the postwar economic stagnation and decline of cities throughout the Northeast and Midwest, while Philip Jenkins has brilliantly chronicled the scares, panics, and genuine menaces—such as heightened violent crime rates, the availability of lethal narcotics, pornography, and threats to children—that by the mid-1970s introduced a climate of fear, insecurity, and pessimism throughout the United States.<sup>92</sup> Third, it merits restating that actual or perceived social, spatial, and political segregation has always

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<sup>92</sup> Jon C. Teaford, *The Rough Road to Renaissance: Urban Revitalization in America, 1940-1985* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990); Philip Jenkins, *Decade of Nightmares: The End of the Sixties and the Making of Eighties America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

occurred in urban areas. And isolation is not uniformly negative or coercive. Finally, social and political turmoil is *one* important part of Chicago's story after 1965. More promising developments also unfolded such as enhanced electoral participation, most notably from African Americans and a burgeoning Latino population; the election of a female (Jane Byrne) and then Black mayor; Loop redevelopment and successful urban renewal efforts like Dearborn Park; and the elevated investment of foreign corporations in Chicago.

The archdiocese and religiously-motivated Catholics had a material and theological interest in the city of Chicago, and therefore responded to, and attempted to influence, the course of post-industrial transition, interpersonal and gang violence, racial politics, gay rights, and AIDS. The Church had made immense human and financial investments in neighborhoods; in the words of John Egan, avoiding the "unplanned obsolescence of the church's material resources" in the face of population shifts was a pressing priority.<sup>93</sup> Theologically-motivated Catholics could not simply abandon Chicago and its many problems, nor shirk their responsibilities to the high number of co-religionists that resided in the city or to the disadvantaged communities and people. To do so would depart from their Church's own heritage of social and political liberalism and ignore Vatican II teachings to root out injustice. Catholics unanimously agreed that the Church's material resources should not be squandered, although sometimes they were conflicted about the most effective measures to preserve them; theological priorities could clash with material interests.

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<sup>93</sup> John J. Egan, "Power and the Church – I. The People of God and Power," *New City* 5, no. 3 (March 1966): 6.

This dissertation argues that Chicago Catholics marshaled a distinctive brand of *religious reciprocity* to satisfy material and theological interests and address post-industrial transition, street gangs and interpersonal violent crime, racial and political polarization, gay liberation, and AIDS. Reciprocity denotes three specific ideas. First, Chicago Catholicism exhibited an unmistakable impetus to kindle Chicagoans' recognition that they were interdependent and did not dwell in isolation but were embedded within an urban and metropolitan community and therefore in possession of rights as well as responsibilities that were to be wielded for the maximization of the collective good, which incorporated citizens' material and spiritual/emotional well-being. Second, it was the responsibility of the Church to recognize Chicagoans' common grievances, bring them to the fore, initiate dialogue between peoples—be they divided along lines of race, ethnicity, class, political party, sexual preference, or physical health—and encourage the mutual exchange of talents and resources. The impulse to foster social discourse, collaboration, and interdependency was a critical attribute of Chicago-style Catholicism between 1965 and 1996, and pivotal to a city wracked by social polarization and spatial segregation. Consider a handful of positive catchphrases synonymous with post-conciliar Chicago Catholicism: “sharing,” “dialogue,” “common ground,” and “solidarity.” While Bernardin is instinctively, and correctly, affiliated with this impetus, there were also local efforts to “build bridges”; Cody's implacable desire to centralize control of the archdiocese in his own hands frequently but not in every instance camouflaged or stifled efforts during his tenure. The paucity of material and human resources sometimes precipitated efforts, as the archdiocesan “Sharing” program suggests. In other instances, bafflingly complex and destructive grievances such as

poverty, interpersonal violence, or AIDS fostered reciprocity. Chicago Catholics realized that satisfactorily addressing these issues demanded cooperation among individuals, neighborhoods, and parishes. In other instances, such as Harold Washington's election, Catholics tried to foster rapport and build trust between races and politicians to dampen aggravation and potential violence.

Third and finally, reciprocity encouraged Catholics to remain open to "secular" enrichment. People and organizations that tout the benefits of mutual dialogue and exchange, to validate their appeals, must also be receptive. A notable segment of the faithful reasoned that the Church, as a vital and extensive institution in the city, should prayerfully consider, sympathize with, and sometimes support Chicagoans' requests for a shift in Catholic pastoral practices and/or theological emphases, which could have a positive bearing on the life of the Church. Consider gay liberation. Some Chicago Catholics touted that the daily experiences of homosexuals can and should inform a living Catholic theology that considered the entire person, rather than simply physical acts, as the touchstone of morality. Other Catholics' response to interpersonal and street gang violence is another case in point. The words and deeds of theologically motivated religious and laypeople that built bridges to at-risk youth suggested that urban trauma and division were not uniformly negative; holiness could blossom from negotiating severe ordeals and witnessing or partaking in human suffering.

Addressing heated or thorny urban problems could understandably spark a measure of disagreement or antagonism between well-meaning people with legitimate concerns. This was the case, for instance, when Near North Side residents resisted archdiocesan-supported efforts to establish housing for AIDS patients. In other instances,

the Church could consider but not cooperate with Chicagoans' request that it adjust its pastoral and theological approach, potentially inviting allegations that Church rhetoric urging reciprocity was merely a charade. Archdiocesan leaders' response to a gay rights ordinance in the mid-1980s is the most palpable case in point. Cardinal Bernardin expressed solidarity with homosexuals on the margins of society and encouraged a public dialogue on gay rights to defuse tensions in the city. However, he also explained that the archdiocese would resist any ordinance that threatened to restrict the Church's right to operate its institutions and programs in accordance with Catholic moral teaching. Affronted gay rights activists alleged that these pleas actually indicated ongoing efforts to socially segregate homosexuals and deny them civil rights.

All of the combustible urban events and trends that this dissertation explores occurred as Catholics negotiated considerable and sometimes wrenching changes to archdiocesan infrastructure and the shifting episcopal styles and policies of Cardinals Cody and Bernardin. We must first, therefore, turn our attention to these developments.

*Chapter 1*  
*The Cody and Bernardin Years: An Overview*

*Definitions*

To contextualize the remainder of the dissertation, a more in-depth chapter exploring Chicago Catholicism between 1965 and 1996 is necessary. Basic subject definitions, brief episcopal biographies, principal archdiocesan infrastructural developments, and archbishops' styles are treated here. Since this dissertation proposes to examine the impact of urban events and trends on the post-conciliar Catholic Church, and how theologically-motivated Catholics shaped the city of Chicago, a few phrases need explanation. First, "post-conciliar" in this particular Catholic historical context denotes the decades that immediately followed the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965). The definition of the "Catholic Church" is more elusive. In this dissertation, the phrase simply refers to the hierarchy (pope, bishops, priests); consecrated religious women and men; and baptized laypeople. The "Chicago Catholic Church" is a substitute for the archdiocese of Chicago. "Chicago Catholics" connote the faithful in the city. The "theologically-motivated" were individuals who deliberately and unmistakably harnessed their understanding of Catholic belief to act as historical agents.

*Episcopal Biographies*

John Patrick Cody was a native of the American Midwest but Roman trained. He was born in Saint Louis, Missouri, in 1907. After seminary at the Pontifical North American College in Rome between 1927 and 1931, Cody was ordained a priest in the Archdiocese of Saint Louis, but quickly assumed a position as Vice Rector at his Roman

*alma mater*. For the next 6 years, he served on the staff of the Vatican's Secretariat of State, then headed by Cardinal Eugenio Pacelli (later Pius XII). In 1938, Cody was called back to Saint Louis and made personal secretary to Archbishop (later Cardinal) John Glennon, which heralded a series of episcopal promotions: he was appointed auxiliary bishop of St. Louis in 1947; coadjutor bishop of St. Joseph, Missouri, in 1954; bishop of Kansas City-St. Joseph in 1956; coadjutor to the archbishop of New Orleans, Louisiana, in 1961; and then archbishop of New Orleans in 1964. Here, Cody built a reputation as an opponent of segregation and as an energetic builder of Catholic institutions. Following the precedent of his predecessor Archbishop Joseph Rummel, Cody continued to integrate Catholic schools. He also excommunicated several Catholic politicians who publicly espoused segregation in their communities. Notably, the archbishop poured \$30 million into new parish and school construction. In 1965, Pope Paul VI appointed Cody the eleventh bishop of Chicago. Two years later, the Holy Father made him a Cardinal.<sup>1</sup>

In Chicago, Cody's autocratic administrative style and secretive decision making alienated priests and some laity. In this regard, Cody starkly contrasted to Stritch and Meyer, who were comparatively permissive and delegated responsibilities to others. Two major debacles that received a good deal of media coverage marred Cody's tenure. First, the archbishop forcibly removed dozens of aging pastors and—zealous to vouchsafe his control—transferred other prominent priests from important offices to the parishes. Monsignor John Egan, for example, was relocated to the poor, inner city, African

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<sup>1</sup> Edward R. Kantowicz, "The Beginning and the End of an Era: George William Mundelein and John Patrick Cody in Chicago," in Skerrett, Kantowicz, and Avella, *Catholicism, Chicago Style*, 130; Richard Philbrick, "New Archbishop's Views," *CT*, 17 June 1965; Michael Tackett and Howard A. Tyner, "Cardinal Cody, 74, Dies of Heart Attack," *CT*, 25 April 1982.

American Presentation Parish in Lawndale. His new pastoral responsibilities occupied so much of his time that he was compelled to resign from the Office of Urban Affairs, which soon folded. To counter Cody's high-handedness, a group of priests formed in 1966 a voluntary *de facto* union, the Association of Chicago Priests. Cody made additional headlines in the early 1980s when the *Chicago Sun Times* charged that the Cardinal had steered nearly one million dollars in tax-exempt church funds to a step-cousin in St. Louis; had helped her to secure employment in the St. Louis Archdiocesan administrative offices while Cody served there as chancellor; had then put her on the Archdiocese of Chicago payroll; and had diverted archdiocesan insurance contracts to her son. The U.S. Attorney's office even began to investigate Cody's finances, although the probe ended inconclusively when the prelate passed away in 1982.<sup>2</sup>

Unlike Cody, Joseph Louis Bernardin was neither a Midwest native nor Roman trained. The son of northern Italian immigrants, Bernardin was born in South Carolina in 1928 and attended several seminaries in the United States: St. Mary's College in Kentucky, St. Mary's Seminary in Maryland, and the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C. Bernardin was ordained a priest in 1952 in the Diocese of Charleston, South Carolina, and held several important posts in that diocese during the next fourteen years, including chancellor and vicar general. He was named auxiliary bishop to Archbishop Paul J. Hallinan in the Archdiocese of Atlanta in 1966, and quickly earned the esteem of American bishops. In 1968, the administrative bodies of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops (NCCB) and the United States Catholic Conference (USCC) elected Bernardin general secretary of their organizations. He secured a

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<sup>2</sup> The archdiocesan investigation into Cody's affairs concluded in December 1982 that the Cardinal was innocent of financial impropriety; however, it recognized that Cody "did not always follow preferred accounting measures." See "Church finds no wrongdoing by Cody," *CT*, 17 December 1982.



reputation as an articulate and influential spokesman. Four years later, Pope Paul VI appointed him the archbishop of Cincinnati, where Bernardin remained for roughly ten years. While in the Ohio diocese, brother bishops elected him president of the NCCB/USCC. He served in this capacity until 1977. Pope John Paul II appointed Bernardin archbishop of Chicago in 1982, and a Cardinal in 1983. During his tenure, Bernardin chaired the NCCB's Committee on War and Peace, helping to compose the influential Pastoral Letter "The Challenge of Peace: God's Promise and Our Response." Bernardin also chaired the NCCB's Pro-Life Activities Committee, formulating and proposing a "seamless garment" of pro-life ethics that interwove diverse threats to human life from conception until natural death, such as abortion, poverty, capital punishment, inadequate health care, nuclear war, and assisted suicide. Media coverage trailed Bernardin during the last years of his life. The Cardinal was accused by a former Cincinnati seminarian of sexual abuse, which the former plainly denied and the latter recanted a few months later. And Bernardin established a "Common Ground Project" shortly before his death in 1996 to foster dialogue among American Catholics on contentious topics in the Church.<sup>3</sup>

### *Archdiocesan Appraisal*

Two principal infrastructural developments were unmistakable in the post-conciliar Chicago Catholic Church: the inclusion of organizational middle levels to mediate between the archdiocese and individual parishes; and contraction and consolidation. With respect to the former, a Second Vatican Council decree had

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<sup>3</sup> Eugene Kennedy, *Bernardin: Life to the Full* (Chicago: Bonus Books, 1989); Edward R. Kantowicz, *The Archdiocese of Chicago: A Journey of Faith* (Ireland: Booklink, 2006), 84-86.

requested the creation of “episcopal vicars” in Catholic archdioceses.<sup>4</sup> In response, Archbishop Cody in October 1967 created seven vicariates, or geographical administrative units, that carved the archdiocese into a pie shape. Vicariates spread outward from the Loop to the suburbs. Hetero- rather than homogeneity characterized each vicariate, which included diverse racial, cultural, and economic components.<sup>5</sup> Seven priests, usually the auxiliary bishops, were appointed and assumed the title of “vicar delegate” for the region. In theory, vicar delegates were to exercise authority in their region similar to the authority exercised by the vicar general over the entire archdiocese, and serve as a vehicle of communication between the parishes in the vicariate and the archbishop.<sup>6</sup> In fact, there was a good deal of confusion over the proper role of vicars.<sup>7</sup> The pie-shape proved ineffective. In 1976, the Presbyteral Council, a consultative body consisting of priest-elected members and hand-picked delegates of the archbishop, devised a new vicariate structure that emphasized geographic homogeneity. In this way, Catholic parishes with similar interests and common concerns could articulate them to the vicar, thereby facilitating problem solving. With Cody’s consent, a Presbyteral Council plan increased the number of vicariates to twelve in 1977.<sup>8</sup> The number fluctuated until Cardinal Bernardin set it at six. Bernardin further subdivided vicariates into deaneries. The archdiocese, in collaboration with local priests and the

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<sup>4</sup> Charles W. Dahm explains that, in the *Decree on the Bishops’ Pastoral Office in the Church*, the Council created the position of “episcopal vicar.” However, “Cody made it clear when he formed [the office] that they would differ from episcopal vicariates in other dioceses. His vicars would be called ‘vicar delegate’ not ‘episcopal vicar’...The change of title indicated a difference of authority. He clearly indicated that he did not want seven chancery officials in his archdiocese. He gave vicars minimal delegated power.” See Charles W. Dahm in collaboration with Robert Ghelardi, *Power and Authority in the Catholic Church: Cardinal Cody in Chicago* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1981), 70.

<sup>5</sup> Fr. Vincent J. Giese, “Vicariates Extend Pastoral Efforts,” *CNW*, 15 April 1977.

<sup>6</sup> Richard Philbrick, “Cody Names 7 Vicars to Head Regional Units,” *CT*, 28 October 1967; Fr. Vincent J. Giese, “Vicariates Extend Pastoral Efforts,” *CNW*, 15 April 1977.

<sup>7</sup> Dahm, 71.

<sup>8</sup> Fr. Vincent J. Giese, “Vicariates Extend Pastoral Efforts,” *CNW*, 15 April 1977; “12 Urban Vicars Have Wide Duties,” *CNW*, 15 April 1977.

faith community, appointed “deans,” or clergymen from a local parish that provided “liturgical, formational, social and administration leadership” in collaboration with the vicar. The dean was also to mediate any conflicts among the parishes in his deanery. In 1987, each of the archdioceses’ sixteen deaneries consisted of approximately twenty seven parishes.<sup>9</sup>

The number of closed and consolidated parishes in the city is sobering. In all, eighty-one parishes were shuttered between 1965 and 1996, and nine were consolidated (See Table 1 and Table 2). Only a small handful were opened. The 281 city parishes in 1965 were by 1996 whittled to 214. A distinction should be made here between the closure, or canonical suppression, of a parish, and the demolition of a church structure. In the former, the suppressed parish is consolidated into another preexisting parish. In the latter, the disassembled church building is simply replaced by another structure; the parish itself is not closed.<sup>10</sup> In respect to the suppression of parishes, a few trends are discernible. First, parish closings and consolidations during Cody’s tenure were chiefly located on the West and South Sides, typically in neighborhoods where European ethnic groups constructed a multitude of large parishes but had then migrated to other parts of the city or the suburbs when the African American ghetto spilled onto their blocks. Parishes here diminished in number and wealth. Collectively poorer congregants simply could not finance aging and sometimes dilapidated structures. To maintain struggling parishes, Cardinal Cody did attempt to reallocate resources in the form of archdiocesan subsidies; unsurprisingly in light of Charles Dahm’s painstaking analysis of Cody’s

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<sup>9</sup> “New Deans to be Chosen,” CC, 6 February 1987; “Here are Duties of ‘Typical’ Dean,” CC, 6 February 1987.

<sup>10</sup> Charles E. Zech and Robert J. Miller, *Listening to the People of God: Closing, Rebuilding, and Revitalizing Parishes* (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2008), 5.

management style, decisions were generally announced by episcopal fiat on an annual basis. The archbishop seldom solicited advice from Catholics outside of a small cadre of hand-picked advisors. Inevitably, rumor mills churned as a result of ineffective long-term planning, particularly among the priests and people of fiscally insolvent parishes dependent on archdiocesan subsidies, as well as Catholic and non-Catholic parents whose children matriculated in struggling parochial schools. Cody was willing to bless inter-parochial collaboration to foster fiscal health. However, he typically stifled local attempts if he perceived them as threats to his authority, or his control over archdiocesan monies. Closures prompted unfortunate charges that the archdiocese and Cardinal Cody in particular were “abandoning” the inner city, and that the decisions were racially motivated. Edward Kantowicz, however, explains that consolidation was necessary. The archbishop was not racist, although he could be “abrupt and undiplomatic.” Nor did Cody abandon the inner city. Conversely, Cody actually suspended suburban Catholic school construction. “A rational bureaucratic management,” Kantowicz reasons, “would have gradually withdrawn resources from the inner city and applied them to the increasingly Catholic suburbs.”<sup>11</sup> The bussing program he inaugurated in 1968, “Operation Hospitality,” and a 1979 Anti-Flight order also evinced that Cody was no racist. Operation Hospitality bussed students between grades four and seven, with their parents’ consent, from crowded and heavily minority inner city schools to more spacious

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<sup>11</sup> Edward R. Kantowicz, “The Beginning and the End of an Era: George William Mundelein and John Patrick Cody in Chicago,” in *Catholicism, Chicago Style*, by Ellen Skerrett, Edward R. Kantowicz, and Steven M. Avella (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1993), 134. In a 1975 letter to Apostolic Delegate Jean Jadot, Cody defended himself against charges that he was apathetic about the fate of predominantly minority inner city schools: “Truthfully, I can say that no private agency is doing more for the ‘Blacks’ in the Chicago area than I have done and am continuing to do so.” See Cardinal Cody to Jean Jadot, 22 August 1975, John Cardinal Cody Papers, Diocesan Boards and Committees, Finance Committee, Box 1, Folder 5, AAC.

and generally White outlying schools, or vice versa. The program was voluntary.<sup>12</sup> According to Auxiliary Bishop William E. McManus, then superintendent of Catholic Schools, Cody's decision elicited "hate mail" from Catholics that was "bitter almost beyond belief."<sup>13</sup> Approximately four hundred parochial students were bussed between 1968 and 1972, when Operation Hospitality became a casualty of the shrinking archdiocesan budget. An Anti-Flight order that Cody approved in 1979 also addressed school segregation. The integration of Chicago public schools impelled some White parents to relocate their children to what they hoped would be more segregated private schools. The Cardinal urged Catholic school principles to delay or reject these parents' request for admission.<sup>14</sup>

A second noticeable trend is that closures accelerated under Cardinal Bernardin. Demographic change, serious structural deficiencies in parish plants, and spiraling costs were again principal culprits. The wave of closings in 1990 was unprecedented. Ellen Skerrett writes that the vanishing of sacred space on such a vast scale was "a watershed event in the history of the Chicago diocese."<sup>15</sup> Sadness, anger, and then ultimate resignation was a common response among parishioners, particularly as Bernardin emphasized extensive dialogue between archdiocesan and parish officials before closures

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<sup>12</sup> Archbishop Cody, "Statement on School Matters," 18 March 1968, Association of Chicago Priests Records, Box 1, Folder 6, AUND; Archbishop Cody, "Operation Hospitality," John Cardinal Cody Papers, School Board, Box 2, Folder 2, AAC; Archbishop Cody to Reverend Clergy, the Devoted Religious, and Faithful Laity of the Archdiocese, 25 January 1968, Association of Chicago Priests Records, Box 1, Folder 6, AUND; "Catholics to Integrate in 'Operation Hospitality,'" *CD*, 13 July 1968; Betty Washington, "Bussing Set for Catholic Schools," *CD*, 25 January 1968; "Operation Hospitality Details," *CNW*, 5 July 1968.

<sup>13</sup> William E. McManus to Mr. Don Heyrman, 19 February 1968, Association of Chicago Priests Records, Box 1, Folder 6, AUND.

<sup>14</sup> Laura S. Washington, "Minorities Spur Enrollment Gain in Catholic Schools," *CR*, February 1981.

<sup>15</sup> Ellen Skerrett, *Chicago's Neighborhoods and the Eclipse of Sacred Space* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1994), 3.

occurred. However, rancor followed when parishioners alleged inadequate collaboration, either from the archdiocese or the religious communities.

**Table 1. Closed Parishes in City of Chicago by Decade**

**1965-1969**

1. St. Philip Benizi (Oak St.), 1904-1965
2. St. Charles Borromeo (Hoyne Ave.), 1885-1968
3. St. Joseph (17<sup>th</sup> Pl.), 1906-1968
4. St. Clara (Woodlawn Ave.), 1894-1969
5. St. Cyril (Dante Ave.), 1904-1969
6. St. Finbarr (14<sup>th</sup> St.), 1900-1969
7. St. George (Wentworth Ave), 1884-1969
8. St. Jarlath (Jackson Blvd.), 1869-1969

**1970-1979**

9. St. Michael (Wabansia St.), 1903-1970
10. St. Anne (Garfield Park), 1869-1971
11. St. Cecelia (Wells St.), 1885-1971
12. St. Nicholas (State St.), 1890-1973
13. Holy Rosary (108<sup>th</sup> St.), 1907-1973
14. St. Louis de France (117<sup>th</sup> St.), 1886-1973
15. St. Matthew (Walnut St.), 1892-1974
16. St. Columbkille (Paulina Ave.), 1859-1975
17. St. Theodore (Paulina St.), 1916-1976
18. St. Mary, Mt. Carm. (Hrmtge St.), 1891-1976
19. Annunc. of B.V.M. (Wabansia Ave.), 1866-1978
20. Our Lady of Perpetual Help (13<sup>th</sup> St.), 1898-1979
21. Sacred Heart (Church St.), 1903-1979

**1980-1989**

22. St. Joseph (Saginaw St.), 1990-1986
23. St. Patrick (Commercial St.), 1857-1986
24. Sts. Peter and Paul (Exchange St.), 1882-1986
25. Sts. Cyril and Method. (Walton St.), 1915-1987
26. St. Fr. Xvr Cabrini (Lexington St.), 1940-1987
27. St. Casimir (Chicago Heights), 1911-1987
28. Our Lady of Hungary (93<sup>rd</sup> St.), 1904-1987
29. Our Lady of Vilna (23<sup>rd</sup> St.), 1904-1987
30. St. Mel/Holy Ghost (Wash. Blvd.), 1941-1988
31. Our Lady of Solace (Sangamon St.), 1916-1988
32. Resurrection (Jackson Blvd.), 1909-1988
33. St. Thomas Aquinas (Washington), 1909-1988
34. St. Willibrord (114<sup>th</sup> St.), 1900-1988
35. All Saints (State St.), 1906-1989
36. St. Bernard (65<sup>th</sup> St.), 1887-1989
37. St. Brendan (Racine Ave.), 1891-1989
38. Ford City Catholic Center (Cicero Ave.), 1969-1989
39. St. John the Baptist (50<sup>th</sup> Pl.), 1882-1989
40. Our Lady of Good Counsel (Western Ave.), 1889-1989
41. Our Lady Help of Christians (Leclair Ave.), 1901-1989
42. St. Justin Martyr (71<sup>st</sup> St.), 1916-1989
43. St. Martin (Princeton St.), 1886-1989
44. St. Carthage (73<sup>rd</sup> St.), 1919-1989

45. St. Raphael (Lafin St.), 1901-1989
46. Sacred Heart (May St.), 1894-1989

**1990-1996**

47. Assumption (Marshfield Ave.), 1901-1990
48. Assumption of the BVM (123<sup>rd</sup> St.), 1903-1990
49. St. Augustine (Lafin St.), 1881-1990
50. St. Boniface (Noble St.), 1864-1990
51. St. Bridget (Archer Ave.), 1850-1990
52. St. Casimir (Whipple St.), 1911-1990
53. St. Catherine of Genoa (118<sup>th</sup> St.), 1893-1990
54. St. Charles Lwanga (Garfield), 1971-1990
55. St. Clara/St. Cyril (Woodlawn Ave), 1969-1990
56. Sts. Cyril and Method. (Hermitage), 1891-1990
57. St. Dominic (Locust St.), 1904-1990
58. St. George (Lituanica Ave.), 1884-1990
59. Holy Cross (65<sup>th</sup> St.), 1891-1990
60. Holy Trinity (Wolcott Ave.), 1885-1990
61. Immaculate Concpn (Aberdeen St.), 1883-1990
62. St. John Nepomucene (Lowe Ave.), 1871-1990
63. St. Ludmilla (Albany Ave.), 1891-1990
64. St. Rose of Lima (48<sup>th</sup> St.), 1881-1990
65. Sacred Heart (Honore St.), 1910-1990
66. Sacred Heart (Oakley Blvd.), 1911-1990
67. St. Salomea (Indiana St.), 1898-1990
68. St. Sebastian (Dayton St.), 1912-1990
69. St. Vitus (Paulina St.), 1888-1990
70. St. Agnes (Pershing Rd.), 1878-1991
71. St. Francis de Paula (Dobson Ave.), 1911-1991
72. St. Francis Xavier (Nelson Ave.), 1888-1991
73. St. Joseph and St. Anne (38<sup>th</sup> Pl.), 1889-1991
74. St. Veronica (Whipple St.), 1904-1991
75. St. John of God (52<sup>nd</sup> St.), 1906-1992
76. St. John the Baptist (Burley Ave.), 1905-1993
77. Our Lady o/t Gardens (Langley), 1952-1993
78. St. Therese o/t Infant Jesus (Wood), 1925-1993
79. St. Callistus (Bowler St.), 1919-1994
80. Our Lady of Pompeii (Lexington Ave.), 1910-1994, reduced to shrine status
81. St. David (Union St.), 1905-1995

**Table 2. Consolidated Parishes in City of Chicago Between 1965 and 1996 (Chronological)**<sup>16</sup>

1. All Saints (Wallace St.), 1875-1968; Consolidated into All Saints/St. Anthony (28<sup>th</sup> Pl.)
2. St. Anthony of Padua (24<sup>th</sup> Pl), 1873-1968; Consolidated into All Saints/St. Anthony (28<sup>th</sup> Pl.)
3. St. Lucy (Mayfield Ave), 1911-1974; Consolidated into St. Catherine of Siena/St. Lucy (Austin Blvd.)
4. Holy Cross (46<sup>th</sup> St.), 1904-1983; Consolidated into Holy Cross/Immaculate Heart of Mary (Wood St.)
5. Immaculate Heart of Mary Vicariate (Ashland Ave.), 1947-1983; Consolidated into Holy Cross/Immaculate Heart of Mary (Wood St.)
6. St. Basil (Garfield Blvd.), 1904-1990; Consolidated into St. Basil-Visitation (Garfield Blvd.)
7. St. Francis of Assisi (Kestner Ave.), 1909-1990; consolidated into St. Francis of Assisi-Our Lady of the Angels (Iowa St.)
8. Our Lady of the Angels (Iowa St.), 1894-1990; Consolidated into St. Francis of Assisi-Our Lady of the Angels (Kestner St.)
9. Visitation (Garfield Blvd.), 1886-1990; Consolidated into St. Basil-Visitation (Garfield Blvd.)

**Table 3. Selected Archdiocesan Statistics, 1965-1996**<sup>17</sup>

YEAR	1965	1970	1975	1980	1985	1991	1996
<u>Priests</u>							
Active Diocesan in Dioc.	1,248	1,141	1,037	988	876	828	639
Sick, Retired, or Absent	25	139	173	223	271	258	312
Religious Rsdnt in Dioc.	1,573	1,135	1,140	1,150	1,316	973	845
Total of Diocese	2,909	2,484	2,551	2,553	2,649	2,104	1,833
<u>Sisters</u>							
Total	9,501	8,331	6,497	5,040	5,162	4,476	3,510
<u>Population</u>							
Catholic/Cook and Lake	2,314,500	2,424,591	2,466,294	2,406,728	2,362,162	2,350,000	2,338,000
Total Cook and Lake	5,582,000	5,757,000	5,936,200	5,750,405	5,707,300	5,621,485	5,700,608

The threat of demolition to church buildings could also aggravate acrimony, as the attempted closure of the Near West Side's Holy Family (1080 W. Roosevelt), the city's second oldest church building and owned by the Jesuit province of Chicago, made painfully plain.<sup>18</sup> In December 1987, Holy Family Jesuit priest Father William J. Spine announced that a parish subcommittee of three priests, two nuns, and five laypeople had elected to raze the church building; the parish would persist.<sup>19</sup> Cardinal Bernardin consented. A cocktail of problems rendered the fourteen hundred seat Victorian Gothic

<sup>16</sup> Tables 1 and 2 were culled from the helpful list of closed archdiocesan parishes in Edward R. Kantowicz, *The Archdiocese of Chicago: A Journey of Faith* (Ireland: Booklink, 2006), 88-89.

<sup>17</sup> These statistics were compiled from relevant editions of *The Official Catholic Directory* (New York: P.J. Kennedy and Sons, 1965-1996).

<sup>18</sup> Two unsuccessful attempted closures, both initiated by the archdiocese, were particularly bitter: St. Mary of the Angels in 1987 and St. Francis in 1994.

<sup>19</sup> Notably, all clergy people, but only one layperson, voted to demolish the building.



structure outmoded, it was held. The building's disrepair included basic structural problems, a leaking roof, and falling plaster. Part of the building in fact had been closed since 1984. Estimated renovation costs exceeded \$3 million. Archdiocesan subsidies already helped to defray the \$650,000 annual operating expenses. The large building, chiefly constructed by immigrants and dedicated in 1860, was unsuited to the contemporary congregation's approximately 200-250 families, many of whom were economically struggling and/or African American and Latino. As a replacement, Spine and other Chicago Jesuits suggested a smaller \$1-\$2 million 350-500 seat parish facility, which would include a gymnasium, meeting rooms, and space for outreach services, such as a food pantry.<sup>20</sup>

The consequent public indignation highlighted public affection for the church building, and threw painful and thorny issues into bold relief. Parishioners levied several serious accusations. First, Spine—who repeatedly clashed with his flock—did not understand that materially disadvantaged congregants desired a grand, historic, and aesthetically pleasing structure more than programs to aid local needy. The priest's resignation was eventually requested. Second, Jesuit and archdiocesan financial concerns, rather than parishioners' spiritual well-being, was the overriding determinant. And third, Spine had concealed from Jesuit provincial Father Robert Wild congregants' strong desire to maintain Holy Family church. Some parishioners therefore held a prayer vigil outside the Jesuit Provincial Office at 2050 N. Clark Street.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Karen Thomas, "Parishioners Get the Bad News," *CT*, 21 December 1987; Bob Reczek, "Church Closings Stir Faithful's Concerns," *CC*, 1 January 1988; Anne Keegan, "Poor Refusing to Let Their Landmark Church Die," *CT*, 12 February 1988; Bob Olmstead, "Archdiocese, Parishioners Square Off Over Churches," *National Catholic Register*, 3 April 1988; "Holy Family's Future Begs Some Hard Questions," *CC*, 29 April 1988.

<sup>21</sup> Karen Thomas, "Parishioners Get the Bad News," *CT*, 21 December 1987; Anne Keegan, "Parishioners Fight Their Priest and Odds to Save Church," *CT*, 8 May 1988.



That the media furnished a good deal of negative attention on the announcement amplified parishioner criticisms. One journalist, musing on its historic legacy, charged that Holy Family church belonged to the people of Chicago, and was not the exclusive possession of the Jesuits or the archdiocese. The edifice should remain.<sup>22</sup> Writing in the *Sun-Times*, historian Ellen Skerrett described how Holy Family had tenaciously survived the Great Fire, depressions, ethnic and racial turmoil, and urban renewal. She concluded that the decision to close the parish “ignores the fact that financial crises have been a part of this parish’s history for more than a century.” Sadly ironic, the demolition of the building would be concurrent with “unprecedented development” on the Near West Side.<sup>23</sup> Popular journalist Anne Keegan was equally critical. She portrayed Holy Family parishioners as feisty but poor, with “few contacts in the monied world,” who were simply trying to save their treasured sacred space.<sup>24</sup> Priest sociologist Andrew Greeley was most acerbic. Taking Cardinal Bernardin and archdiocesan decision-makers to task, he described the Holy Family debacle as “an excellent object lesson of what happens when clerical ‘liberals’ discover that poor people don’t want what they ought to want.” He warned that the Church’s preferential option for the poor should not be confused with the “white man’s burden.”<sup>25</sup>

Assisted by favorable publicity and their own relentlessness, parishioners ultimately convinced the Jesuit province and the archdiocese to preserve Holy Family church. In June 1988, the parish council agreed to transfer ownership of the structure to a

<sup>22</sup> Bill Granger, “Found: A Way to Keep Those Old Churches (But Not Necessarily the Faith),” *CT*, 6 March 1988.

<sup>23</sup> Ellen Skerrett, “Holy Family Church a Vital Link to the City’s Immigrant Past,” *CST*, 22 January 1988. See also Ellen Skerrett, “Whose Church is it Anyway,” *Commonweal*, 18 November 1988.

<sup>24</sup> Anne Keegan, “Poor Refusing to Let Their Landmark Church Die,” *CT*, 12 February 1988; Daniel J. Lehmann, “Lay Leaders Seek to Oust Pastor of Holy Family,” *CST*, 10 June 1988.

<sup>25</sup> Andrew Greeley, “Archdiocese Out of Touch with People of Holy Family Parish,” *CST*, 9 June 1988.

non-profit corporation, which would try to restore and maintain the church. Bernardin consented to the plan. In 1990, the Jesuits notified parishioners that they had one year to raise the \$4 million necessary for repairs, improvements and an endowment; the amount was later reduced to \$1 million in cash. A “Committee to Save Holy Family” enlisted public relations firms to conduct the effort, and notable personalities such as Greeley, Senator Paul Simon, and State Attorney General Neil Hartigan were public supporters. The necessary funds were raised, and the main sanctuary was re-opened for Easter Mass in 1994.<sup>26</sup>

An overwhelming number of primary and secondary schools closed or consolidated between 1965 and 1996.<sup>27</sup> Previously, priests, brothers, and especially religious order sisters had subsidized schools by working for token salaries. Tuition was low for parish members. Church funds covered deficits. During the post-industrial and post-conciliar era, however, outmigration undercut parish income and poorer and often non-Catholic in-migrants could not replenish lost funds. Moreover, the number of teaching sisters precipitously declined. Financially strapped parishes were obliged to hire lay teachers and pay them a living wage.<sup>28</sup> The White Catholic birth rate decreased, limiting the number of potential students. The archdiocese issued subsidies to maintain struggling schools, depleting its funds. Plans to slash costs and alleviate parents’ financial burden were proposed, as we shall see below. The financial crunch was

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<sup>26</sup> Zay N. Smith, “Faithful Won’t Let Hope Flicker for Holy Family,” *CST*, 28 November 1988; Frank Burgos, “Shy of Fund Goal, Parish Prays to Save Holy Family,” *CST*, 28 December 1990; Daniel J. Lehmann, “Holy Family Backers Feeling Like a Million,” *CST*, 1 January 1991; Tom Seibel, “Holy Family Beats Cash Goal,” *CST*, 2 January 1991; Neil Steinberg, “Holy Family Church Near Rebirth for Easter Mass,” *CST*, 30 March 1994.

<sup>27</sup> A fine account of Chicago high school closures is George Vincent Fornero, “The Expansion and Decline of Enrollment and Facilities of Secondary Schools in the Archdiocese of Chicago, 1955-1980: A Historical Study” (Ph.D. diss., Loyola University Chicago, 1990).

<sup>28</sup> Kathleen H. Goepfinger, “The Development of Elementary School Teacher Compensation in the Archdiocese of Chicago, 1965-1988” (Ph.D. diss., Loyola University Chicago, 1990).

painfully felt between Bernardin's second and last years as Chicago archbishop (1984-1996), when an astonishing one hundred thirty elementary schools and eighteen high schools were closed in the archdiocese. The vast majority of them were located in the city.<sup>29</sup> No new Catholic school was opened in the city between 1969 and 1989.<sup>30</sup>

**Table 4. Selected Archdiocesan Statistics, 1965-1996<sup>31</sup>**

YEAR	1965	1970	1975	1980	1985	1991	1996
<u>High Schools</u>							
Diocesan/Parochial	30	22	25	16	13	10	9
<i>Total Population</i>	10,861	9,859	10,061	6,262	5,717	4,785	2,995
Private	60	58	51	49	46	40	38
<i>Total Population</i>	63,738	60,873	52,656	47,338	45,361	32,443	31,186
<u>Elementary Schools</u>							
Parochial	429	412	394	380	361	323	279
<i>Total Population</i>	286,670	225,402	160,129	133,391	125,786	111,700	103,503
Private	8	6	8	4	3	2	1
<i>Total Population</i>	1,232	821	1,278	698	1,297	335	361
<u>Public School</u>	106,755	113,850	168,259	178,659	147,100	95,731	103,394
<u>Pupils in Special</u>							
<u>Religious Instruction</u>							
<u>Classes/CCD</u>							
<u>Teachers</u>							
Sisters, Full Time	5,921	5,212	3,026	2,081	1,287	678	475
Lay	4,653	6,604	6,101	6,146	6,583	6,954	6,192
Total	12,509	12,560	9,654	8,593	8,167	7,832	6,799

### *Episcopal Styles and Programs*

In respect to Cardinals Cody and Bernardin, it would be difficult to conjure up two episcopal styles that contrasted more glaringly, at least at first blush. As noted, Cody

<sup>29</sup> Paul Simons, "Office of Catholic School Archdiocese of Chicago Closure History, 1984-2004," [http://www.illinoisloop.org/cath\\_closed\\_school\\_84\\_04.pdf](http://www.illinoisloop.org/cath_closed_school_84_04.pdf).

<sup>30</sup> In 1989, Old St. Patrick's near the Loop opened an elementary school in response to the surging number of families moving back to the city center and for suburban young professionals who commuted to the city and wanted their children to acquire an education in the city. See Dirk Johnson, "Return from Suburbs to Downtown School," *NYT*, 28 April 1989. See also Bob Olmstead, "Three Cheers for St. Pat's," *National Catholic Register*, 30 April 1989; Keith David Picher, "Archdiocese Announces Plan for New School," *CNW*, 14 April 1989.

<sup>31</sup> These statistics were compiled from relevant editions of *The Official Catholic Directory* (New York: P.J. Kennedy and Sons, 1965-1996).

exercised a high-handed administrative style and was often reluctant to delegate responsibilities. Decisions were routinely made in a furtive manner and foisted on priests and laity. Cody solicited advice from few Catholics outside a small assemblage of hand-picked advisors. On the one hand, one can appreciate that these characteristics may not be uniformly negative; a leader with a disinclination for extensive consultation may quickly address problems and rapidly implement solutions. However, the plain truth is that Cody often vacillated on critical issues, such as parish subsidies and closures, which exacerbated anxiety among priests and people of fiscally insolvent churches and schools. Bernardin's episcopal style, which the archbishop clearly outlined in an address to the Presbyteral Council in 1984, was a significant departure. Bernardin exercised his authority in a "participative" manner. In his judgment, leadership must involve many others to be effective. A bishop should challenge people to harness their own creativity and initiative to arrest problems. Broad support or consensus was the ideal; therefore, the bishop could not solely be blamed for failures, nor could he alone claim credit for successes. A Catholic prelate should not be content to "preside over a congregational type church where each entity is more or less on its own," nor should he make every archdiocesan decision—although it was inevitable that he would make unpopular choices. Bernardin prized respectfulness, charity, and patience, although he acknowledged that too much patience and consultation may be construed as indecision. A close and loving relationship with Jesus Christ was of unmatched significance for shepherds to properly lead flocks. Bernardin recommended to priests personal prayer, celebration of the Eucharist and the Sacrament of Reconciliation, edifying spiritual reading, acts of self-denial, and praying the Liturgy of the Hours. Acknowledging that

this may be “old fashioned advice,” he was nonetheless confident that “In substance, it really isn’t any different from that given by the Lord to His disciples.”<sup>32</sup>

One pivotal distinction between the leadership of Cody and Bernardin regards the communal spirit of Chicago Catholics, especially among priests and religious. Cody’s placement in Chicago was coeval with the end of the Second Vatican Council, which animated a good deal of optimism as well as theological confusion. This, in combination with the alienation that many priests and religious developed for their bishop and the movement of some influential Catholics away from the city or strictly Catholic endeavors, contributed to the atomization of Chicago Catholic efforts to ameliorate urban problems and foster social justice. Recollect John Egan’s observation, made in the late 1970s: “We moved into the 1960s with a lot of strength, and it hasn’t been the same since. It would be wrong to place all the blame on Cody. But the spirit disappeared. It still resides in individuals, but in terms of a diocesan-wide spirit moving us ahead on social justice....the common strategy, the common vision, that all has disappeared.”<sup>33</sup> As this dissertation indicates, a crucial element of Bernardin’s tenure was the attempt to “re-corporatize” Chicago Catholicism, or use his position to redevelop a common vision to more effectively handle problems. If priests could not be “overly dependent on others,” Bernardin announced in his 1984 speech, nor could they be “lone rangers.”<sup>34</sup>

Episcopal styles naturally influenced the methods and major objectives of each prelate. Witness the response of Cody and Bernardin to archdiocesan contraction. Whereas Cody and his advisors made year-to-year decisions in respect to selecting

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<sup>32</sup> Joseph Cardinal Bernardin, “Remarks for the Meeting of the Presbyteral Senate,” 17 January 1984, Joseph Cardinal Bernardin Addresses and Talks, Box 17, Folder 55, AAC.

<sup>33</sup> See Jim Winters, “The Last Angry Monsignor,” *Notre Dame Magazine*, 7, no. 4 (October 1978).

<sup>34</sup> Joseph Cardinal Bernardin, “Remarks for the Meeting of the Presbyteral Senate,” 17 January 1984, Joseph Cardinal Bernardin Addresses and Talks, Box 17, Folder 55, AAC.

fiscally insolvent churches and schools that would receive archdiocesan subsidies, Bernardin's approach was more consultative and programmatic. As Peter R. D'Agostino has recounted, Bernardin oversaw the creation of various consultative bodies of religious and laypeople in the archdiocese to advise him on consolidations and closings. He also urged individual parishes to plan for their future. Planning became "a type of religious activity, a devotion of the new people of God to discern God's will." A program billed "Tomorrow's Parish," first implemented in 1992 and ultimately requisite for all parishes, was the culmination of parish planning efforts. Parishes were essentially asked to design a three to five year plan for their viability. With some legitimacy, it may be argued that Cody attempted to salvage the urban industrial model, while Bernardin "dismantled" it and desired to retrench a post-industrial Church.<sup>35</sup>

In other instances, Cody did develop long term plans for the archdiocese. They reflected his penchant for unilateral decision-making. The archbishop's first and most ambitious archdiocesan fund-raising scheme, the multiphase Project Renewal (PR), is an illuminating case in point. The city of Chicago, Cody explained prior to inaugurating PR in 1967, had "planned its development through the year 2000"; the archdiocese should do likewise.<sup>36</sup> PR was designed to address the population shift from the central core of Chicago to the suburbs, the changing demographics of parishes in the city, and aging physical plants. Notably, PR was also premised on Cody's perceptive prediction that the population of Chicago would, after the present suburbanization trend had passed, shift "back to the core as the core is itself rebuilt and renewed." He anticipated that a third of

<sup>35</sup> Peter R. D'Agostino, "Catholic Planning for a Multicultural Metropolis, 1982-1996," in *Public Religion and Urban Transformation: Faith in the City*, ed. Lowell W. Livezey (New York: New York University Press, 2000), 274-6.

<sup>36</sup> Community Counseling Services, Inc., "Archdiocese of Chicago, Project: Renewal," No Date, John Cardinal Cody Papers, Box: Project Files, Project Renewal, No Folder, AAC; "Cody Opens Building Drive: \$250 Million 'Project Renewal,'" *CDN*, 10 January 1967.

Chicago's estimated three million residents in 2000 would be Catholic. A long term archdiocesan plan was therefore necessary so that churches and schools existed to serve this population. PR would solicit money from Catholic families, wealthy individuals, and businesses. In a "planned" rather than "haphazard" way, funds would build new parishes, refurbish older ones, and help churches and schools "weather the transitional period" between suburbanization and re-concentration.<sup>37</sup> Although shrewd, Cody's vision suffered from the archbishop's heavy handedness and the project's audacity.<sup>38</sup> His announcement of the program triggered protests from at least eleven priests, who publicly groused that PR had been "intolerably and injudiciously imposed on us."<sup>39</sup> That the Chancery would determine the objectives of the program and how proceeds would be redistributed aggravated some laypeople who complained that their funds were tied up in the expansion and maintenance of their own parishes. Rumors surfaced in at least one outlying parish that "all the money collected is going to the inner city parishes." Contrariwise, inner city parishes suspected that funds would chiefly benefit churches and schools in the outlying areas of the city and the suburbs.<sup>40</sup> Cody's ambition was also detrimental. Touting PR as nothing less than the renewal of "the mission and fabric of

<sup>37</sup> "Cody Opens Building Drive: \$250 Million 'Project Renewal,'" *CDN*, 10 January 1967.

<sup>38</sup> In this way, PR was akin to the Catholic Television Network of Chicago, another Cody enterprise. In 1975, CTN/C attempted to link all archdiocesan parishes with a closed circuit network. Kantowicz insightfully explains that despite the fact that the idea was "brilliant," Cody's approach was "clearly old school": without much consultation or requests for advice, the archbishop unilaterally announced the costly project to the Presbyteral Council. See Edward R. Kantowicz, "The Beginning and the End of an Era: George William Mundelein and John Patrick Cody in Chicago," in *Catholicism, Chicago Style*, eds. Ellen Skerrett, Kantowicz, and Steven M. Avella (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1993), 136.

<sup>39</sup> "Priests Rebel at 250 Million Cody Project," *CT*, 8 February 1967.

<sup>40</sup> Dahm, 25; "Archbishop's Cody's Plan," *CDN*, 12 January 1967; "Catholics Assail Lack of Role in Fund Campaign," *CT*, 17 April 1967; Aloysius J. Wycislo, Pastor, to Parishioners, 5 March 1967, John Cardinal Cody Papers, Box: Project Files, Project Renewal, Folder: Project Renewal Correspondence, 1967-1980, AAC; Most Rev. Aloysius J. Wycislo, to Cardinal Cody, 20 March 1967, John Cardinal Cody Papers, Box: Project Files, Project Renewal, Folder: Project Renewal, Correspondence, 1967-1980, AAC; Cardinal Cody to Most Rev. Aloysius J. Wycislo, D.D., Auxiliary Bishop of Chicago, 22 March 1967, John Cardinal Cody Papers, Box: Project Files, Project Renewal, Folder: Project Renewal, Correspondence, 1967-1980.

the Archdiocese and its people in the spirit of modern Catholicism” and “the largest development program ever undertaken by any Catholic diocese or archdiocese in history,” the archbishop initially declared that his objective was to raise \$250,000,000 in pledges and gifts in ten years.<sup>41</sup> This announcement, which local newspapers extensively covered, was fumbled, as the final archdiocesan PR report indicated. It had not been clarified that “this \$250 million figure did not actually mean the archdiocese would need to raise this amount in new money, but that much of it would come from the normal income of the parishes of the archdiocese.”<sup>42</sup> On the one hand, Dahm’s flat statement that PR “failed” is inaccurate; the campaign by June 1967 had raised \$5.5 million in cash and a total pledged amount of \$41,654,745. However, vast numbers of Catholics did not participate, and PR was truncated.<sup>43</sup>

Contrast PR with Bernardin’s the “Big Shoulders Fund” (BSF) campaign. BSF, along with the “Cardinal’s Appeal,” which was an annual collection that Bernardin implemented in 1991 to solicit Catholics to aid struggling parishes, schools, and other archdiocesan programs, were the major fund raising campaigns most closely affiliated with Bernardin’s tenure.<sup>44</sup> Established in 1986, BSF was a not-for-profit organization that manifested Bernardin’s “participative” episcopal style. Collaboration and planning were the first steps. Bernardin and a board of laypeople and religious analyzed educational trends among Chicago Catholic schools, and realized that 48,000 of the

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<sup>41</sup> Community Counseling Services, Inc., “Archdiocese of Chicago, Project: Renewal,” No Date, John Cardinal Cody Papers, Box: Project Files, Project Renewal, No Folder, AAC; “Cody Opens Building Drive: \$250 Million ‘Project Renewal,’” *CDN*, 10 January 1967.

<sup>42</sup> Community Counseling Service, Inc., “Final Report to His Eminence, John Cardinal Cody,” June 1967, John Cardinal Cody Papers, Box: Project Files, Project Renewal, No Folder, AAC.

<sup>43</sup> Dahm, 167; “Catholics Pass Goal for Project Renewal,” *CT*, 9 June 1967; “New Project Renewal Total,” *CT*, 30 June 1967. Community Counseling Service, Inc., “Final Report to His Eminence, John Cardinal Cody,” June 1967, John Cardinal Cody Papers, Box: Project Files, Project Renewal, No Folder, AAC.

<sup>44</sup> “New Bernardin Appeals Seek 10 Million for Programs,” *CST*, 18 April 1991.



166,000 children enrolled in them attended 140 schools in poor neighborhoods. Of the 48,000, more than eighty percent were minorities and one third were non-Catholic.<sup>45</sup> Scores of these inner city parishes could not sustain parochial schools; adequate public aid was not forthcoming, and parents in inner cities could not afford the double burden of supporting public as well as private schools. Bernardin inaugurated BSF to maintain these schools, sensitizing Chicago's Catholic and non-Catholic business elites to parochial schools' contributions to the city. Individuals, foundations, and corporations were solicited, with an archdiocesan pledge that all funds would be funneled to Catholic schools in low income areas. Closures would negatively impact taxpayers, who would have to foot the estimated \$500 million bill if all Chicago Catholic school system students required public education. The BSF by most measures was successful. Initially, Bernardin aspired to collect \$10 million in 1987. By the time of Bernardin's death in 1996, \$62 million had been raised for students in inner city Catholic schools.<sup>46</sup>

Differences between the prelates were therefore marked. Be that as it may, Cody and Bernardin did to varying degrees embrace social liberalism—if we assume that a “liberal” sympathizes with the extension of civil liberties and individual rights, and supports using the state to advance the underprivileged and progressive causes. While others have identified Cody's liberalism in respect to race as the Introduction notes, this dissertation further notes that the archbishop also ardently espoused a legal ban on all firearms, and was the first American Catholic bishop to approve a Mass specifically for homosexuals. Meanwhile, Bernardin's major contribution to the pastoral letter on war

<sup>45</sup> “Cardinal Bernardin's Bargain,” *CT*, 29 October 1987.

<sup>46</sup> John A. McDermott, “Chicago Business Leaders Take Fresh Look at Catholic Schools,” *Chicago Enterprise* 2, no. 7 (August 1987): 10-11; Meg McSherry Breslin, “Catholic Schools Chief Steps Down,” *CT*, 4 August 2000; Jay Copp, “Chicago's Church Cuts Back,” *National Catholic Register*, 21 November 1993; Daniel J. Lehmann, “Archdiocese's Fiscal Year ‘Good One Over All,’” *CST*, 20 February 1987; Bill Britt, “Big Shoulders Gets Even Bigger,” *CNW*, 25 October 1996.

and peace enhanced his reputation as a social liberal. Both Cody and Bernardin were vocal exponents of the U.S. Catholic Bishops' novel Campaign for Human Development (CHD), established in 1969.<sup>47</sup> Bernardin in fact was at the time the General Secretary of the NCCB/USSC and was directly involved in the program's creation. Essentially, CHD harnessed Catholic social teaching to "raise funds to assist self-help programs designed and run by the poor, to educate the more affluent about the root causes of poverty, and to change attitudes about the plight of the poor."<sup>48</sup>

### *Presence*

The Catholic demographic and institutional presence in Chicago between 1965 and 1996 remained formidable, despite contraction. Several factors hamper a precise calculation of Catholics in the city. The U.S. Census does not record religious affiliation, and the archdiocese tracks the number of Catholics in Cook and Lake Counties rather than the individual municipalities within them. Also, the archdiocesan tally embraces all living baptized members, irrespective of Mass attendance or parish involvement. Two other factors render a guess imprecise at best: some suburban residents attended city parishes and vice versa, unsurprising as Vatican II rendered parish boundaries more fluid; and Chicago Catholicism included a sizable number of undocumented migrants, principally from Latin America, some of whom did not speak English or know where to

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<sup>47</sup> That Cody threw his weight behind CHD helped the Chicago archdiocese top "all others in the amount of money raised in the Campaign's first three years." See "Catholic 1973 Campaign," *CD*, 6 October 1973. For Cody's support of the CHD, see John Cardinal Cody Papers, Project Files, Campaign for Human Development, Box 1, Folder: Campaign for Human Development, AAC. Other figures from the archdiocese were also important to the establishment and maintenance of the CHD in its early years: Monsignor George Higgins, renowned for his experience and knowledge of labor issues, helped to inspire the CHD; Monsignor John Egan was a vocal proponent; and Auxiliary Bishop Michael R. Dempsey was appointed the first national chairman of the CHD. See Cardinal Joseph Bernardin, "The Campaign for Human Development at Age 25," *Origins* 25, no. 12 (7 September 1995).

<sup>48</sup> Cardinal Joseph Bernardin, "Introduction," in United States Catholic Conference, *Campaign for Human Development: Empowerment and Hope* (Washington, D.C.: United States Catholic Conference, 1996).

locate Spanish speaking parishes. Every ten years, the Catholic oriented Glenmary Research Center publishes *Churches and Church Membership in the United States*, a compendium of roughly 130 church bodies. Demographics are divided along state and county lines; the pertinent editions furnish arguably the most exact estimation of Catholics in Cook County but not Chicago itself. Between 1971 and 1990, the total number of faithful declined from 2,409,465 to 2,121,152, a loss of 288,313. That the entire population of Cook County dropped by 387,302 (5,492,369 in 1970 to 5,105,067 in 1990) is a qualification that should be kept in mind, however, and helps to explain why the percentage of Catholics in the total population fell by just two points, from 43.9 percent to 41.5 percent (See Table 5).<sup>49</sup> Although the percentage of Catholics among the total number of Cook County religious adherents slipped from 79.2 percent in 1971 to 65.7 percent in 1990, the Church retained the highest number of faithful by far. Witness that Black Baptists were second in 1990, with 290,094 members or 9.0 percent of Cook County's total religious adherents.<sup>50</sup>

Doubtless, the number of Catholics in Chicago between the mid-1960s and 1990s dwindled. The loss would have been more catastrophic had in-migrants and notably Latino Catholics not replenished parish rolls. As far as can be ascertained at this point, the only attempt to track the number of Chicago Catholics was made in 1984 by *Chicago Reporter* journalists Kevin B. Blackstone and Karen Snelling. Purporting to offer the "first comprehensive review of local church presence and commitment," Blackstone and

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<sup>49</sup> Douglas W. Johnson, Paul R. Picard, and Bernard Quinn, *Churches and Church Membership in the United States, 1971* (Washington, D.C.: Glenmary Research Center, 1974), 54; Martin B. Bradley, Norman M. Green, Jr., Dale E. Jones, Mac Lynn, and Lou McNeil, *Churches and Church Membership in the United States 1990* (Atlanta: Glenmary Research Center, 1992), 117; Cook County, Population by Age, [http://www.public-record.com/content/municipalities/cook/cook\\_county\\_census\\_demographics.asp](http://www.public-record.com/content/municipalities/cook/cook_county_census_demographics.asp); Barbara Fiske Page, ed., *Key to Government in Chicago and Suburban Cook County* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1980), 3.

<sup>50</sup> Johnson, Picard, and Quinn, 54; Bradley, Green, Johns, Lynn, and McNeil, 117.

Snelling added that “much of the information” in their report “has never before been compiled.” In respect to Catholics, Blackstone and Snelling contrasted the demographics for the years 1963 and 1983. In the former, the number of Catholics stood at 1.6 million; twenty years later, that number had dipped to 1.3 million. Once again, we should be attentive to the entire city’s contraction—3,550,404 in 1960 to 3,005,072 in 1980.<sup>51</sup> Between 1963 and 1983, the number of White Catholics had plummeted from 1.2 million to 756,775. On the other hand, Black Catholics increased from 45,000 to 90,000 and Latino membership jumped from 300,000 to 432,000. Blackstone and Snelling’s estimations are illuminating insofar as they suggest approximations of adherents. However, the journalists’ explanation as to how they arrived at their conclusions is vague, and therefore judiciousness requires that we interpret their numbers as pointing to trends rather than as incontestable evidence.<sup>52</sup>

**Table 5. Cook County Catholic Population<sup>53</sup>**

<b>YEAR</b>	<b>1971</b>	<b>1980</b>	<b>1990</b>
Total, Cook County	5,492,369 <sup>54</sup>	5,253,655	5,105,067
Catholics, Cook County	2,409,465	2,303,743	2,121,152
Catholic % of Total Population	43.9	43.9	41.5
Percent of Total Adherents	79.2	77.6	65.7

Sizeable Catholic residential enclaves continued to exist in many parts of the city, although they were increasingly unlikely in community areas that were majority African American, a historically Protestant demographic group. In the years under study, the

<sup>51</sup> Chicago Fact Book Consortium, *Local Community Fact Book, Chicago Metropolitan Census Based on the 1970 and 1980 Censuses* (Chicago: Chicago Review Press, 1984), x.

<sup>52</sup> Kevin B. Blackstone and Karen Snelling, “Suburban Catholic Church Booms; Hispanics Offset City Decline,” *CR*, November 1984.

<sup>53</sup> Johnson, Picard, and Quinn, 54; Bernard Quinn, Herman Anderson, Martin Bradley, Paul Goetting, and Peggy Shriver, *Churches and Church Membership in the United States 1980* (Atlanta: Glenmary Research Center, 1982), 83; Bradley, Green, Jr., Jones, Lynn, and McNeil, 117; Cook County, Population by Age, [http://www.public-record.com/content/municipalities/cook/cook\\_county\\_census\\_demographics.asp](http://www.public-record.com/content/municipalities/cook/cook_county_census_demographics.asp); Fiske Page, ed., 3.

<sup>54</sup> This figure is from the 1970 census, as there was no 1971 census.

Northwest and Southwest Sides in particular contained large concentrations of Catholic European Americans, such as Germans, Irish, Italians, Poles, and other Eastern Europeans. Heavy concentrations of other historically Catholic ethnic groups that are usually categorized as “Latinos”—principally Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, and Cubans—could be found in the West Town-Humboldt Park-Logan Square community areas on the Near Northwest Side, as well as the Lower West Side and South Lawndale. Latinos also developed a significant presence in North Lake Shore community areas, New City, and the Near West Side, and by the mid-1990s were dispersed throughout the city. On the whole, youthfulness distinguished the demographic bloc. Relative to Whites, the Spanish-speaking population of Chicago in 1970 had a median age that was approximately ten years younger (20.3 compared to 30.5 years). Larger family sizes, lower income, and a higher frequency of residential overcrowding were also typical.<sup>55</sup>

Whites, Latinos, and African Americans comprised the three largest racial/ethnic groups among Chicago Catholics. A smaller number of Asians and American Indians contributed to dizzying diversity, which was manifested in the Mass. By the early 2000s, city parishes regularly celebrated the Eucharist in approximately twenty different languages, and occasionally in over forty.<sup>56</sup> Ethnic diversity had long confronted Catholic leaders in Chicago and around the country, as the Introduction makes plain. In the middle decades of the twentieth century, they had espoused a “melting pot” model that tried to assimilate immigrants into the American Catholic Church. Vatican II and Americans’ new sensitivity to ethnicity in the mid-1960s birthed a new paradigm, at first

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<sup>55</sup> Chicago Department of Development and Planning, *Chicago’s Spanish-Speaking Population* (Chicago: City of Chicago, 1973); Pierre de Vise, *The Spread of Latino Poverty and Overcrowding in Metropolitan Chicago, 1980 to 1995* (Chicago: City Club of Chicago, 1996).

<sup>56</sup> Jay P. Dolan, “A Different Breed of Catholics,” in *Religion and Public Life in the Midwest: America’s Common Denominator?*, ed. Philip Barlow and Mark Silk (Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira, 2004), 111.

advanced by intellectuals and activists. These Catholics, D'Agostino explains, "sought to recapture or preserve distinctive religious rituals, symbols, and affective experiences associated with European homelands or immigrant neighborhoods."<sup>57</sup> An emphasis on cultural pluralism supplanted the melting pot model. During Cody's tenure, archdiocesan leaders permitted new cultural centers and offices that spoke for individual ethnic groups. Although he maintained the cultural pluralist model, Bernardin also desired to forge closer bonds between these offices and his office; therefore he reorganized them in 1989 into a single Office for Ethnic Ministries (OEM), an umbrella unit that helped parishes negotiate intercultural relations and where representatives of the various ethnic groups could articulate their concerns. D'Agostino wagers that in this way, the OEM "embodied a Catholic baptism of the ideology of multiculturalism, and its mission of evangelization was linked to a Catholic theology of inculturation."<sup>58</sup>

Institutionally, a plethora of Catholic churches, schools, hospitals, and social welfare agencies remained operative. Notably, Catholic hospitals for a few decades bucked the trend of Catholic contraction, particularly if the number of total patients served is used as the chief criterion. However, between 1985 and 1996 the number of hospitals did decline from twenty four to twenty, as health care costs escalated (Table 6). It can be legitimately argued that the existence of so many service-producing Catholic institutions was an immense boon to a city experiencing chronic revenue shortfalls and unable to adequately fund basic social services. A 1986 Chicago Catholic Charities survey of Catholic-sponsored institutions in the archdiocese conservatively estimated that Catholic educational, health care, and social service agencies annually contributed an

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<sup>57</sup> D'Agostino, 281.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid., 286.

astonishing \$1,371,612,210 “through tax free human services” to residents of Cook and Lake counties. This translated into a yearly savings for each of the counties’ 2,147,068 households of \$640.00. The report, which was developed to generate support among local businesses and residents for these Catholic services, recollected that local and state taxes would be considerably higher were Catholics to cease funding their institutions; government would have to furnish these services.<sup>59</sup>

**Table 6. Selected Archdiocesan Statistics, 1965-1996<sup>60</sup>**

YEAR	1965	1970	1975	1980	1985	1991	1996
General Hospitals	22	23	23	23	24	21	20
Bed Capacity	6,500	7,660	8,777	8,895	9,016	--	--
Total Patients	848,470	1,319,999	1,947,947	1,852,435	1,676,889	2,379,446	2,769,633

Catholic schools in the city remained pivotal to educating Chicago Catholic and non-Catholic youth. In 1965, Chicago Catholic schools educated approximately one out of every three children in the city. Well into the 1970s, the archdiocese maintained the largest private system in the nation in numbers of students, and the fourth largest public or private system behind the public school systems of New York, Los Angeles, and Chicago.<sup>61</sup> Out-migration, the escalating costs for parochial school parents, and the high quality of suburban public schools eventually took their toll. By the early 2000s, the school system of the Chicago Archdiocese was the eleventh largest public or private enterprise in the U.S., although it remained the largest Catholic school system.<sup>62</sup>

<sup>59</sup> Roger J. Coughlin, Stephen M. Combs, Jean Welter, and Mary E. O’Brien, *Financial Contributions to Community by Catholic Institutions in 1986* (Chicago: Chicago Catholic Charities, 1987).

<sup>60</sup> These statistics were compiled from relevant editions of *The Official Catholic Directory* (New York: P.J. Kennedy and Sons, 1965-1996).

<sup>61</sup> John Culhane, “The Catholic Schools: A Question of Quality,” *CDN*, 2 September 1965; “Race and Catholic Schools: More Mixed than Public; Strong in Inner City,” *CR*, March 1974; School Study Commission, *Directions for the Future: For Catholic Schools in the Archdiocese of Chicago* (Chicago: The Commission, 1971); Sr. Bruno C. Onyebuchi, “An Examination of the Organizational Structure of the Chicago Archdiocese Office of Catholic Schools and Perceptions of Its Impact on Catholic School Success” (Ph.D. diss., Loyola University Chicago, 2007), 28.

<sup>62</sup> Onyebuchi, 11.

If the overall number of schools and students declined, the percentage of minority, non-Catholic, and low income youngsters increased.<sup>63</sup> Several factors account for the trend, most notably that Catholics in outlying areas or suburbs were willing to expend great expense and effort to maintain city schools. Also, episcopal policies enhanced the system's ability to educate disadvantaged youngsters, namely Bernardin's Big Shoulders Fund, which has already been addressed. The culture and curricula of parochial schools were also welcomed by non-Catholic minority parents, who desired "an academically superior education at a cost below that of other private schools."<sup>64</sup> Relative to their public counterparts, Catholic schools enforced high disciplinary standards and inculcated Christian ethics. Families also prized the archdiocesan school system's emphasis on active parent involvement—many schools had their own boards—and decentralized administration, which starkly contrasted with the public school system's labyrinthine bureaucracy and inflexible centralization. While the Archdiocesan School Office loosely oversaw all Catholic schools, individual principals retained the power to hire, fire, and manage school budgets.<sup>65</sup>

By any number of criteria, Chicago Catholic schools collectively outperformed overworked and underachieving public schools.<sup>66</sup> Catholic schools had lower dropout rates; a higher percentage of college bound students; were racially more integrated; and educated each pupil at a fraction of the cost of public schools. Parochial merits were

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<sup>63</sup> "Low income" refers to families receiving some kind of public aid.

<sup>64</sup> Julia Wally Rath, "Faith, Hope, and Education: African-American Parents of Children in Catholic Schools and their Social and Religious Accommodation to Catholicism" (Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 1995), x.

<sup>65</sup> Laura S. Washington, "Catholic Schools Draw Minorities as Public School Rolls Slip," *CR*, February 1982; "Race and Catholic Schools: More Mixed than Public; Strong in Inner City," *CR*, March 1974; Joe Cappel, "Hire Archdiocese to Run Chicago's Public Schools," *CST*, 20 September 1987.

<sup>66</sup> For national comparisons that underscore the efficacy of Catholic schools in comparison to public, see Anthony S. Bryk, Valerie E. Lee, and Peter B. Holland, *Catholic Schools and the Common Good* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993); Coleman; Derek Neal.



especially helpful to disadvantaged minorities, whose academic success in Catholic schools far exceeded their public school counterparts.<sup>67</sup> In fact, some scholars, touting Catholic schools' effectiveness, have contended that Catholic schools in the long term are a more effective antidote to financial hardship than direct aid anti-poverty programs.<sup>68</sup> Surveying the accomplishments of Chicago Catholic schools, one *Sun Times* columnist concluded in 1987 that parochial administrators "should be hired to run the public school system." He was especially awestruck that the streamlined archdiocesan school system employed nearly four thousand fewer administrators than the CPS.<sup>69</sup> Inevitably and understandably, criticism aggravated public school officials, who periodically retorted that Catholic schools could select their students—thus increasingly the likelihood of academic success—whereas public schools could not.<sup>70</sup> However, the chief of the CPS in 1997, Paul Vallas, acknowledged that the successes of Catholic schools "can't all be explained away by selectivity or other factors."<sup>71</sup>

Catholic schools also encountered immense challenges. Nagging financial troubles engendered repeated archdiocesan attempts to procure public aid for parochial education. For instance, in the 1960s, administrators recommended to the public school

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<sup>67</sup> Laura S. Washington, "Catholic Schools Draw Minorities as Public School Rolls Slip," *CR*, February 1982; "Most Catholic Pupils Here Do Well on Tests," *CT*, 12 May 1970; Meg McSherry Breslin, "Catholic Schools Give Advantage, Study Says," *CT*, 5 March 1997; "Race and Catholic Schools: More Mixed than Public; Strong in Inner City," *CR*, March 1974; Joe Cappel, "Hire Archdiocese to Run Chicago's Public Schools," *CST*, 20 September 1987.

<sup>68</sup> Albert Schorsch III, "Catholic Schools Make the Best Antipoverty Investments," *U.S. Catholic* (June 1997): 22-26.

<sup>69</sup> Joe Cappel, "Hire Archdiocese to Run Chicago's Public Schools," *CST*, 20 September 1987.

<sup>70</sup> Jay Copp, "Rally to Make Cry for Choice in Education," *CNW*, 3 March 1995.

<sup>71</sup> Meg McSherry Breslin, "Catholic Schools Give Advantages, Study Says," *CT*, 5 March 1997; Rosalind Rossi, "Public School Crisis – Vallas Asks Catholic Help," *CST*, 7 August 1996. Some scholars, such as DePaul University economist William Sander, have argued that—at least among non-Hispanic White Catholic grade school students—higher test scores "cannot be attributed to selecting superior students." See William Sander, "Catholic Grade Schools and Academic Achievement," *The Journal of Human Resources* 31, no. 3 (1996): 540-548; William Sander, *Catholic Schools: Private and Social Effects* (Boston: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2001).

boards of Chicago and surrounding municipalities a “shared time” or “dual enrollment” plan whereby interested Catholic school youngsters could matriculate in math, science, and other quantitatively oriented classes in nearby public schools, while taking religion, history, literature, and social studies courses in Catholic schools. A few hundred students initially participated.<sup>72</sup> In the late 1960s, Cardinal Cody and other Illinois Catholic bishops aggressively, but ultimately unsuccessfully, lobbied Illinois lawmakers to allot state monies to parochial schools.<sup>73</sup> They argued that the fate of public and nonpublic schools in much of Illinois was inextricably wed; Catholic schools performed a valuable service to the state by educating hundreds of thousands of students; and if financially struggling Catholic schools were forced to close, the wave of students matriculating in public schools would overwhelm a system that, in Chicago, was already underfunded and overstrained. Also, Catholic schools anchored to the city families who would otherwise have left for the suburbs.<sup>74</sup> The Illinois State Senate narrowly denied this appeal in May 1970.<sup>75</sup> A distraught Cody immediately warned that “hundreds” of archdiocesan schools may be shuttered, alarming parents.<sup>76</sup> Superintendent of Catholic Schools Father Robert Clark quickly amended the archbishop’s statement, promising that “schools will not be

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<sup>72</sup> John Culhane, “Plight of Catholic Elementary Schools,” *CDN*, 4 September 1965. In 1985, the U.S. Supreme Court judged that public school teachers furnishing specialized classes for religious schools violated the separation of church and state. See Glen Elsasser, “Court Cuts Parochial School Aid,” *CT*, 2 July 1985.

<sup>73</sup> “Catholics Seek School Plan,” *CT*, 27 May 1970.

<sup>74</sup> “Bishop McManus Asks Non-Public School Aid,” *CNW*, 30 August 1968; “Cardinal Cody Views Future of Schools in Telecast,” *CNW*, 17 January 1969; David Sutor, “Bill to Aid Non-Public Schools Seeks Highest Amount Possible,” *CNW*, 24 January 1969.

<sup>75</sup> David Sutor, “Senate Kills Nonpublic School Aid Legislation,” *CNW*, 29 May 1970; “Failure to Act on School Aid ‘Appalling Disappointment,’” *CNW*, 29 May 1970. Another form of public aid to non-public schools was denied in 1979, when Illinois governor James Thompson vetoed a bill that would have forced public school districts to cover the costs of bussing students to non-public schools. See Steve Askin, “Illinois Busing Veto Irks Bishops,” *NCR*, 7 December 1979.

<sup>76</sup> “Failure to Act on School Aid ‘Appalling Disappointment,’” *CNW*, 29 May 1970.

closed one by one,” as there was simply “no room for our pupils in the public schools.”<sup>77</sup> An emergency meeting of the Archdiocesan School Board (ASB) was called to devise a plan to alleviate the inevitable financial crunch. In June, the Board submitted an innovative design to the Chicago Board of Education (CBE) that essentially recommended a vast expansion of the dual enrollment plan. The 130,000 Catholic students would remain in their schools. During math and science classes, however, they would be enrolled as public school students, and the city would consider parochial teachers as public school teachers. During these hours, the CBE would “rent” private school facilities, and pay parochial educators a salary. Catholic schools could remain open, parents’ onerous financial burden would be reduced, parochial students would not besiege public school facilities, and they would be educated at a fraction of the cost. Public school superintendent James Redmond supported the ASB’s plan, noting that the state rather than the CBE would cover the costs.<sup>78</sup> Be that as it may, the CBE vetoed the proposal, upsetting the ASB and Catholic parents, and infuriating *Chicago Defender* editors, who supported the ASB plan as it would allow Black students to remain in private schools. Editors speculated that the “incomprehensible” and “indefensible” decision was fueled by “damnable religious bias.”<sup>79</sup> To design a comprehensive plan for the future of Catholic schools, the ASB a few months later established a twenty member School Study Commission, chaired by Edward Marciniak.<sup>80</sup> It recommended that Catholic schools continue to decentralize the system, rendering it flexible and better able

<sup>77</sup> “We Will Keep Schools Open in Fund Crisis, Catholics Say,” *CT*, 28 May 1970; “Chicago Diocese Pledges to Keep Schools Going,” *NCR*, 12 June 1970.

<sup>78</sup> Father Robert Clark, “Proposal to Enroll Catholic Students as Part-Time Public School Students,” *CNW*, 19 June 1970; “Approve Catholic Proposal!,” *CD*, 25 June 1970.

<sup>79</sup> “Reject Catholic Plan,” *CD*, 22 July 1970.

<sup>80</sup> Judy Edinger, “Commission Studies Catholic Schools Here,” *CNW*, 20 November 1970; John Cardinal Cody, “Chart a New Direction,” *CNW*, 20 November 1970.

to meet community needs. Decentralization would be accomplished “through the exercise of local options which places decision making with the local communities served by the schools.” Acting through the local school board, parents would determine the school’s education program, Christian character, finance, and administration.<sup>81</sup>

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Doubtlessly, contraction and consolidation of parishes and schools, ebbing morale particularly during the Cody years, and declining numbers of priests, nuns, and faithful in the city, were glaring trends in post-conciliar Chicago Catholicism. However, these should not obscure real positive developments, or the Church’s immense contribution to Chicago’s welfare. Consider that the need of consolidation offered opportunities for long term archdiocesan planning. Likewise, it encouraged more open communication—during Bernardin’s tenure in particular—between archdiocesan leaders, clergy, and laity. Similarly, noting the consequent turmoil of some church and school mergers and closings should not camouflage the many surprisingly smooth transitions that occurred, or Catholics’ innovation to render their schools more responsive to neighborhood needs. Resourcefulness was indeed a valuable asset in post-industrial Chicago, as this dissertation will now demonstrate.

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<sup>81</sup> *School Study Commission, Directions for the Future*, August 1971; Donald Yabush, “Parental Authority Increased: Catholic Schools Decentralized,” *CT*, 11 June 1970; “A Way Out for Catholic Schools,” *Chicago Today* (20 August 1971): 24; Terry Shaffer, “Ask Lay Rule of Catholic Schools Here,” *CDN*, 20 August 1971; Betsy Brooker, “Parental Board Control? Parochial Schools Say OK,” *Chicago Daily Herald*, 1 October 1971.

## *Chapter 2* *Post-Industrial Transition*

### *(Re-)Birth Pains*

John P. Koval has remarked that “The birth of Chicago and the birth of industrial America were contemporaneous. By the 1920s Chicago had emerged as the poster-city of America’s industrial power when the nation itself came to be recognized as the world’s industrial giant.”<sup>1</sup> In Chicago, industrial prosperity fostered and profited from demographic growth; European immigrants, White and African American in-migrants, and Mexican immigrants among others settled to labor in mills, factories, stockyards, and railroads—the implements of industrial capitalism. Many other factors fostered industrial growth: Chicago’s geographic position, a vast and resource-rich hinterland, zealous investors, world wars that devastated the industrial capacity of other countries, political influence in Washington and subsequent federal government subsidies, particularly in armaments.

By the late-1950s, it was evident that the economy was drastically shifting, as a combination of international, domestic, and local economic, political, and social trends repositioned the “city of broad shoulders” into a twenty-first century “global city with worldwide connections.”<sup>2</sup> In the interim, Chicago experienced post-industrial transition. “Post-industrialization” is a contested phrase, as sociologists and historians disagree over its definition, genesis, causes, and effects. In this dissertation, “post-industrial transition” indicates a cluster of interrelated *economic, social, and geographic* restructurings,

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<sup>1</sup> John P. Koval, “An Overview and Point of View,” in *The New Chicago: A Social and Cultural Analysis*, eds. John P. Koval et al. (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2006), 3.

<sup>2</sup> Dominic A. Pacyga, *Chicago: A Biography* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 5.

which—as was true of industrialization over a century prior—were frequently painful to many Chicagoans.<sup>3</sup> The post-industrial transition in Chicago was comprised of:

Economic Restructuring. Deindustrialization, or the extensive disinvestment in the city's productive capacity, was evident at midcentury and accelerated during the next few decades. Tens of thousands of industrial jobs from old line and heavy industries that had been central to Chicago's economy, such as meatpacking and steel, streamed from the city to the suburbs or other regions of the country. Firms often maintained local headquarters but established factories abroad where cheap, non-unionized labor pools were large and property taxes negligible, contributing to the proliferating number of

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<sup>3</sup> The following books were most helpful to my understanding of post-industrial transition; the impact on Chicago; and the impact on religion in the United States. For regional or national analyses, see Barry Bluestone and Bennett Harrison, *The Deindustrialization of America: Plant Closings, Community Abandonment, and the Dismantling of Basic Industry* (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1982); Charles F. Bonser, ed., *Dimensions of Change: Decline and Restructuring in the American Midwest* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1994); Janet L. Abu-Lughod, *New York, Chicago, Los Angeles: America's Global Cities* (Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1999); Dennis R. Judd and Todd Swanstrom, *City Politics: The Political Economy of Urban America*, 8<sup>th</sup> ed. (New York: Pearson, 2011); Ann Markusen, et al., *The Rise of the Gun Belt: The Military Remapping of Industrial America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991); John H. Mollenkopf, *The Contested City* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1983); David Ranney, *Global Decisions, Local Collisions: Urban Life in the New World Order* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2003); Jon C. Teaford, *The Rough Road to Renaissance: Urban Revitalization in America, 1940-1985* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990); Wyatt Wells, *American Capitalism, 1945-2000: Community and Change from Mass Production to the Information Society* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2003); Alfred E. Eckes, Jr., *The Contemporary Global Economy: A History Since 1980* (Oxford, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011). For Chicago, see John P. Koval et al, eds., *The New Chicago: A Social and Cultural Analysis* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2006); Joel Rast, *Remaking Chicago: The Political Origins of Urban Industrial Change* (DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 1999); Gregory D. Squires, et al., *Chicago: Race, Class, and Response to Urban Decline* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1987); David Bensman and Roberta Lynch, *Rusted Dreams: Hard Times in a Steel Community* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1987); Irving Cutler, *Chicago: Metropolis of the Mid-Continent*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 2006); Dominic A. Pacyga, *Chicago: A Biography* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009); Milton Derber, *Labor in Illinois: The Affluent Years, 1945-1980* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1989); Human Relations Foundation and The Center for Urban Research and Learning of Loyola University Chicago, "Minding the Gap: An Assessment of Racial Disparity in Metropolitan Chicago," November 2003, <http://www.luc.edu/curl/pdfs/mindingthegap1.pdf>; Pierre DeVise, "Chicago's Spreading Gold Coast and Shrinking Ghetto: Shifts in the Chicago Area's Geography of Wealth and Poverty, 1980 to 1990," Committee on Population and Demographics of the City Club of Chicago, January 1993. For religion, see Lowell W. Livezey, ed., *Public Religion and Urban Transformation: Faith in the City* (New York: New York University Press 2000); Anthony E. Healy, *The Postindustrial Promise: Vital Religious Community in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* (Herndon, VA: Alban Institute, 2005); Clifford J. Green, ed., *Churches, Cities, and Human Communities: Urban Ministry in the United States, 1945-1985* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1996).

multinational corporations. Koval records that Chicago “lost 32% of all manufacturing jobs between 1969 and 1983—dropping from a high of nearly one million to less than 600,000.”<sup>4</sup> Deindustrialization underlay the sluggish economy of the 1970s.

Unemployment rates soared, manufacturing wages fell, union strength was attenuated, the blue collar labor force was devastated, the economic security of individuals and families was jeopardized, and communities were undermined. Shuttered factories blighted the landscape, and nearby businesses withered.<sup>5</sup> Sparse federal government defense-related spending in the region, stagflation, and oil crises and escalating energy prices multiplied economic duress.<sup>6</sup> As the number of manufacturing jobs dwindled, it was increasingly evident that the service and computer-fueled information sector—essentially jobs that provide services to businesses and individuals, rather than jobs wherein workers produce consumer goods—was becoming dominant. By necessity, Chicago’s economy diversified. The unskilled, generally un-unionized, service labor pool swelled alongside a growing white collar work force.<sup>7</sup> In all sectors, enhanced computer technology heightened productivity, and eased businesses’ demand for full time workers.

Social Restructuring. Frequently resulting from African American in-migration to their neighborhoods, economic restructuring, and/or interstate construction, White middle class residents migrated from the city. Collectively less affluent than out-migrants,

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<sup>4</sup> Koval 8. By the 1990s, “manufacturing was still more important to Chicago than in most other big urban areas, but smoky mills, clanging presses, and fast assembly lines no longer defined the regional economy as much as it had in the past.” See David Moberg, “Economic Restructuring: Chicago’s Precarious Balance,” in *The New Chicago: A Social and Cultural Analysis*, eds. John P. Koval et al. (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2006), 36.

<sup>5</sup> The description of deindustrialization’s impact on Chicago-area communities is particularly vivid in Bensman and Lynch.

<sup>6</sup> Abu-Lughod recognizes that defense spending in Chicago decreased because of the city’s diminishing clout in Washington, but more as a result of the fact that it was more profitable and efficient to manufacture arms on the coasts for international export. See Abu-Lughod, 233-234.

<sup>7</sup> Examples of low end service jobs include cashiers, sales/retail associates, or fast food cook.



African American and Latino enclaves grew demographically and geographically. The hemorrhaging middle-class tax base and the demographic growth of lower income residents aggravated revenue shortfalls in the city. Locally, lawmakers curtailed municipal services to balance budgets. The proliferation of the information and service industry generated an “hourglass economy”; the income gap between high end professions and the unskilled labor force widened. One’s position in the economic hierarchy was increasingly dependent on educational qualifications. Social mobility stagnated. Decently paid and low skilled jobs grew scarce. Anthony E. Healy has observed that “the postindustrial emphasis on education has knocked out the middle rungs of the ladder of opportunity that once made it possible in industrial society for the diligent and hardworking to rise bit by bit in wages and job status—even if they had meager educations.”<sup>8</sup> By 1980, one out of every five Chicagoans, about 600,000 in all, survived on wages that the federal government considered below the poverty line.<sup>9</sup> The linkage between economic well-being and race/ethnicity was amplified, as economic shifts were superimposed on preexisting racial animosities and prejudices; African Americans and Latinos disproportionately suffered. Eighty-five percent of Chicago’s poor were minorities, and Black female-headed households were especially susceptible to poverty.<sup>10</sup> Particularly apparent during the Reagan era, federal and state public assistance was slashed, which taxed private social welfare agencies attempted to redress.<sup>11</sup>

Geographic restructuring. Out-migrants often resettled in suburbs. Whereas 80 percent of the metropolitan labor force in 1955 lived in the city, less than 33 percent

<sup>8</sup> Healy, 23.

<sup>9</sup> Steve Askin, “‘New Poverty’ Traps 600,000 Chicagoans –Permanently,” *CR*, February 1980.

<sup>10</sup> Steve Askin, “‘New Poverty’ Traps 600,000 Chicagoans –Permanently,” *CR*, February 1980. See also Tom Brune and Eduardo Camacho, “Chicago Became Blacker, Poorer in 1970s; Minorities Bear Brunt of Poverty Increase,” *CR*, April 1983.

<sup>11</sup> “Religious Social Services Grow in City; Aid Joblessness and Poor,” *CR*, November 1984.



resided there in 2000.<sup>12</sup> Income disparities between suburbs and the city increased. In 1970, 80 percent of “low income households” in the metropolitan area were located within the city, although Chicago contained only forty eight percent of the entire population.<sup>13</sup> Generally, suburban growth was racially selective. *De facto* residential segregation deprived minorities of homes, although this slowly changed in the 1980s and 1990s for middle- and upper-class minorities in particular. Jobs that had relocated to the suburbs were veritably inaccessible to city residents who possessed few funds and limited transportation options. In the early 1980s, no direct public transportation lines operated between the suburbs on the one hand, and the poorer South and West Sides on the other. The half dozen commuter train lines linking Chicago and the suburbs were more conducive to residents of the latter commuting to Loop offices, rather than “reverse commuters” desiring transportation from the city to newer industrial parks. A higher minority unemployment rate was one upshot; regentrification in other areas was another. Post-industrialization facilitated the emergence of what Gregory D. Squires, Larry Bennett, Kathleen McCourt, and Philip Nyden in the mid-1980s called “two communities” distinguished by stark socioeconomic cleavages. On the one hand were “old affluent neighborhoods” such as the Gold Coast; gentrified neighborhoods particularly on the North Side; the Loop, thanks to an injection of capital and new office space construction; and prosperous suburbs. On the other were older suburban communities that deindustrialization had decimated; a few struggling White ethnic communities on the Southwest Side; and low income minority neighborhoods particularly but not exclusively on the South and West Sides, some of which were grievously indigent

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<sup>12</sup> Koval, 9.

<sup>13</sup> Tom Brune, “Poor Still Concentrated in Chicago as City-Suburb Gap Grows,” *CR*, October 1978.

and physically and socially isolated. Chicago in 1980 possessed ten of the nation's sixteen most impoverished neighborhoods, helping to touch off an explosive "underclass" debate among scholars in the 1980s and 1990s.<sup>14</sup>

The post-industrial transition furnishes a context by which to analyze the interaction between the city and the Catholic Church between the 1960s and the 1990s. This chapter explores how the archdiocese, individual parishes, and religious congregations responded to middle-class outmigration, the influx of migrants who were often non-Catholic (African Americans) or culturally disinclined to routinely participate in parish life (Latinos), a shrinking revenue base, and rising socioeconomic inequalities. The following chapter will investigate soaring violent crime rates in materially underprivileged, physically isolated, and socially alienated neighborhoods—many of which experienced parish closings. In respect to Chicago Catholicism, Peter R. D'Agostino's insight in "Catholic Planning for a Multicultural Metropolis, 1982-1996" is applicable: "Post-conciliar Catholicism is largely a post-industrial church. Deindustrialization, out-migration of middle-class Catholics, weakened labor unions, and diminished social services and neighborhood political power have drastically restricted the possibilities for the Catholic Church in urban America."<sup>15</sup>

This chapter explains that post-industrial transition, in combination with plummeting numbers of active religious and falling birth rates, kindled reciprocity in the form of collaboration across parochial and geographical boundaries and the carefully planned distribution and maximization of human and material resources to maintain the

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<sup>14</sup> Squires, 24. For a genealogy of the debate, see John F. Bauman, "The Truly Segregated?: Exploring the Urban Underclass," *Journal of Urban History* 21, no. 4 (May 1995): 536-548.

<sup>15</sup> Peter R. D'Agostino, "Catholic Planning for a Multicultural Metropolis, 1982-1996," in *Public Religion and Urban Transformation: Faith in the City*, ed. Lowell W. Livezey (New York: New York University Press, 2000), 288-9.

Church's material interest. Whereas D'Agostino has emphasized how Cardinal Bernardin's reforms in archdiocesan governance, administration, and ecclesial geography "promoted awareness of interdependence among Catholic institutions and people," there also existed a previous local impulse to foster reciprocity and transcend the relative autonomy of Catholic institutions.<sup>16</sup> The innovative Twinning or Sharing program is a telling example. It was initiated by archdiocesan priests in the late 1960s and subsequently embraced and extended by Cardinals Cody and Bernardin.<sup>17</sup>

Twinning/Sharing addressed widening socioeconomic disparities between parishes and neighborhoods. It required the exchange of material resources and hospitality between, on the one hand, parishioners of more wealthy and usually suburban parishes with, on the other, less wealthy and frequently minority parishes in the city. Twinning/Sharing reaffirmed that parishes were not autonomous entities; rather, the faithful were members of one Body of Christ. The program also reminded Chicago-area Catholics that they were embedded within a wider metropolitan matrix—the Catholic Church was perhaps the most organized and demographically large extra-governmental institution that spanned the city and suburbs—and therefore had material and theological responsibilities to co-religionists of other races, ethnicities, income levels, and geographic areas.

Systematic cooperation to address economic, social, and geographic restructurings also

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<sup>16</sup> D'Agostino, 270.

<sup>17</sup> There were other examples of Catholic inter-parochial collaboration, most notably Englewood parishes' initiation of a novel cluster project. However, non-historians Dahm (sociologist) and Murnion and Wenzel (pastoral ministers) have extensively examined this. Somewhat inexplicably, Dahm mentions Twinning/Sharing only once in passing. Chicago Twinning/Sharing is also mentioned once in Frederick J. Perella, Jr., "Roman Catholic Approaches to Urban Ministry, 1945-1985," in *Churches, Cities, and Human Community: Urban Ministry in the United States, 1954-1985*, ed. Clifford J. Green (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1996), 187. Murnion and Wenzel devote approximately one page to the program. See Charles W. Dahm, *Power and Authority in the Catholic Church: Cardinal Cody in Chicago* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1982), 166; Philip J. Murnion and Anne Wenzel, *The Crisis of the Church in the Inner City: Pastoral Options for Inner City Parishes* (New York: National Pastoral Life Center, 1990), 30-31.

occurred between members of local religious congregations, a fact sometimes unaddressed by scholars of urban religion who privilege parishes in analyses of post-industrialism's impact. In Chicago, the Eighth Day Center for Justice embodied inter-congregational efforts. It applied the insights of liberation theology to diagnose and solve local injustices that post-industrial transition had enhanced. Exhibiting social progressivism and post-conciliar radicalism, the Eighth Day Center constituted an outspoken, provocative, and occasionally controversial but important strand of Chicago-style Catholicism.

*Interconnecting "Two Communities"*

Post-industrial transition and dipping numbers of religious necessitated reciprocity in the form of planning and collaboration across parochial and geographical boundaries, as well as the redistribution and maximization of resources to maintain the Church's material interests. The "Twinning" program, renamed "Sharing" in 1976 by Archbishop John Cody, was one grassroots inter-parochial undertaking. It attempted to foster mutual aid and dialogue and surmount racial misunderstandings among Catholics in the city and suburbs; and mitigate socioeconomic disparities between financially sound and unsound parishes. Essentially, the program paired fiscally healthy parishes with poorer and often minority congregations for the purpose of sharing financial resources on a continuing basis and forming bonds of affection through social and liturgical events. Twinning was unofficially initiated in the late 1960s by several innovative archdiocesan priests, chiefly Monsignor John Egan, the vicar delegate of Vicariate I Monsignor Harry C. Koenig, and Auxiliary Bishop Michael R. Dempsey. Cardinals Cody and then Bernardin discerned the financial and social value of the program. Twinning was

innovative. Other archdioceses ultimately adopted similar programs although Chicago was and remained until Bernardin's death the only U.S. diocese wherein all parishes participated.<sup>18</sup> Twinning/Sharing was modestly successful, in part because it was inter-parochial and fostered an awareness of interdependency without breaching the traditional autonomy of parishes. Impressively, Pope Paul VI extolled it as a "most worthy goal to seek to promote in this way a spirit of Catholic unity and fraternal love among your people and especially those of different cultural backgrounds." Vicar General Francis Brackin's reported boast that the program was "The greatest thing that has happened in the history of the archdiocese," is debatable.<sup>19</sup>

Twinning had antecedents in the late 1950s and 1960s when individual pastors and parishioners of suburban and financially insecure and typically minority-dominated inner city parishes began establishing contacts with each other. In 1965, the Office of Urban Affairs formed the Archdiocesan Inter-Parish Movement, an ostensibly lay movement that encouraged wealthier parishes to financially assist poorer parishes, but AIM languished.<sup>20</sup> The program that eventually became known as "Twinning" was initiated in November 1969 when Monsignor John Egan, then pastor of the low income Presentation Parish on the West Side, met in a daylong session with Msgr. Harry Koenig of the comparably affluent suburban St. Joseph's parish in Libertyville, and vicar delegate of Vicariate I. Egan and Koenig were enthusiastic about twinning their parishes, and selected between ten and twelve parish leaders who were equally supportive. The

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<sup>18</sup> Cardinal Joseph Bernardin, "Building Bridges Between Communities of Faith: Pastoral Statement on Parish Sharing," in *Selected Works of Joseph Cardinal Bernardin*, vol. 1, ed., Alphonse P. Spilly, C.P.P.S. (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2000), 234-5.

<sup>19</sup> Mary Claire Gart, "'Sharing' Plan Unites Catholics in Suburban and City Parishes," *CNW*, 6 May 1977.

<sup>20</sup> Dahm, 166.

Presentation and St. Joseph's committees held a meeting to become acquainted.<sup>21</sup> "The purpose of this encounter," explained Koenig, was "to see if people from the inner city and suburbs could really get to know each other, to learn how black and white people could live together." The parishes decided to "twin." Monthly, St. Joseph's parishioners collected sums for Presentation. Congregants from either parish attended the parish council meetings of the other, and Egan and Koenig preached at the others' parish. Social gatherings such as picnics and lunches facilitated interaction. The twinning concept appealed to auxiliary bishop Michal R. Dempsey, director of the archdiocese's Inner City Apostolate and pastor of Our Lady of Lourdes, an African American parish in materially disadvantaged Lawndale. Dempsey actively encouraged twins, and in January 1970, he visited sixteen fiscally sound parishes to coax them to "adopt" struggling inner city parishes of their choice.<sup>22</sup> When Dempsey passed away in 1974, auxiliary bishop William McManus assumed unofficial charge of the program and continued to invite pastors and parishes to twin. McManus' own parish of St. Ferdinand's, a large comparatively wealthy congregation on the Northwest Side, had adopted Our Lady of Lourdes.<sup>23</sup> By 1975, eighty one parishes had twinned and over one million dollars had been shared.<sup>24</sup> The principal solicitation method that wealthier congregations adopted, which the Parish Council Finance Committee at St. Joseph's Libertyville first devised, was to include a specially delineated envelope for the parish's twin, placed among the

<sup>21</sup> Msgr. Harry C. Koenig to Rev. Msgr. Francis A. Brackin, 18 June 1976, Vicariate IX Records, Box: Vicariate IX (Historic), Folder: Vicariate IX/Program Files: Twinning Program, 1975-1976, AAC.

<sup>22</sup> "Twinning' Brings Suburb, City Parishes Together," *CNW*, 27 November 1970.

<sup>23</sup> Rev. George Herdegen to Msgr. Brackin, 12 June 1976, Vicariate IX Records, Box: Vicariate IX (Historic), Folder: Vicariate IX/Program Files: Twinning Program, 1975-1976, AAC; Bishop William E. McManus to Rev. Robert McGlynn, 10 June 1976, Vicariate IX Records, Box: Vicariate IX (Historic), Folder: Vicariate IX/Program Files, Twinning Program, 1975-1976, AAC.

<sup>24</sup> John Cardinal Cody, "The Sharing Years: 1971-1977," *CNW*, 14 May 1976; Clarence Page, "Catholic Church Battles to Exist in Inner City," *CT*, 19 June 1974.

packet of donation envelopes that each parishioner received monthly. Most pastors encouraged financial gifts, but stressed the voluntary nature of twinning.<sup>25</sup> Some pairs were geographically distant; others were comparatively proximate, although yawning neighborhood socioeconomic cleavages were as unambiguous as any suburban-city twin. Consider the pairing of Christ the King in upscale Beverly and Precious Blood on the West Side. Parishioners of Christ the King need only to drive north on Western Avenue to glimpse the dilapidated neighborhood of a parish that was, in the words of Christ the King pastor Edward Myers, “about ten percent white, sixty five percent Spanish-speaking, and twenty five percent Black, and whose poverty is very, very gray.” Myers explained that “Our parish voted...to support this move to broaden our horizons of what it means to be a Christian when the neighborhood when the neighbor down the street is in dire need.”<sup>26</sup>

Twinning’s objective was not exclusively monetary; impersonal giving unaccompanied by human understanding and affection would not stanch the unplanned obsolescence of Catholic material resources. The program’s architects routinely inferred that enduring stabilization demanded earnest dialogue, inter-parochial collaboration, and a heightened sensitivity to socioeconomic disparities, racial prejudice, and the challenges that inner city brothers and sisters in Christ daily confronted. Twinning had social, cultural, and liturgical value, and would remind Chicago-area Catholics that their parish was but one unit embedded within a metropolitan-wide archdiocese. “The chief value of the Twinning project is not the money,” Koenig explained in 1970, “It’s the fact that it

<sup>25</sup> “‘Twinning’ Brings Suburb, City Parishes Together,” *CNW*, 27 November 1970.

<sup>26</sup> Jack Bacon, “Twin Parishes Build a Bridge on Western,” *CNW*, 12 March 1971; Presbytery Senate Meeting, “What is Sharing,” 5 December 1978, Daniel M. Cantwell Papers, Box 28, Folder 3, CHM; “‘Twinning’ Brings Suburb, City Parishes Together,” *CNW*, 27 November 1970; Jay Copp, “Diverse Parishes Share Their Gifts, Resources,” *CNW*, 5 April 1991.

brings people from both parishes together to get to know one another, to form friendships, to work out problems together.”<sup>27</sup> Social interaction between twinned parishes assumed many forms: cultural, medical, professional, liturgical. Congregants occasionally gathered together at retreats, picnics, and lunches. A heightened sensitivity to the social isolation and relative immobility of inner city residents was exhibited. Medical professionals from materially advantaged parishes voluntarily traveled to inner city pairs to provide eye and dental examinations to adults and youth. Lawyers and accountants offered gratis legal and income tax assistance. Engineers inspected the structural integrity of increasingly dilapidated inner city parish physical plants. Children were targeted for assistance. For instance, Father John Fahey, pastor of St. Luke’s in the affluent suburb of River Forest, invited students and mothers from Lawndale’s Blessed Sacrament to spend the day at their school and lunch at the homes of St. Luke’s parishioners. Christ the King initiated a teacher aid program with Precious Blood school; teams of women from the former would weekly volunteer as teacher aides at Precious Blood. They tutored, and facilitated courses in subjects such as nutrition and sex education. One Christ the King volunteer marshaled her expertise of the Spanish language to help Precious Blood’s Puerto Rican and Mexican American students improve their English language skills. Liturgically, twins celebrated joint Masses. Priests from beneficiary parishes visited and delivered homilies during a Mass hosted by their twin, exposing benefactors to the material needs and ordeals daily confronted by his congregants.<sup>28</sup> Liturgical collaboration culminated in Spring 1976 in a celebration at

<sup>27</sup> “‘Twinning’ Brings Suburb, City Parishes Together,” *CNW*, 27 November 1970.

<sup>28</sup> Presbytery Senate Meeting, “What is Sharing,” 5 December 1978, Daniel M. Cantwell Papers, Box 28, Folder 3, CHM; Fr. Vincent J. Giese, “Vicariate VII: Joy in Sharing,” *CNW*, 29 April 1977; Clarence Page, “Catholic Church Battles to Exist in Inner City,” *CT*, 19 June 1974.



Holy Name Cathedral, initiated by laypeople from eight parishes that had originally twinned. Over four hundred attendees witnessed a Mass designed to reflect “the black, Hispanic, and white cultural heritages of the Family of God in the Chicago area.”<sup>29</sup>

Twinning’s success did not go unnoticed. Archbishop Cody, who had hitherto only been verbally supportive of the program, officially embraced and promoted it in 1976. On Holy Thursday, Cody announced that all 453 parishes in the archdiocese would now be asked to participate—“whether affluent or in need, whether newly built or a hundred years old.”<sup>30</sup> The Presbyteral Council praised the decision and the program: “There is a great need for communication,” the body noted, “and this is a perfect framework for beginning.”<sup>31</sup> In June, Vicar General Monsignor Francis A. Brackin queried archdiocesan priests about their experiences and recommendations in respect to an official archdiocesan twinning program.<sup>32</sup> In his response, McManus strongly urged that twinning remain voluntary. Parishes must not be commanded to participate, nor should the enterprise be “top down” or centrally administered, which may undermine “the foundations of some beautiful relationships between parishes.” The sentiment was shared by many but not all respondents. According to McManus, giving parishes should initiate the pair; priests at receiving congregations must never feel coerced to “beg for help.” Priest support was pivotal to any future success. Twinning must avoid any pretense that it was designed to financially assist African American parishes so that

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<sup>29</sup> Presbytery Senate Meeting, “What is Sharing,” 5 December 1978, Daniel M. Cantwell Papers, Box 28, Folder 3, CHM.

<sup>30</sup> John Cardinal Cody, “The Sharing Years: 1971-1977,” *CNW*, 14 May 1976; Mary Claire Gart, “‘Sharing’ Plan Unites Catholics in Suburban and City Parishes,” *CNW*, 6 May 1977.

<sup>31</sup> Presbytery Senate Meeting, “What is Sharing,” 5 December 1978, Daniel M. Cantwell Papers, Box 28, Folder 3, CHM. It voted to endorse and support Cody’s efforts regarding the Sharing Program by a margin of 82 yes votes to 0 no votes. See “Presbyteral Council,” 27 August 1976, Presbyteral Council Administrative Records, Box: 76-6, Folder: 1976-77, Proposal “Sharing,” AAC.

<sup>32</sup> Msgr. Francis A. Brackin to “Father,” 10 June 1976, Vicariate IX Records, Box: Vicariate IX (Historic), Folder: Vicariate IX: Program Files: Twinning Program, 1975-1976.

“black people can stay where they are.”<sup>33</sup> Priests recommended a handful of theological motifs that could buttress the program such as Christian charity, or that fact that Jesus Christ admonished his followers to make disciples. Father Thomas R. Seitz of Sacred Heart Church on Aberdeen exhorted Brackin to emphasize that “there is ONE CHURCH in the archdiocese of Chicago. There is not a suburban church, a white church, a Spanish church, an inner city church, but one church. What affects one, affects them all.”<sup>34</sup>

Cody heeded some of the advice; however, he was generally unreceptive to McManus’s suggestion that a formal archdiocesan-backed Twinning program be voluntary. In July, Cody appointed twenty-six members to an archdiocesan committee to develop methods of expanding and promoting the program. The committee included archdiocesan administrators, urban vicars, Presbyteral Council members, and clergy from parishes that had previously twinned. Vicar General Monsignor Francis A. Brackin was appointed Chairman. The criteria to determine receiving parishes included “proven inability over a several year period to generate sufficient operating funds, parish cash balance, and the future economic outlook of the parish.”<sup>35</sup> The committee, which completed its work in August 1976, did not alter established relationships. In respect to hitherto uninvolved parishes, the committee attempted to pair those with real or symbolic bonds. Holy Family and St. Ignatius, for example, were twinned because Jesuits staffed

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<sup>33</sup> Bishop William E. McManus to Rev. Robert McGlynn, 10 June 1976, Vicariate IX Records, Box: Vicariate IX (Historic), Folder: Vicariate IX/Program Files, Twinning Program, 1975-1976, AAC. Interestingly, Koenig endorsed an idea proposed by Fr. Myles McDonnell that Twinning partnerships be expanded to include four parishes, which would have been more inclusive than two, that included “the parish in good financial shape,” “a parish which is in a troubled neighborhood where fairly little enthusiasm will be found,” a Latino parish, and a subsidized inner city parish. See Msgr. Harry C. Koenig to Rev. Msgr. Francis A. Brackin, 18 June 1976, Records of Vicariate IX, Box: Vicariate IX (Historic), Folder: Vicariate IX/Program Files: Twinning Program, 1975-1976, AAC.

<sup>34</sup> Thomas R. Seitz, “Sacred Heart Church, Response to Twinning Letter,” Vicariate IX Records, Box: Vicariate IX (Historic), Folder: Vicariate IX/Program Files: Twinning Program, 1975-1976.

<sup>35</sup> Archbishop Cody to “Reverend and Dear Father,” 7 September 1976, Francis Brackin Papers, Box: Executive Records, exect/e2610/235, Folder: Sharing Program, ’76-77, AAC.

both. Common patrons were sometimes paired, such as Our Lady of Lourdes parishes on the North and South Sides. Priests who had moved to new parishes could be paired with their former congregation. In September, Cody issued a letter to all archdiocesan priests that outlined the plan, which essentially mandated the participation of all archdiocesan parishes.<sup>36</sup> The archdiocese would oversee financial exchanges. A collection would be taken in giving parishes once a month for their partner. Of the sharing of “talent, time, and fellowship,” the Cardinal left to the “initiative and creativity of the individual parish.” Although Cody actively promoted the program—for example, he solicited the support of the Archdiocesan Council of Catholic Women by emphasizing that members’ human and material aid could ensure that the “privileges of Catholic education” in the city would persist—he did encounter a degree of pessimism from parish priests who cried that their own parishes had trouble remaining fiscally solvent and therefore had no spare funds to donate to others.<sup>37</sup>

By and large, the methods and objectives of Twinning continued. Material gifts would be collected, usually on a monthly basis, and exchanged. In 1977, approximately \$1,800,000 was given.<sup>38</sup> Holy Name Cathedral made the largest donation, twelve thousand dollars to St. Joseph on Orleans Street.<sup>39</sup> In addition to money, food and clothing were shared, particularly with parishes that operated inner city pantries for the impoverished of their neighborhood—indicative of that fact that rising numbers of

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<sup>36</sup> Mary Claire Gart, “‘Sharing’ Plan Unites Catholics in Suburban and City Parishes,” *CNW*, 6 May 1977.

<sup>37</sup> Mary Claire Gart, “Cardinal Cody Asks Women to Back ‘Sharing’ Program,” *CNW*, 17 September 1976. For priest discontent, see “Sharing Questionnaires,” Vicariate IX Records, Box: Vicariate IX (Historic), Folder: Vicariate IX/Program Files: Sharing Program, 1976, n.d., AAC.

<sup>38</sup> Presbytery Senate Meeting, “What is Sharing,” 5 December 1978, Daniel M. Cantwell Papers, Box 28, Folder 3, CHM.

<sup>39</sup> Mary Claire Gart, “‘Sharing’ Plan Unites Catholics in Suburban and City Parishes,” *CNW*, 6 May 1977.

Chicagoans were struggling to meet basic needs. Office supplies for rectories and classrooms and kitchen appliances for cafeterias were donated. A factory-owning parishioner of St. Anne employed Woodlawn residents from St. Gelasius. Human interaction was a chief goal. Social, liturgical, and educational enterprises would continue. In at least one instance, St. Anne established a scholarship fund for underprivileged children from Woodlawn to attend Catholic schools.<sup>40</sup> The archdiocesan committee slightly modified some elements of Twinning. While every parish belonged to at least one pair, some poor congregations would receive financial aid from multiple parishes. The committee also placed renewed emphasis on the “two-way process of exchanging gifts,” and therefore re-coined the project “Sharing.” A principal objective of Sharing, Brackin emphasized, was the establishment of “reciprocal relationships between groups of parishes.” Participation and gift giving was expected from all parishes so that Catholics would be mindful that “there is always someone worse off” than they were, explained Brackin.<sup>41</sup> Struggling parishes sometimes furnished limited material resources to poorer parishes. More typically, they provided human services to their wealthier twin, which pastors lauded. St. Charles Lwanga on W. Garfield, for instance, supplied talent show acts for Immaculate Conception’s (Highland) annual fundraiser. “Those of us who may not be wealthy financially have a great deal of wealth to share in the culture, the tradition, the music, the spirit of our people and the life of our faith community,” remarked St. Charles’s pastor, Father Robert Backis.<sup>42</sup>

<sup>40</sup> Jay Copp, “Diverse Parishes Share Their Gifts, Resources,” *CNW*, 5 April 1991.

<sup>41</sup> John Cardinal Cody, “The Sharing Years: 1971-1977,” *CNW*, 14 May 1976; “‘Sharing’ Committee to Announce Program,” *CNW*, 27 August 1976; “Cardinal Cody Urges Participation in ‘Sharing’ Program,” *CNW*, 10 September 1976; Mary Claire Gart, “‘Sharing’ Plan Unites Catholics in Suburban and City Parish,” *CNW*, 6 May 1977.

<sup>42</sup> Presbytery Senate Meeting, “What is Sharing,” 5 December 1978, Daniel M. Cantwell Papers, Box 28, Folder 3, CHM.

Considering Cody's warranted reputation for stifling local pastoral innovations, his espousal of Twinning at first glance seems anomalous. An understanding of post-industrial transition and the consequent financial difficulties of the archdiocese and individual parishes is requisite contextualization. The depletion of many city parishes' middle-class revenue base, and the influx of lower income and often non-Catholic immigrants had translated into swelling numbers of parishes that relied on annual archdiocesan subsidies to remain operational. Archdiocesan coffers were steadily depleted. In addition to subsidies, new expenses included suburban church construction, rising archdiocesan pensions, and an economic downturn that reduced the value of archdiocesan financial holdings. In respect to struggling city parishes, the Sharing program relocated part of the pecuniary burden from the archdiocese to fiscally solvent parishes, which became alternate sources of revenue. "Total twinning," Cody remarked in 1976 in the *New World*, "is the right and positive way for our archdiocese to go in coming sharing years. Total twinning can lead us to a living future."<sup>43</sup> That the archbishop could wield control over the program's financial element in 1976 rendered it more inviting; under Cody, this was customarily a precondition for programs or organizations that were normalized by the archdiocese.<sup>44</sup> Egan was no longer at Presentation, having departed for Notre Dame in 1970. Dempsey had passed away in 1974.

Problems encumbered the effectiveness of Twinning/Sharing in the 1970s and early 1980s. For some twins, sheer geographic distance hindered the program, particularly its social components. For example, the first paired parishes, Presentation

<sup>43</sup> John Cardinal Cody, "The Sharing Years: 1971-1977," *CNW*, 14 May 1976

<sup>44</sup> Kantowicz, "The Beginning and the End of an Era: George William Mundelein and John Patrick Cody in Chicago," in *Catholicism, Chicago Style*, 135.

and St. Joseph's, Libertyville, lay forty-two miles apart, which was a source of frustration.<sup>45</sup> Second, the intercommunication between parishes should not be exaggerated. As McManus observed, "pairing" was a "better word than 'twinning'" for describing the relationships between most congregations: "the word 'twinning' tends to exaggerate the relationship—it rarely is that close."<sup>46</sup> Third, there loomed a nagging threat that Twinning/Sharing could fortify feelings of superiority among material benefactors and inferiority among beneficiaries. This remained true despite the archdiocesan commission's decision to emphasize reciprocity and the prospective gifts that poorer parishes could impart. Other dilemmas surfaced after Sharing became mandatory rather than voluntary. There was a threat that participants would be mired in bureaucracy; by 1977, Cody was already asking that each parish submit to him quarterly reports of financial transactions.<sup>47</sup> Some priests and parishioners protested that they struggled with debt and funding their own schools. They simply had no monies to reallocate to other parishes.<sup>48</sup> In the pages of *Upturn*, the journal of the Association of Chicago Priests, Father Anthony Vader of Holy Name of Mary exposed the "voices of priests who are hurting" as a consequence of Sharing. Some struggling parishes like his had "cut back, made adjustments, sacrificed to keep from asking the Chancery Office for support while still sharing with other parishes." In one regretful instance, however, Sharing funds were furnished to a congregation that accepted archdiocesan subsidies, which in turn proceeded to "use this money to steal our students by lowering their tuition rates." While urging the continuation of Sharing, Vader cautioned parishes that "send

<sup>45</sup> "Twinning' Brings Suburb, City Parishes Together," *CNW*, 27 November 1970.

<sup>46</sup> Bishop William E. McManus to Rev. Robert McGlynn, 10 June 1976, Vicariate IX Records, Box: Vicariate IX (Historic), Folder: Vicariate IX/Program Files, Twinning Program, 1975-1976, AAC.

<sup>47</sup> Archbishop Cody to "Reverend and Dear Father," 30 March 1977, Francis Brackin Papers, Box: Executive Records, exect/e2610/235, Folder: Sharing Program, '76-'77, AAC.

<sup>48</sup> Fr. Vincent J. Giese, "Vicariate VII: Joy in Sharing," *CNW*, 29 April 1977

tens of thousands of dollars to inner city parishes” to investigate how monies are being spent.<sup>49</sup> Uneven parish engagement across the archdiocese further qualified the success of Twinning/Sharing. Evidence suggests that dedicated and active participants generally comprised a small percentage of parish congregants. Finally, Sharing can be considered underachieving insofar as dozens of churches and schools were shuttered after Cody officially embraced it.

Archbishop Bernardin espoused and attempted to enhance Sharing, generally for the same reasons that Cody and Brackin elucidated in 1976: the program financially assisted troubled parishes and afforded opportunities for social and liturgical collaboration and human affection. Moreover, the program harmonized with Bernardin’s episcopal emphasis on cooperation, “bridge building,” and interdependency between parishes, neighborhoods, and peoples. Bernardin praised Sharing in April of his first year in Chicago in a homily at the annual Sharing Mass at Holy Name Cathedral. He was pleased that nearly two million Sharing dollars had been exchanged in 1982. Publicized racial, ethnic, and class divisions unfavorably depicted the city, he acknowledged. Sharing, however, was a more accurate reflection of the “real Chicago” in “the unity of its diverse segments, in the willingness to cooperate, the determination to make the city one that truly works.” “The Chicago that I have witnessed as I travel around the city and suburbs,” he continued, “is really one.”<sup>50</sup> That the Chicago-area consisted of “two communities” separated by yawning socioeconomic disparities, however, was an inescapable motif that Bernardin was compelled to acknowledge. He did so repeatedly

<sup>49</sup> Father Tony Vader, “Your ‘Sharing Money’: How is it Used?,” *Upturn*, June-July 1989, CHM.

<sup>50</sup> Archbishop Joseph Bernardin, “‘Sharing Mass’ Homily,” 24 April 1983, Cardinal Joseph Bernardin Addresses and Talks, Box 15, Folder 22, AAC.

during the next few years. A 1984 address to archdiocesan priests is an illuminating case in point, and worth quoting at length:

“We live not in one ‘city’ but two! There is the shining downtown and beautiful residential areas, both within the city and in the suburbs. This is the city that is full of dynamism, potential, hope; the ‘city that works.’ Then there is the other city; a city marked by poverty, high unemployment, decaying housing, the city that breeds despair. If we are to minister effectively, if we are to witness to the Gospel in a credible way, we must first understand the reality and complexity of these two entities and how they relate to each other. We simply cannot adopt a schizophrenic attitude which prohibits us from seeing and making the interdependence between the two a prime factor in our planning and in the allocation of our resources.”<sup>51</sup>

Despite Bernardin’s high regard for Sharing, the program in the 1980s devolved into “bureaucratic limbo.” Questions about who precisely coordinated and supervised the financial and social aspects of Sharing surfaced. In 1985, Bernardin therefore appointed Father Edward Gleeson as director of the Parish Sharing Commission, and named Father Thomas Hickey as the associate director.<sup>52</sup> The program was again rejuvenated in 1993 with the archdiocesan publication, *Decisions for the Future of Our Church*. *Decisions* was the official blueprint for the future shape of the local Church; encompassed forty objectives for enhancing ministerial leadership, education, and evangelization; and was the product of extensive consultation between the archbishop, his advisors, parishes,

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<sup>51</sup> Archbishop Joseph Bernardin, “Priests’ Workshop on Racism,” 1 October 1984, Cardinal Joseph Bernardin Addresses and Talks, Box 20, Folder 23, AAC.

<sup>52</sup> Rev. Frank Kane to Archbishop Bernardin, Rev. James P. Roache, and Mr. John Philbin, 3 May 1985, Office of Peace and Justice, Box: Administrative Records, Project Files, Parish Sharing, Folder: Archdiocese of Chicago, 1986 and Prior, Parish Sharing Programs, AAC; Rev. Edward D. Gleeson, to His Eminence Joseph Cardinal Bernardin, 18 June 1986, Office of Peace and Justice, Box: Administrative Records, Project Files, Parish Sharing, Folder: Archdiocese of Chicago, 1986 and Prior, Parish Sharing Programs, AAC.



archdiocesan agencies, and laypeople.<sup>53</sup> Strengthening Sharing was one objective. It had languished in the late 1980s and early 1990s; the annual archdiocesan Sharing Mass was no longer celebrated, and parish participation was uneven. To overcome the negative impact on parishes and neighborhoods of post-industrial transition, *Decisions* reemphasized the participation of every parish via interpersonal relationships and/or financial assistance. The co-director of the Office for the Ministry of Peace and Justice, James Lund, was designated as Sharing's principal "implementer." To effectively revitalize Sharing, Lund promised more archdiocesan resources, a published newsletter, and the Sharing Mass's revival.<sup>54</sup> Around three million dollars and another three millions dollars' worth of goods and services were exchanged in 1995. By 1996, around one hundred sixty parishes "interact[ed] socially and liturgically in what they describe as a meaningful reciprocal way." Shortcomings persisted. Most problematically, two decades of post-industrial transition—"economic downturns in some areas and gentrification in others," in Bernardin's words—fostered demographic shifts, diminished the rationale and efficacy of some parish alignments, and aggravated uneven participation in the program.<sup>55</sup>

The Cardinal devoted a 1996 pastoral statement to Sharing, "Building Bridges Between Communities of Faith," which addressed these problems. It coincided with the official program's twentieth anniversary, and is indicative of the high-regard with which Bernardin held Sharing. Chicago-area Catholics had mobilized Sharing as a vehicle to

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<sup>53</sup> Tom Toussaint, "Bernardin Launches New Planning Process," *CNW*, June 25/July 2 1993; Cardinal Joseph Bernardin, "Future 'Decisions' for the Archdiocese," *CNW*, June 25/July 2 1993; D'Agostino, 277.

<sup>54</sup> Heidi Schlumpf, "Cardinal Promotes Parish Sharing," *CNW*, June 28/July 5 1996.

<sup>55</sup> Cardinal Joseph Bernardin, "Building Bridges Between Communities of Faith: Pastoral Statement on Parish Sharing," in *Selected Works of Joseph Cardinal Bernardin*, vol. 1, ed., Alphonse P. Spilly, C.P.P.S. (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2000), 234.

interconnect communities that race, ethnicity, economic disparity, and culture had separated. As a result, “many divisions that otherwise occur in our society” had been overcome. Endorsing the participation of every parish, Bernardin laid stress on the indispensability of reciprocity, as Cody had. However, Bernardin also buttressed Sharing with a rich biblical and theological foundation—a customary characteristic of the archbishop’s public addresses. The program was a manifestation of Christian love, rooted in the teaching and example of Jesus Christ, who emphasized the essential unity of all human beings, and in the practices of ancient Christian communities. St. Paul had distinguished that these communities possessed different resources; some who were materially wealthy and others who were spiritually wealthy imparted their gifts to one another. “Koinonia,” or communion, was as necessary for contemporary Chicago-area Catholics as it had been to ancient communities. Implicitly addressing the post-industrial transition, Bernardin observed that in the metropolitan area, “vast gulfs exist among people.” “Economic disparities are enormous, even though the geographical distance separating some of our region’s wealthiest people from the poorest can be negligible,” he continued. One of the Church’s missions was to “bring unity from this diversity and make possible the sharing of the gifts and talents with which God has blessed His body, the Church.” Sharing’s shortcomings were addressed. To realign parishes for more equitable and effective exchanges, a task force of staff members at each congregation was formed and had already submitted a plan to the archbishop. It requested that ten Sharing relationships be realigned annually during the following three years. Successful pairings would be undisturbed. Manifesting what D’Agostino calls “process ecclesiology,”

Bernardin promised to appoint a permanent committee of priests and parish staff members to continuously “review and adjust the alignment, as needed.”<sup>56</sup>

### *Sinful Structures*

Local members of religious orders of men and women also displayed an impulse for grassroots planning and systematic collaboration across parochial, geographic, and religious congregational lines to address the inequities of post-industrial transition, foster a just social order, and prevent the unnecessary squandering of Catholic material resources. Consider the Eighth Day Center for Justice (8<sup>th</sup> Day). Founded in 1974 by local members of diverse religious communities, some of whom had participated in the innovative but defunct Urban Apostolate of the Sisters, 8<sup>th</sup> Day deliberately operated independently of the archdiocese.<sup>57</sup> A peace and justice organization influenced by the Civil rights and anti-war movements, 8<sup>th</sup> Day was a unique and outspoken blend of Chicago social progressivism and post-conciliar Catholic radicalism. Two analytic keys are indispensable to understanding the organization. First, members interpreted social injustices through the lens of liberation theology. Sin was not simply individual, but social, systematic, and structural. Crippling exploitation had coevolved with, and was legitimized by, the historical unfolding of the economy, institutions, and social attitudes. Second, post-industrial transition altered 8<sup>th</sup> Day’s local methods and objectives; its activities could center on, but were by no means restricted to, Chicago. Staff and volunteers recognized that physical decline was intensified by economic, demographic, and geographic restructurings, and in particular corporations’

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<sup>56</sup> Ibid., 231-240.

<sup>57</sup> As will be discussed below, the Urban Apostolate of the Sisters was initially a collection of Chicago-area nuns from multiple convents who attempted to address the serious social problems that rapid racial turnover aggravated in Chicago neighborhoods.

disinvestment in aging Chicago neighborhoods, the swelling number of Chicagoans who relied on outside assistance for basic human needs, and the unwillingness or inability of underfunded public social services to address these needs. The transformation of what had become oppressive and unjust post-industrial structures and human liberation demanded “solidarity” with the victimized, a “preferential option for the poor,” and radical initiatives that sometimes invited arrest. Importantly, members were not unfeeling but neither were they naïve; sometimes, provocative tactics were employed to effect the desired political and social reordering. Although never numbering more than a few dozen between 1974 and the mid-1990s, staff generally shared a unity of purpose—noticeably absent from the archdiocese and some individual parishes and religious congregations—that facilitated consensus, a programmatic social agenda, and swift decision making. This unity of purpose kindled ceaseless activism for myriad peace and justice causes, which made 8<sup>th</sup> Day appear “ubiquitous” and provoked Monsignor John Egan to tell one member, “Simply said, the Church, the city, all of the People of God are in your debt.”<sup>58</sup>

In Chicago, systematic inter-congregational collaboration to effectively maximize resources and rectify social injustices was rooted in the early 1960s. The Urban Apostolate of the Sisters (UAS) was the plainest embodiment. Its methods and objectives prefigured 8<sup>th</sup> Day, and therefore must be mentioned. Members waged that it was the “oldest organization of Catholic sisters in Chicago and possibly the earliest in the United States.”<sup>59</sup> The UAS was one of a handful of early 1960s Catholic-led organizations that

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<sup>58</sup> Msgr. John J. Egan to Rev. Charles Dahm, O.P., 20 July 1984, 8<sup>th</sup> Day Center for Justice Records, Box 1, Folder 5, WLALUC.

<sup>59</sup> Urban Apostolate of the Sisters, “A Modern Herstory,” September 1974, Mary Benet Papers, Box 4, Folder 3, AUND.

addressed rapid racial turnover in formerly White neighborhoods, racial prejudice, and African American civil rights.<sup>60</sup> A host of secular and religious factors motivated volunteers: the distressing poverty of Chicago's inner city; the publication of Cardinal Leon Joseph Suenen's *The Nun in the World* (1962); and the Second Vatican Council, which heightened nuns' awareness that the Church should be active in, rather than unengaged from, society and its problems.<sup>61</sup> UAS's genesis occurred during informal meetings held by approximately three dozen nuns from seven convents, located principally in East Garfield and Lawndale on the West Side—which members described as a “teeming section of Chicago...forgotten by most citizens of the city”—in parishes located in neighborhoods experiencing drastic demographic turnover, such as St. Malachy, Our Lady of Sorrows, St. Jarlath, and Precious Blood.<sup>62</sup> Nuns realized that their religious formation had ineffectively equipped them to educate disadvantaged non-Catholic African American students uninterested in formal education. Superiors were amenable to the meetings, and the UAS developed. Coordinated first by Daughter of Charity Sister Mary Williams, and then Benedictine Sister Mary Benet (McKinney), the UAS drew the attention of Father John Egan, who invited the organization to operate with, and work out of, the archdiocese's Office of Urban Affairs, which Egan directed. Communication, education, and collaboration across parish, convent, and geographical boundaries were indispensable to meeting the 1960s' “urban crisis.” UAS members visited homes of parishioners, tutored financially burdened students, coordinated social

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<sup>60</sup> Others included the Conference on Religion and Race, Marillac, and the Catholic Interracial Conference.

<sup>61</sup> John T. McGreevy writes that “More than any other group of Catholics, women religious took seriously papal commands to reexamine their work.” See McGreevy, *Parish Boundaries: The Catholic Encounter with Race in the Twentieth Century Urban North* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 167.

<sup>62</sup> “Encounter: The Sisters' Approach to Metropolitan Challenge,” *Encounter*, June 1964, Mary Benet Papers, Box 4, Folder 7, AUND.

activities for youth, agitated against migrant labor abuses and redlining, and urged welfare, prison, and mental health reform.<sup>63</sup> Planning and coordination were imperative. To share resources and ideas, the UAS initially divided the city into seven “Areas”; nuns in convents located within each geographical area acquainted themselves with local neighborhoods, participated in community organizations, established communication with civic leaders, and spearheaded discussion groups that plumbed Church documents applicable to their work, and social problems and solutions. By 1966, more than four hundred volunteers had organized, or planned to establish, the following Areas that spanned the city and extended into the suburbs: Near North Side; Northwest community; Southwest community; Mid-South; Northwest suburban; Chicago Heights; Blue Island; the Southeast community; Southwest suburban; and Lakeview. A Coordinating Committee, comprised of selected nuns from each Area, was responsible for facilitating and coordinating inter-Area communication and activities.<sup>64</sup>

Despite their novelty and initiative, the UAS was ultimately a victim of post-industrial transition and Cardinal Cody’s priorities. The archdiocese had since 1968 annually funded the great majority of the group’s operating expenses, thanks in some part to the promptings of auxiliary bishop and Inner City Apostolate coordinator Michael R. Dempsey. With Dempsey’s death in 1974, and the soaring number of parishes that requested subsidies, the archdiocese announced that it was withdrawing UAS funding.

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<sup>63</sup> Suellen Hoy, *Good Hearts: Catholic Sisters in Chicago’s Past* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2006), 135-137; “Encounter: The Sisters’ Approach to Metropolitan Challenge,” *Encounter*, June 1964, Mary Benet Papers, Box 4, Folder 7, AUND; Sister Mary Benet, “The Urban Apostolate of the Sisters,” *Encounter*, February 1967, Mary Benet Papers, Box 4, Folder 7, AUND; McGreevy, 167-169.

<sup>64</sup> Sister Mary Benet to Board of Directors of the Office of Urban Affairs, 5 April 1966, Mary Benet Papers, Box 4, Folder 3, AUND; “Encounter the Sisters’ Approach to Metropolitan Challenge,” *Encounter*, June 1964, Mary Benet Papers, Box 4, Folder 7, AUND; Sister Mary Benet, “The Urban Apostolate of the Sisters,” *Encounter*, February 1967, Mary Benet Papers, Box 4, Folder 7, AUND; Urban Apostolate of the Sisters, “A Modern Herstory,” September 1974, Mary Benet Papers, Box 4, Folder 3, AUND; Betty Prevender, “The Nun in the City,” *New City* 4, no. 4 (15 May 1965): 2-4.

Monsignor Brackin thanked the Sisters for their “excellent” work, nevertheless explaining that the archdiocese was prioritizing subsidies to struggling parishes and schools. A controversial accusation for members, Brackin also alleged that the UAS’s overriding purpose was no longer training nuns for the inner city, but rather offering services to local female religious communities—superfluous tasks that duplicated the efforts of established archdiocesan agencies. Therefore, the responsibility for funding UAS activities lay with individual orders, rather than the archdiocese.<sup>65</sup> Director Grasso countercharged, accusing the archdiocese of unilaterally arriving at the decision, and insisting that services were not duplicated. Why had the UAS become the only subsidized organization in the archdiocese to have its funding eliminated? Grasso insisted that the real reason was that Cardinal Cody “has no control over it,” and was suspicious of women in positions of authority. Despite these allegations and Presbyteral Council sympathy with the nuns, archdiocesan funding was pulled. Substantive outside financial support was not forthcoming, and the UAS folded.<sup>66</sup>

Similarly comprised of members of local religious communities, 8<sup>th</sup> Day inherited the UAS’s impulse to plan, collaborate systematically across geographical and congregational lines, maximize resources to avoid unnecessary waste, and foster a just social order. This was not accidental; both the success and abrupt collapse of the UAS had a bearing on 8<sup>th</sup> Day’s initial organization. 8<sup>th</sup> Day emerged from UAS-hosted meetings for the “social action directors” of local religious communities in Fall 1973. Meetings were designed to foster cooperation between local congregations and establish

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<sup>65</sup> David Sutor, “Chicago Cuts Subsidy for Urban Sisters,” *NCR*, 8 November 1974; In all, the archdiocese had granted the UAS approximately \$135,000. See “Subsidy Cut for Urban Apostolate of Sisters,” *CNW*, 8 September 1974.

<sup>66</sup> Urban Apostolate of the Sisters, “A Modern Herstory,” September 1974, Mary Benet Papers, Box 4, Folder 3, AUND; David Sutor, “Chicago Cuts Subsidy for Urban Sisters,” *NCR*, 8 November 1974.

in the Chicago area a center for “peace and justice” akin to the Milwaukee “Justice and Peace Center.”<sup>67</sup> Participants were agreeable. In early 1974, an *ad hoc* committee crafted a seven-page proposal, issuing it to all local religious communities with “substantial memberships.”<sup>68</sup> It queried their support for an inter-congregational peace and justice center and underscored the “urgent” need for reciprocity between the orders to strengthen social justice efforts. The proposal included justifications for, and the methods and objectives of, the center. It noted that the NCCB had in its recent pastoral letter “To Teach as Jesus Did” mandated that Catholics cooperate “with all persons of good will” to mitigate social problems. The proposal repeatedly counseled the indispensability of inter-congregational joint planning and action, which would lend visibility and authority to the center, and efficacy to its programs. It pointed out that injustices that threatened the well-being of local residents were remarkably complex in origin and impact, and merited systematic critical analysis, which the center would furnish. Social action representatives from religious communities would staff it, function as vehicles of communication between the center and individual congregations, and facilitate the exchange of ideas.

Reciprocity with the poor was crucial. The committee was emphatic that local religious need not simply work for the poor, but *with* them as well. The impoverished could in turn help Catholics fashion a theology of praxis—indispensable for the Church,

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<sup>67</sup> Sister Teresina Grasso to Sister Joann Crowley, 25 October 1973, 8<sup>th</sup> Day Center for Justice Records, Box 7, Folder 8, WLALUC; 8<sup>th</sup> Day Report, December 1974, 8<sup>th</sup> Day Center for Justice Records, Box 1, Folder 2, WLALUC.

<sup>68</sup> The members of the ad hoc committee were Sister Joann Crowley, BVM, Sister Geraldine Bolzan, SNDdeN, Father Chuck Dahm, OP, Sister Christine Dobrowski, IHM, Sister Sean Fox, OSM, Sister Teresina Grasso, SP, Sister Kate Hinde, OP, Sister Mary Bridget Murphy, SNDdeN, Sister Rosemary Meyer, BVM, Sister Pat Mahony, OP, Sister Patricia Smith, OP, Sister Camilla Shea, SCC, Sister Rita Simo, OP, Sister Mary Sullivan, RSM, Sister Beth Wagner, IHM, Father Paul Nierenca, OP, Sister M. Dominic Krivich, OSF, Father Joe Mulligan.



as its moral theology was increasingly incompatible with the real world experiences of human beings. Ecumenical coalition-building with other social justice agencies was crucial. Chicago was chosen as the center's locus not simply because committee members and social action directors resided in the area, but also because of its glaring injustices, the limited response of the Church there, and the city's history of "creativity in social ministry."<sup>69</sup>

Their vision was soon realized. The archdiocese's slashing of UAS's subsidy and nuns' determination to continue social justice endeavors, lent impetus to the formation of the fledgling entity. Six religious communities decided to formally assist: the Sisters of Mercy, Providence, Charity, the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Adrian Dominicans, and Dominican men.<sup>70</sup> Their respective provincials notified Cardinal Cody, appealed to the NCCB pastoral statement, emphasized that their congregations were heeding the directives of American church hierarchy, and explained that collaboration was urgent to exploit increasingly limited resources and avoid duplication of efforts.<sup>71</sup> Save the Adrian Dominicans, each furnished one staff member, some of whom were the social action coordinators for their respective congregations: Sister of Mercy Betty Barrett, Sister of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary Joanne Crowley, Dominican Charles Dahm, Sister of Providence Dorothy Gartland, and Sister of the Immaculate Heart of Mary Elizabeth

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<sup>69</sup> Ad Hoc Committee for a Center for Justice and Peace to Local Religious Communities, 16 January 1974, 8<sup>th</sup> Day Center for Justice Records, Box 7, Folder 8, WLALUC.

<sup>70</sup> Bernadette Doran, "On the Eighth Day," *Chicago Reader*, 15 October 1976; Father Vincent J. Giese, "8<sup>th</sup> Day Center Marks 15 Years of Advocacy for Poor, Oppressed," *CNW*, 15 September 1989.

<sup>71</sup> Sister Mary Inviolata, R.S.M., to Cardinal Cody, 12 August 1974, 8<sup>th</sup> Day Center for Justice Records, Box 7, Folder 8, WLALUC; Sister Loretta Schafer, S.P., to John Cardinal Cody, 5 August 1974, 8<sup>th</sup> Day Center for Justice Records, Box 7, Folder 8, WLALUC; Very Rev. Gerard B. Cleator, O.P., to John Cardinal Cody, 22 July 1974, 8<sup>th</sup> Day Center for Justice Records, Box 7, Folder 8, WLALUC.

Wagner.<sup>72</sup> They recognized the precariousness of archdiocesan funding and were suspicious of Cody's intervention. Each member congregation therefore pledged five thousand dollars annually to fund the endeavor.<sup>73</sup> Deliberately circumventing the archbishop did not mean that all archdiocesan officials were averse to a Catholic-led peace and justice center unaffiliated with the archdiocese. The Superintendent of Catholic schools Father Robert Clark, for instance, recognized the utility.<sup>74</sup> So did Goedert, who in a discussion with Dahm agreed that the archdiocese "definitely needs to take stands on social issues" and "give serious consideration" to complex issues in the manner of Egan's defunct Office of Urban Affairs. The lack of clerical interest could be problematic; priests' apathy chiefly derived from their estimation that the project would be ineffective as long as Cody remained in Chicago. The archbishop's affiliation with the peace and justice center may impair its efficacy, Goedert admitted, but admonished that the archdiocese "can't just stop all efforts because of Cody." He acknowledged that an independent peace and justice office could be "a spur to Cody to form his own office on urban affairs," analogues to how ACP autonomy had induced the archbishop's consent to the Presbyteral Council's formation.<sup>75</sup> Ultimately, a shabby floor at 22 East Van Buren Street became operational headquarters. It housed offices, a library, conference rooms, and research stalls. The group's assumed moniker, "Eighth Day Center for Justice," derived from a reading of Augustine of Hippo's interpretation of the Book of

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<sup>72</sup> Considering Dahm's participation in 8<sup>th</sup> Day, it is unsurprising that he upbraided unjust ecclesial structures in his book on Cardinal Cody.

<sup>73</sup> Bernadette Doran, "On the Eighth Day," *Chicago Reader*, 15 October 1976; Father Vincent J. Giese, "8<sup>th</sup> Day Center Marks 15 Years of Advocacy for Poor, Oppressed," *CNW*, 15 September 1989; *8<sup>th</sup> Day Anniversary*, 12 September 1975, 8<sup>th</sup> Day Center for Justice Records, Box 2, Folder 8, WLALUC.

<sup>74</sup> From Charles Dahm to Staff, 15 September 1974, 8<sup>th</sup> Day Center for Justice Records, Box 18, Folder 1, WLALUC.

<sup>75</sup> Charles Dahm to Staff, 26 September 1974, 8<sup>th</sup> Day Center for Justice Records, Box 18, Folder 1, WLALUC.

Genesis, as the saint recorded in *City of God*. Members understood that God's "creation is not yet completed....that it is still in progress and the Creator calls us to continue to accept the responsibility of building the earth."<sup>76</sup> The number of communities that pledged human and material assistance slowly increased, and by 1989, 8<sup>th</sup> Day tallied seventeen communities as "sponsors or friends."<sup>77</sup> Active staff members who joined in the early years included Dominican Marilyn Uline, School Sister of Saint Francis Arlene Wolefel, Claretian Tom Joyce, intern Dominican Jerry Stookey, office manager and School Sister of Notre Dame Gail Marie Johnson, Priest of the Sacred Heart Robert Bossie, and Sinsinawa Dominican Sister Donna Quinn.<sup>78</sup>

Locally, 8<sup>th</sup> Day applied the insights of liberation theology to diagnose and mend the injustices of post-industrial transition. Describing nuns in particular, Quinn articulated 8th Day's logic that sin was social and systematic: "We are called today to martyrdom, to risk, and to change structures and systems that oppress people."<sup>79</sup> "Any efforts to build a more human world that reflects the Gospel value of solidarity must address the systematic roots of injustice," outlined the center's 1977 mission statement.<sup>80</sup> Deindustrialization, corporate disinvestment in Chicago neighborhoods, and the rising number of residents who relied on public or private assistance for basic human needs bred instability. That the federal government funded arms manufacturing while de- or underfunding local public social services multiplied the grievances of 8<sup>th</sup> Day staff.

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<sup>76</sup> *Anniversary Report*, October 1989, 8<sup>th</sup> Day Center for Justice Records, Box 2, Folder 1, WLALUC; Father Vincent J. Giese, "8<sup>th</sup> Day Center Marks 15 Years of Advocacy for Poor, Oppressed," *CNW*, 15 September 1989.

<sup>77</sup> Father Vincent J. Giese, "8<sup>th</sup> Day Center Marks 15 Years of Advocacy for Poor, Oppressed," *CNW*, 15 September 1989.

<sup>78</sup> Terri Hadro, BVM, "It's a Matter of Justice," *SALT* (Summer 1976): 11-14; Bernadette Doran, "On the Eighth Day," *Chicago Reader*, 15 October 1976.

<sup>79</sup> Bruce Buursma, "Where Are the Nuns," *CT*, 19 April 1981.

<sup>80</sup> Committee on 8<sup>th</sup> Day Goal to 8<sup>th</sup> Day Staff, 19 December 1984, 8<sup>th</sup> Day Center for Justice Records, Box 3, Folder 7, WLALUC.

Oppressive structures densely interconnected the city, nation, and globe; an authentic Scriptural vision of “at-oneness, wholeness, justice, interdependency, and interrelatedness with others and the world” would only flow from an equitable sharing of the “gifts of creation.”<sup>81</sup>

To mitigate chronic injustices, 8<sup>th</sup> Day followed a customary procedure. First, a glaring social problem was extensively researched so that 8<sup>th</sup> Day-recommended solutions did not duplicate existing services, which would have needlessly squandered the material contributions of participating religious congregations. Then a multi-pronged solution was drafted, consisting of direct aid, corporate intervention, public policy initiatives, and education. Coalition building was crucial.

An example was hunger and poverty, which members designated a top priority from the organization’s inception. By the mid-1970s, many Chicagoans were suffering hard times. Inflation drove up food prices. Satisfying basic human needs demanded an escalating percentage of private social service agencies’ funds. Many of these agencies, including Catholic Charities, were already grappling with revenue shortfalls.<sup>82</sup> 8<sup>th</sup> Day believed it could effectively supplement existing services to the materially deprived. Spearheaded by Sister Dorothy Gartland, a small team of staff and volunteers investigated the many dimensions of hunger in Chicago. Which demographic groups were principally afflicted; what resources were already available; where were they; and

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<sup>81</sup> Committee on 8<sup>th</sup> Day Goal to 8<sup>th</sup> Day Staff, 19 December 1984, 8<sup>th</sup> Day Center for Justice Records, Box 3, Folder 7, WLALUC.

<sup>82</sup> “Charities Expenses Rise by \$2.5 million,” *CNW*, 27 September 1974; “Charities Says State Agencies Causing It Repeated Deficits,” *CNW*, 27 June 1975; *Marginal Line: The Archdiocesan Committee on Poverty*, Vol. 5, no. 2, Summer 1975, Institute of the Church in an Urban Industrial Society Collection, Box 2, Folder 19, AUIC; “Unemployment Doubles Here,” *Daily Calumet*, 17 March 1975.

how could 8<sup>th</sup> Day enhance local efforts?<sup>83</sup> Gartland and her team arrived at a few conclusions. First, interdependency was crucial. The paucity of communication and collaboration between the disparate direct service providers hindered efforts to feed Chicago's hungry. A coalition that united the expertise and efforts of organizations such as the Metropolitan Area Pantries and the Church Federation of Chicago—which “were willing to help...but lack the time and cohesion to pull it all together”—would be more judicious.<sup>84</sup> Second, a great number of low income Chicagoans were unaware that the Federal Department of Agriculture had mandated the implementation of a food stamp program in the State of Illinois; three hundred thousand Cook County residents eligible for food stamps were not receiving them. The Illinois Department of Public Aid (IDPA) was responsible for alerting potential users. 8<sup>th</sup> Day observed that the IDPA was remiss in its obligation, however, and the USDA was lackluster in implementing it. Many of the 8<sup>th</sup> Day-estimated three hundred thousand low income residents in Chicago—senior citizens, the un- and under-employed, the working poor, working mothers—did not avail themselves of the program because they knew little about it.<sup>85</sup>

Direct aid followed needs discernment. Preliminary research culminated in the *Hunger Handbook*, edited by staff member Thomas Fox and designed for individuals who worked closely with the impoverished, such as local clergy and social workers. The book was essentially a directory of service providers for the hungry in Chicago. It explained how to access and where to apply to programs; appraised food stamp and

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<sup>83</sup> Terri Hadro, BVM, “It’s a Matter of Justice,” *SALT* (Summer 1976): 11-14; Bernadette Doran, “On the Eighth Day,” *Chicago Reader*, 15 October 1976.

<sup>84</sup> *8<sup>th</sup> Day Anniversary*, September 12, 1975, 8<sup>th</sup> Day Center for Justice Records, Box 2, Folder 8, WLALUC.

<sup>85</sup> *8<sup>th</sup> Day Anniversary*, 17 September 1976, 8<sup>th</sup> Day Center for Justice Records, Box 2, Folder 8, WLALUC; Bernadette Doran, “On the Eighth Day,” *Chicago Reader*, 15 October 1976; Bob Olmstead, “Chicago Jobless Rate at 8.7 Percent Tops U.S. Level,” *CST*, 4 July 1975.

school lunch programs, as well as emergency food pantries and meals on wheels; and delineated available legal and advocacy services for the poor.<sup>86</sup> 8<sup>th</sup> Day staffers also pieced together the Chicago Metropolitan Food Stamp Coalition. Impressively, the coalition was composed of sixty five church, civic, and business groups. It included the Gray Panthers, an organization of concerned senior citizens who had initiated litigation against the state for its failure to inform the poor about the food stamp program. The coalition's principal aim was a Food Stamp Outreach Campaign, which was intended to fulfill the requisite but uncompleted duties of the IDPA. To that end, Gartland and Barrett launched a telephone hotline to provide information about the USDA program, and help callers determine their eligibility. Three thousand hotline inquiries were made monthly in 1976, handled by 8<sup>th</sup> Day English, Spanish, and Polish-speaking volunteers. The coalition and the food stamp hotline were publicized. Flyers were posted in the stores of all Chicago's major food chains, as well as Chicago Transit Authority terminals. Here, coincidentally, the USDA official in charge of the government food stamp program saw a coalition flyer, and then pressured the IDPA to stringently enforce the program. Soon thereafter, the IDPA offered 8<sup>th</sup> Day a public contract for the continuation of its hotline and hunger initiatives, which in turn jumpstarted a long term Food Justice Program that was individually incorporated in 1978.<sup>87</sup>

Appraising injustice through a liberation theology lens, 8<sup>th</sup> Day's antidote for poverty in Chicago was never restricted to relief; also, the intensity and unambiguousness of post-industrial transition's wrenching concomitants gave legitimacy to liberation

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<sup>86</sup> *Anniversary Report*, October 1989, 8<sup>th</sup> Day Center for Justice Records, Box 2, Folder 1, WLALUC; *8<sup>th</sup> Day Anniversary*, 21 September 1977, 8<sup>th</sup> Day Center for Justice Records, Box 2, Folder 8, WLALUC.

<sup>87</sup> *Anniversary Report*, October 1989, 8<sup>th</sup> Day Center for Justice Records, Box 2, Folder 1, WLALUC; *8<sup>th</sup> Day Anniversary*, 17 September 1976, 8<sup>th</sup> Day Center for Justice Records, Box 2, Folder 8, WLALUC; Bernadette Doran, "On the Eighth Day," *Chicago Reader*, 15 October 1976.

theology's emphasis that sin was social, structural, and systematic. Oppression and social instability—large scale deindustrialization and the disinvestment in aging city neighborhoods, purely profit-driven decisions to lay off local workers whose well-being was consequently jeopardized—were perpetrated at public policy and corporate levels, which had to be addressed for lasting peace and harmony. Studying and altering public policy was principally the bailiwick of the center's Legislative Action System (LAS), which Beth Wagner and Tom Joyce coordinated during the early years of its existence. This 8<sup>th</sup> Day subsidiary collected and harnessed data to sensitize federal, state, and local officials to unequal and unethical public policies, and subsequently to amend them. In respect to hunger and poverty, for instance, the LAS lobbied to reform the ineffective USDA food stamp program. It was decided that hotline callers should be queried about the inadequacies of the IDPA's approach, as well as city and state officials' inhospitable treatment of applicants. Equipped with this collated and organized data, staffers were invited to address, and successfully substantiated their criticisms before, the House Agricultural Committee in Washington, D.C., in 1977. The Agricultural Act of 1977 was the upshot; it eased the burden of food stamp recipients.<sup>88</sup> Audacity to publicize their message was not wanting, particularly during the Reagan years; "friend Ronnie Reagan's" austerity measures vis-a-vis public welfare monies was a major goad. In 1989, for instance, 8<sup>th</sup> Day helped spearhead a "storming" of the state capital of Springfield, demanding more aid for the indigent. Unsuccessful, staffer Dorothy Pagosa gathered a few hundred of Chicago's homeless, led them to the Governor James Thompson's Chicago home on North Clarendon, and knocked on the door. Thompson's

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<sup>88</sup> 8<sup>th</sup> Day Anniversary, 21 September 1977, 8<sup>th</sup> Day Center for Justice Records, Box 2, Folder 8, WLALUC.

daughter answered, informing the group that the governor was unavailable to the public.<sup>89</sup> Other initiatives to alter public policy and aid the impoverished followed unconventional argumentation and channels. 8<sup>th</sup> Dayers frequently and emphatically married poverty in Chicago and the inadequacy of public social services with federal arms funding. Conspicuously distributing leaflets outside the Federal Building in Chicago that admonished passers that their tax dollars abetted the arms race while significant numbers of people “lack the necessities of life” was one tactic.<sup>90</sup> In the 1970s and 1980s, Robert Bossie was particularly zealous. Bossie vehemently advocated nuclear disarmament, and frequently staged demonstrations outside weapons manufacturers, such as Chicago’s Morton Thiokol, Inc. Bossie’s dedication to alleviating poverty was one major stimulus. “We’re spending more and more money to building up weapons, and to building bigger and better weapons,” he explained in a 1989 interview. He continued, “While we’re pouring all our money into nuclear weapons, thousands of people are starving to death every week.”<sup>91</sup>

Reshaping corporate policies to effect lasting peace and justice was another 8<sup>th</sup> Day goal. To foster corporate responsibility, and take to task the irresponsible, 8<sup>th</sup> Day established the Illinois Committee for Responsibility in Investment (ICRI).<sup>92</sup> Staff members Dahm, Woelfel, and Uline directed the ICRI, which in 1977 was an assemblage of seventeen Catholic religious congregations, the Rockford diocese, and the Illinois

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<sup>89</sup> *Anniversary Report*, October 1989, 8<sup>th</sup> Day Center for Justice Records, Box 2, Folder 1, WLALUC.

<sup>90</sup> *Anniversary Report*, September 1979, 8<sup>th</sup> Day Center for Justice Records, Box 2, Folder 8, WLALUC.

<sup>91</sup> Christi Parsons, “Priest Takes Stand on Nuclear Arms,” *CT*, 6 October 1989.

<sup>92</sup> 8<sup>th</sup> Day did not spare the archdiocese, which it accused of disinvesting in black communities. A more plausible 8<sup>th</sup> Day allegation was that an “open, deliberate process of planning” was lacking during the Cody era. See *8<sup>th</sup> Day Report*, February 1976.



Conference of the United Church of Christ.<sup>93</sup> The ICRI's logic was as follows: Catholic religious orders frequently held large stock portfolios; some had unknowingly invested in firms that cushioned profit margins by distressingly unjust employment practices, selling adulterated foodstuffs, or hawking destructive weapons; and finally, orders had a religious imperative to attempt to curb unjust practices, or failing to do so, divest themselves of the stock. In 1976, the ICRI summoned social action coordinators and treasurers from local congregations to conduct research into corporate activities. The ICRI encouraged congregations to attend shareholder sessions to throw light on illicit practices.<sup>94</sup>

Locally, Chicago's First National Bank and Continental Illinois were two initial financial institutions that the ICRI singled out. Staff alleged that the banks' disinvestment policies had animated demographic turnover, exacerbated infrastructural deterioration, and undermined Chicago communities.<sup>95</sup> More particularly, bank policies were notoriously "redlining" carefully pre-selected areas of the city—a habitual practice in the past that had been putatively outlawed in 1948. Bank loan policies to residents of redlined neighborhoods were arbitrarily stiffened, or loans were withheld. Infrastructural improvements became impossible, and homes and businesses deteriorated. When they crumbled, the city sold the land to developers who constructed residences for the upper and middle class. Property taxes rose and the poor were pushed out. As they denied loans to residents in redlined neighborhoods, financial institutions simultaneously offered

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<sup>93</sup> *Anniversary Report*, September 1979, 8<sup>th</sup> Day Center for Justice Records, Box 2, Folder 8, WLALUC; *Anniversary Report*, September 1978, 8<sup>th</sup> Day Center for Justice Records, Box 2 Folder 8, WLALUC.

<sup>94</sup> Jack Houston, "Churches Target Corporate 'Sins,'" *CT*, 23 January 1978; *8<sup>th</sup> Day Anniversary*, 17 September 1976, 8<sup>th</sup> Day Center for Justice Records, Box 2, Folder 8, WLALUC.

<sup>95</sup> *Anniversary Report*, 21 September 1977, 8<sup>th</sup> Day Center for Justice Records, Box 2, Folder 8, WLALUC.

loans to residents and businesses in potentially thriving areas such as newer suburbs or downtown. In this way, financial institutions were powerful arbiters of neighborhood collapse or success. In respect to First National and Continental, the ICRI frankly asked why banks that “had made available long term financing for Dearborn Park” not exhibited “the same level of leadership and commitment in rehabilitating existing neighborhoods.” Through the Dominican Sisters, who owned 11,400 shares of First National and 800 shares of Continental, the ICRI filed a disclosure resolution, requesting that both corporations furnish an account of their loan commitments, the criteria they used for making loans, the entities that had requested loans, and a statement of their current loan policy.<sup>96</sup>

While it exposed redlining, 8<sup>th</sup> Day concurrently supported “greenlining,” a policy that encouraged financial institutions to “invest a substantial portion of their assets in the neighborhood from where they get the majority of their savings.” Staff member Beth Wagner, one of 8<sup>th</sup> Day’s initial founders, was an embodiment of the support. Wagner in the 1970s was invited to work for South Shore Bank in that neighborhood of Chicago, and eventually became vice president.<sup>97</sup> Founded in 1973, South Shore officials such as founders Mary Houghton and Ronald Grzywinski touted it as the only bank in the United States whose chief goal was the revitalization of a blighted neighborhood. For South Shore, neighborhood development—the saving, restoring, or new construction of homes—was its principal priority. It lent money to creditworthy property owners who

<sup>96</sup> Jack Houston, “Churches Target Corporate ‘Sins,’” *CT*, 23 January 1978.

<sup>97</sup> R. Bruce Dold, “A Credit Union for Those Who’ve Paid Dues,” *CT*, 5 October 1987; “Bank is Honored,” *CD*, 9 December 1974.

other banks had refused simply because they were Black and resided in deteriorating neighborhoods.<sup>98</sup>

Education was the last prong of 8<sup>th</sup> Day's proposed solutions to remedy injustices and oppressive post-industrial structures. As education had perpetrated injustice, so too could it foster material equity, sensitivity to the burdens of the underprivileged, and awareness that the two Chicagos were interconnected. "Urban Plunge" and "Chicago Summer" were the organization's chief educational programs. Each typically enticed a few dozen participants. The former "plunged" participants into inner city life to sensitize them to the difficulties and isolation of Chicago's poor, as well as the "systematic roots of injustice." Ministerial sites, such as predominantly Black and Latino Catholic parishes, were visited, and the models of inner city ministry appraised. Chicago Summer employed a similar format, but lasted four to six weeks. Participants volunteered with a Chicago service project or agency that generally aided the needy, such as the city's Juvenile Court Child Abuse division or St. Charles Lwanga on Garfield Boulevard. The goal was to analyze city systems. After each week, volunteers and 8<sup>th</sup> Day staffers reflected on their experiences and prayed together.<sup>99</sup>

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Between the late 1950s and 1990s, Chicago experienced post-industrial transition, a combination of economic, social, and geographic restructurings. Frequently, the

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<sup>98</sup> R.C. Longworth, "South Shore Bank Spreading Its Creed," *CT*, 30 May 1988. In April 2008, the University of Notre Dame awarded Grzywinski and Houghton the Theodore M. Hesburgh Award for Ethics in Business. See Notre Dame News, "Shore Bank co-founders honored with Notre Dame ethics award," <http://newsinfo.nd.edu/news/9409-shorebank-co-founders-honored-with-notre-dame-ethics-award/>.

<sup>99</sup> *Anniversary Report*, September 1979, 8<sup>th</sup> Day Center for Justice Records, Box 2, Folder 8, WLALUC; *Anniversary Report*, September 1978, 8<sup>th</sup> Day Center for Justice Records, Box 2 Folder 8, WLALUC; *8<sup>th</sup> Day Anniversary*, 21 September 1977, 8<sup>th</sup> Day Center for Justice Records, Box 2, Folder 8, WLALUC; *8<sup>th</sup> Day Anniversary*, September 12, 1975, 8<sup>th</sup> Day Center for Justice Records, Box 2, Folder 8, WLALUC.

transition negatively impacted the financial and emotional well-being of residents and workers, particularly those who lacked the skills or educational certifications necessary to flourish. Post-industrial transition also fostered a growing socioeconomic rift between Chicago's "two communities," that is, noticeably prosperous areas of the city on the one hand, and on the other, neighborhoods wherein post-industrial transition wrought or exacerbated economic insecurity and social disadvantages.

Among Chicago Catholics, post-industrialism did, however, help to stoke religious reciprocity. It encouraged grassroots collaboration across parochial, geographic, and religious congregational lines, and the carefully planned distribution and maximization of human and material resources. Among archdiocesan parishes, Twinning/Sharing was one local response to post-industrial transition and widening socioeconomic disparities between neighborhoods. The program implicitly acknowledged that the Church—as one of the very few institutions that spanned the metropolitan area—had a responsibility to foster mutual aid between financially sound and unsound parishes, and encourage dialogue to overcome racial and cultural misunderstandings among the faithful.

8<sup>th</sup> Day was a particularly distinctive response. Post-industrial transition in the form of corporate disinvestment in aging Chicago neighborhoods and the swelling number of Chicagoans who relied on outside assistance for basic human needs, made plain to staffers that sin was not simply individual but social, systematic, and structural. Staffers' critique of the established economic order is more readily appreciated if one dwells on the grievous poverty, high unemployment rates, and widespread structural decay of some neighborhoods—factors that not only bred human despair but also seemed

to contribute to a menacing spike in interpersonal violence and deadly gang activity, as the next chapter illustrates.

### *Chapter 3* *Interpersonal Violence and Street Gangs*

#### *Under Siege*

Chicago's reputation for violence and lawlessness, acquired in previous generations through episodes such as the Haymarket Square Riot of 1886, the 1919 race riots, and the bloody "beer wars" of the Prohibition era, persisted between 1965 and 1996. In large measure, this was due to civil disorders in 1968 that riveted national and international attention: the explosion of West Side violence, burning, and looting in the aftermath of Martin Luther King Jr.'s slaying, and the street rioting that accompanied the National Democratic Convention. Other notorious racially or ethnically charged episodes of violence that unfolded in the 1960s and 1970s included White counter-protesters' aggression toward Martin Luther King Jr.-led housing marches on the South Side in the summer of 1966; confrontations between Puerto Ricans and police in Humboldt Park and West Town in the same year; and occasional skirmishes in the Marquette Park area on the Southwest Side between White supremacist groups and their opponents.<sup>1</sup> In the 1960s and 1970s, a few highly publicized local cases of serial murder, perpetrated by apparent "psycho killers" such as John Wayne Gacy, put Chicagoans on edge. Finally, youth delinquency and gang activity, which chiefly concern this chapter, was a chronic source of interpersonal violence among inner city males in particular. That gang activity seemed insoluble as well as pervasive, "random," and increasingly deadly as a consequence of firearm use helps to explain why a considerable number of anxious residents felt as

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<sup>1</sup> For a searing description of Whites' violent tactics to discourage Blacks from moving into their neighborhoods in the decades prior to the 1960s, see Arnold R. Hirsch, *Making the Second Ghetto: Race and Housing in Chicago, 1940-1960* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983).

though sections of their city were under siege. Police statistics do suggest abnormal levels of violent crime between 1965 and 1996—at least relative to Chicago’s history if unremarkable compared to other major U.S. cities at the time. Homicide rates, for instance, soared during the 1960s and early 1970s, and then again in the late 1980s. Robberies, which are a more accurate measure of day-to-day violence, also reached unprecedented levels in the 1970s and again in the late 1980s.<sup>2</sup>

### *Violence and the Sacred*

The Chicago Catholic Church had a measure of experience grappling with interpersonal violence and crime-prone youth. Gangs in the nineteenth and first half of the twentieth centuries were usually divided along ethnic lines and members were frequently baptized Catholics. Parish boundaries demarcated “turf,” and Dominic A. Pacyga records that members trespassed “strict ethnic borders...with trepidation.” In this way, an aura of violence had long superimposed sacred space.<sup>3</sup> Catholics generally depended on close-knit families and neighborhoods as well as a vast tissue of parochial schools to socialize youth, inculcate virtuous behavior, and mete out discipline—although an inverse danger existed when community life fostered exclusivity and intolerance of outsiders. Catholics and non-Catholics in the middle decades of the twentieth century could also rely on archdiocesan programs to mold the morals of young people, funnel aggression into more constructive endeavors, and inhibit criminal behavior. Most obviously, Auxiliary Bishop Sheil skillfully directed the Catholic Youth Organization,

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<sup>2</sup> Chicago Police Department reports and statistics from 1965 to the present can be found at Chicago Police Department, “Annual Reports,” <https://portal.chicagopolice.org/portal/page/portal/ClearPath/News/Statistical%20Reports/Annual%20Reports>. For analysis of homicide trends in Chicago, Carolyn R. Block’s scholarship has been particularly exhaustive and insightful. See especially Block, *Major Trends in Chicago Homicide, 1965-1994* (Chicago: Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority, September 1995).

<sup>3</sup> Dominic A. Pacyga, *Chicago: A Biography* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 187.

which sponsored athletic events for Catholic and non-Catholic boys to curtail delinquency and prevent “anti-Christian philosophies” such as communism from bewitching them.<sup>4</sup> A thriving industrial sector and an abundance of low-skilled jobs that furnished a living wage for young men was a gang deterrent of perhaps unequalled importance.

Interpersonal violence, street crime, gang activity, and the fear thereof in the last four decades of the twentieth century had a multifaceted impact on Catholics institutions and people. Among those that could leave violence prone neighborhoods, outmigration was common. Pierre de Vise observed in 1973 that “one violent incident in a changing neighborhood may set off reverberations of fear and anxiety which last for months.”<sup>5</sup> Lives, as well as residential and parish property, were in jeopardy.<sup>6</sup> Occasionally, the threat of violence compelled inner city priests to cancel evening or early morning Masses so that parishioners could avoid walking streets during sunless hours; discouraged families, who worried that an empty residence would invite thieves, from collectively attending Mass; and bolstered the number of crime victims that Catholic hospitals treated. In some sections of the city, violence loomed in alleys and school hallways, which degraded pupils’ education. In worst case scenarios, victims were injured, shot, or slain on streets or sidewalks adjacent to, or on the steps of, Catholic churches and schools—

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<sup>4</sup> Steven M. Avella, *This Confident Church: Catholic Leadership and Life in Chicago, 1940-1965* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1992), 23.

<sup>5</sup> Pierre de Vise, “Murder, Chicago Style: The Facts of Urban Violence,” *The Critic* 31, no. 5 (May-June 1973).. Wesley Skogan observes that “Fear of crime has been one of the most important factors driving residents to the suburbs.” See Skogan, *Police and Community in Chicago: A Tale of Three Cities* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 225.

<sup>6</sup> One vivid and particularly disturbing illustration of the destruction of parish property occurred in July 1984, when a psychologically impaired gunman fired at a statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary in St. John of God Catholic Church, 1234 W. 52<sup>nd</sup> St. The statue had been particularly esteemed by parishioners as one month earlier it had reportedly shed tears. See John Kass and Bill Boyce, “‘Weeping Virgin’ Hit by Gunman,” *CT*, 26 July 1984.



particularly distressing because neighborhood consensus implicitly delineated churches as community asylums.<sup>7</sup> The highest authorities in the local church were not precluded from the direct impact of violence and crime. Cardinal Cody was robbed at gunpoint in 1974 outside of Holy Name Cathedral while the Archbishop's Residence in 1994 was strafed with gunfire as Cardinal Bernardin slept.

The archdiocese, parishes, and religious communities allocated material and human resources to alleviate interpersonal violence, stem gang formation, safeguard lives and property, and prevent the squandering Catholic material resources. Liberalism and religious reciprocity were harnessed. Consider archdiocesan leaders' response to the crucial post-conciliar and post-industrial ideological flashpoint of interpersonal violence, crime, and punishment. Both Cardinals Cody and Bernardin emphasized gun control as well as rehabilitation for offenders rather than punishment—two central tenets of post-1960s liberal criminology. Among theologically motivated Catholics who grappled with the problems of violent gangs, connecting crime prone youth to their communities to alleviate alienation was a favored approach. Intervention rather than suppression and penalization was favored, despite the national drift away from the former to the latter in the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. Contrapuntally, the words and deeds of some Catholics indicated that toiling among gangs could produce spiritual renewal. In this respect, as we shall see, the life of Brother Bill Tomes is most remarkable.

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<sup>7</sup> Herein follows several examples of such acts of violence. In June 1990, two teens were shot and killed, apparently by members of a rival gang, on the steps of the North Side's Our Lady of Mercy School, 2216 N. Troy. See Jay Copp, "Killings on School Steps Sets Parents, Children on Guard," *CNW*, 6 June 1990. In April 1994, teens sitting on the church steps outside the Northwest Side's Holy Trinity Polish Mission (1144 N. Noble) were targets of a barrage of bullets. One died and four others were wounded. See Veronica Flores, "Church Slaying Stuns Parish," *CST*, 4 April 1994. In August 1987, Father Alan D. Scheible was stabbed with a screwdriver in the head, chest, arm and back after an intruder broke into the rectory of St. Willibroard Catholic Church on the Far South Side (11406 S. Edbrooke Ave.). The priest survived. See Cheryl Devall and Liz Sly, "Priest Hurt in Burglary at Rectory," *CT*, 3 August 1987.

The leadership style of Cardinal Cody and the paucity of material resources encumbered theologically-motivated Catholics' response to interpersonal violence, street crime, and gang activity. Few urban trends so emphatically validate Monsignor John Egan's 1978 observation that the "diocesan wide spirit" and "common strategy" that animated Chicago Catholic social activism in the early 1960s flagged during the Cody era. In respect to interpersonal violence, street crime, and gang formation between the late 1960s and the early 1980s, the efforts of individuals or small groups from single parishes or religious orders, rather than a coordinated archdiocesan effort, better typified Catholics' response; there could be no renaissance of a CYO-type organization not only because the archdiocese suffered from a scarcity of priests, religious, and laypeople willing to address the causes of street violence, but because the archbishop's leadership style militated against a multi-parish endeavor beyond his immediate control. This observation is supported by the fact that Cardinal Bernardin, heeding the appeals of priests, religious and laypeople, attempted to re-corporatize archdiocesan efforts to arrest violent crime and gang formation. The paucity of material resources was another serious hindrance. The Church's presence in gang-ridden areas was significant, but steadily contracted as parishioner rolls declined, archdiocesan monies were drained, and churches and schools were closed. The quarter of a million dollars that the archdiocese pledged in December 1984 to deter gang formation and activity was insufficient in respect to "solving the problem," as Vicar General James Roache acknowledged.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Jean Davidson, "Church Tells Plan to Fight City Gangs," *CT*, 29 December 1984.

### *Violence, Chicago Style*

Violent crime rates soared across the United States in the 1960s, according to the Federal Bureau of Investigation's *Uniform Crime Reports (UCR)*. The 1960 violent crime rate of 161 per 100,000 population was in 1970 364 per 100,000, an astonishing jump of 56 percent that, as historian Michael W. Flamm explains in *Law and Order: Street Crime, Civil Unrest, and the Crisis of Liberalism in the 1960s*, touched off an intense national debate on crime and punishment. Rates continued to climb in the early 1970s and, after modestly dropping in the early 1980s, re-escalated in the latter half of the decade.<sup>9</sup> Chicago's violent crime rates generally mirrored this trend. Here, it is necessary to recollect the weaknesses of statistical evidence, which *suggests* more violence but cannot certify precise numbers; crime is often unreported and rates are liable to be fabricated for political purposes.<sup>10</sup> Of the four crimes that the *UCR* classifies as "violent," robbery rates are probably the most accurate measure of day-to-day violence, according to many criminologists and historians of crime.<sup>11</sup> Windy City rates jumped in the late 1960s and 1970s, briefly fell in the last years of that decade and early 1980s, and then reached unprecedented levels in the late 1980s and early 1990s. A more publicized

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<sup>9</sup> Michael W. Flamm, *Law and Order: Street Crime, Civil Unrest, and the Crisis of Liberalism in the 1960s* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), 125; Lawrence B. Joseph and Laurence E. Lynn, Jr. "Introduction," in *Crime, Communities, and Public Policy*, ed. Lawrence B. Joseph (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1995), 5-6. The FBI classifies as "violent crime" murder and non-negligent manslaughter, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault. Property crime (burglary, larceny, and auto theft) dramatically increased as well. For a helpful description of United States crime data sources that also identifies methodological problems, see Neil Alan Weiner and Marvin E. Wolfgang, "The Extent and Character of Violent Crime in America, 1969 to 1982," in *American Violence and Public Policy: An Update of the National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence*, ed. Lynn A. Curtis (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985), 20-1.

<sup>10</sup> Skogan, 34.

<sup>11</sup> Robbery refers to the threat or use of force in a bid to acquire property. According to Skogan, an important scholar of Chicago crime and police, some analysts consider robbery a "bellweather indicator of urban trends" because "it combines theft, risk to life and limb (for a gun is often involved), and predatory intent." See Skogan, 239.

and fearsome but less accurate indicator of violence, homicide rates also experienced a dramatic and sustained rise in the 1960s, early 1970s, and then again in the late 1980s, as Carolyn R. Block, one of the most judicious analysts of twentieth-century Chicago homicide trends, has detailed (See Tables 7 and 8).

**Table 7. Chicago Homicides, 1965-1996<sup>12</sup>**

Year	Number	Year	Number
1965	397	1981	879
1966	511	1982	671
1967	551	1983	732
1968	647	1984	738
1969	724	1985	667
1970	807	1986	748
1971	824	1987	686
1972	708	1988	661
1973	867	1989	752
1974	962	1990	845
1975	822	1991	915
1976	816	1992	939
1977	827	1993	852
1978	792	1994	928
1979	853	1995	827
1980	859	1996	789

**Table 8. Robberies in Chicago, 1965-1996<sup>13</sup>**

Year	# Reported	Year	# Reported
1965	14,839	1981	16,118
1966	16,720	1982	16,307
1967	18,374	1983	23,471
1968	19,007	1984	28,535
1969	21,462	1985	26,892
1970	23,198	1986	30,678
1971	24,012	1987	29,879
1972	23,531	1988	28,975
1973	23,674	1989	31,588
1974	25,829	1990	37,156
1975	22,171	1991	43,783
1976	17,479	1992	38,422
1977	16,512	1993	35,209
1978	15,233	1994	33,949
1979	14,464	1995	30,086
1980	16,261	1996	26,860

There is not consensus on the forces driving violent crime rates in the 1960s, although many scholars agree that multiple and often interrelated causal factors should be considered.<sup>14</sup> Franklin E. Zimring and Gordon Hawkins observe that “The assumption....that violent acts should have one and only one cause, is probably the most

<sup>12</sup> From Block, *Major Trends in Chicago Homicide, 1965-1994*.

<sup>13</sup> Chicago Police News Desk, Annual Reports,

<https://portal.chicagopolice.org/portal/page/portal/ClearPath/News/Statistical%20Reports/Annual%20Reports>.

<sup>14</sup> The core statement of the National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence, which Lyndon B. Johnson established in 1968 following the assassination of Robert F. Kennedy, neatly captures that violence has multiple origins: “To be a young, poor male; to be undereducated and without means of escape from an oppressive urban environment, to want what the society claims is available (but mostly to others), to see around oneself illegitimate and often violent methods being used to achieve material success, and to observe others using these means with impunity—all this is to be burdened with an enormous set of influences that pull many toward crime and delinquency. To be also a Black, Mexican, or Puerto Rican American and subject to discrimination adds considerably to the pull.” Quote found in Lynn A. Curtis, “Introduction,” in *American Violence and Public Policy: An Update of the National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence*, ed. Lynn A. Curtis (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985), 4.

frequent found error in the rhetoric of violence.”<sup>15</sup> While here is not the appropriate place to weigh scholars’ arguments and counterarguments, the most commonly cited factors in the academic literature and the Chicago media during the years under study should be mentioned.<sup>16</sup> Racism in combination with post-industrial transition were potent forces. Whites’ denial to minorities of equal housing, employment, and political opportunity, as well as alleged police brutality and apathy toward minorities, potentially bred in poor African Americans and Latinos a profound sense of alienation from the social mainstream and its institutions, and subsequent anger and aggression. In past generations, a degree of industrial opportunity in the form of low-skill jobs that furnished a living wage mitigated discontent. Industry afforded middle- and lower-class young men opportunities to legitimately realize a modicum of material comfort. Deindustrialization, national recessions, and the growing primacy of the service and technology sector wherein one’s position in the economic hierarchy was increasingly dependent on educational qualifications, however, eroded industrial opportunity, amplified material deprivation for minorities in particular, and exacerbated the desperation of a hitherto segregated and increasingly un- and under-employed “underclass” that were physically isolated and whose poverty was progressively concentrated.<sup>17</sup> In respect to Latino gangs, Tom Diaz describes post-industrialization’s disastrous impact as “an unforgiving crucible” that “transformed and hardened” Latino bangers. As a consequence, local “fighting” gangs morphed into “enduring,

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<sup>15</sup> Franklin E. Zimring and Gordon Hawkins, *Crime is Not the Problem: Lethal Violence in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 99.

<sup>16</sup> The best overview of violent and property crime in Chicago between the 1960s and 1990s is Lawrence B. Joseph, ed., *Crime, Communities, and Public Policy* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1995).

<sup>17</sup> For a somewhat dated but helpful and probing overview of the “underclass” debate, see John F. Baumann “The Truly Segregated? Exploring the Urban Underclass,” *Journal of Urban History* 21, no. 4 (May 1995): 536-548.

institutionalized, and irreducibly violent alternative societies.”<sup>18</sup> That the lack of employment opportunities directly bred violence was the verdict of *Chicago’s North-Northwest Community News*—communities in the Near Northwest and in particular Humboldt Park, Logan Square, and West Town witnessed some of the most deadly and pervasive gang violence. In 1995, it editorialized that “Every day, the news headlines and TV reports are filled with overnight killings to the point that we are nearing a desensitization towards the heinous social manifestation...It’s a spiral of devastation that has been in place for decades. The answer is jobs. We must create more jobs. People must be given the opportunity to work for a living and earn back their dignity.”<sup>19</sup>

Demographic restructuring could also foster violence, most noticeably in neighborhoods on the South and West Sides where racial turnover was most rapid, and where Whites sometimes condoned violence to stanch Black settlement. That baby boomers in the late 1960s and early 1970s were at their most crime-prone age, and that birth rates in Latino enclaves were conspicuously high in the 1970s and 1980s, were other demographic developments that potentially aggravated crime rates, according to some scholars.

The deterioration of neighborhoods and other instruments of socialization, such as families and schools, have also been cited as facilitators of interpersonal violence. That “social disorder”—e.g., public drinking and drug use, a visible gang presence, prostitution, public gambling and panhandling—and physical decay such as vandalism, trash in the streets and yards, abandoned automobiles and abandoned or burned out buildings triggers violence was notably posited in James Q. Wilson and George L.

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<sup>18</sup> Tom Diaz, *No Boundaries: Transnational Latino Gangs and American Law Enforcement* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2009), 5.

<sup>19</sup> “How Much More Killing Can We Take?,” *Chicago’s North-Northwest Community News*, 25 January 1995. Volumes of this newspaper can be found in the archives of the Chicago History Museum.

Kelling's "broken windows" thesis. The argument has come under criticism, although scholars do generally agree that social disorder and physical decay causes fear of crime.<sup>20</sup> In any case, Chicago media regularly mused on the negative impact to community life of disorder and decay. For example, what had become a critical mass of abandoned residential and non-residential structures and the danger they posed to neighborhood welfare invited analyses in the early 1970s. In a lengthy *Chicago Reporter* article that offered pictorial comparisons of West Side Chicago neighborhoods and World War II-devastated German housing, journalist Frank Keller uncovered that approximately fourteen thousand housing units in Chicago had been abandoned in 1971 alone. Devastation was unevenly distributed; about eighty percent of the buildings "were located in just seventeen of the city's seventy-six communities"—sixteen were largely African American and the other contained a high proportion of Spanish-speakers.<sup>21</sup> The city had limited funds to destroy edifices. Devastated structures were not simply an aesthetic blight, but a community threat; fearful residents described the criminals, drug addicts, youth gangs, and vagrants who seized the buildings.<sup>22</sup> The deterioration and inability of families and schools to effectively supervise and/or socialize children was also highlighted by scholars and the media, and acknowledged by city officials. The stories had truth. Witness rising dropout rates; 42 percent of Chicago public high school students in the class of 1982, for example, left school before graduation (12,616 of

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<sup>20</sup> George L. Kelling and James Q. Wilson, "Broken Windows," *The Atlantic*, March 1982. For criticism of Kelling and Wilson's thesis, see for example Robert J. Sampson and Stephen W. Raudenbush, "Spaces: A New Look at Disorder in Urban Neighborhoods," *American Journal of Sociology* 105, no. 3 (November 1999): 603-651; Bernard E. Harcourt, *Illusion of Order: The False Promise of Broken Windows Policing* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001).

<sup>21</sup> Frank Keller, "Housing Abandonment in Chicago – The Cancer of the Inner City," *CR*, December 1972.

<sup>22</sup> Cornelia Honchar, "Abandoned Buildings: Grim Signs of Decay, Danger," *CT*, 7 October 1971; Dennis Byrne, "Menace of Abandoned Homes," *CDN*, 30 June 1975.

29,815).<sup>23</sup> In respect to families, Elijah Anderson in his groundbreaking ethnography *Code of the Streets: Decency, Violence, and the Moral Life of the Inner City*, remarks that the most powerful force in the community to counteract negative influences is “a strong, loving ‘decent’ family that is committed to middle-class values.”<sup>24</sup> Chicago in 1978 had “the largest proportion of illegitimate births among major American cities.”<sup>25</sup> One visible symptom was the spike in female-headed households among Blacks in public housing.<sup>26</sup>

Finally, narcotics use and drug sales and the accessibility of firearms fostered deadly violence. The availability and destructiveness of heroin grabbed headlines in the 1970s. Some Mexican drug cartels used Chicago as the major Midwestern brown heroin distribution center. Here, pushers from Indiana, Michigan, Iowa, Ohio, and elsewhere collected their product.<sup>27</sup> A decade later, crack cocaine was introduced and quickly infiltrated all parts of the city; whereas the CPD seized crack cocaine from two of the city’s 25 police districts in 1988, the narcotic was found in every district by 1993. Wars to control drug markets increasingly contributed to gang-related fatalities.<sup>28</sup> The widespread availability and use of guns exacerbated deadly violence.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>23</sup> Patrick Reardon, “Everyone Pays a Price for Crime in the Ghetto,” *CT*, 17 September 1985.

<sup>24</sup> Elijah Anderson, *Code of the Streets: Decency, Violence, and the Moral Life of the Inner City* (New York: Norton, 1999), 32.

<sup>25</sup> Nancy Fisher Schulte, “Illegitimacy Soars, Begets Legacy of Health, Social Hardships,” *CR*, June 1980. See also Susan J. Popkin et al, *The Hidden War: Crime and the Tragedy of Public Housing in Chicago* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2000).

<sup>26</sup> Arthur J. Lurigio, “Crime and Communities: Prevalence, Impact, and Programs,” in *Crime, Communities, and Public Policy*, ed. Joseph, 51, 36.

<sup>27</sup> Edmund J. Rooney, “Vast Drug Ring Crushed,” *CDN*, 24 February 1971; William F. Mooney and William Clements, “Chicago Heroin Flood,” *CDN*, 7-8 June 1975; “Mexico-Chicago Drug Link Traced,” *CST*, 7 September 1971.

<sup>28</sup> *Together We Can: A Strategic Plan for Reinventing the Chicago Police Department* (Chicago: 1993), 11; Isabel Wilkerson, “Crack Hits Chicago, Along with Wave of Killing,” *NYT*, 24 September 1991.

<sup>29</sup> Rick Greenberg, “Chicago’s Deadly 70s,” *CR*, January 1981.



All of these factors potentially bred youth delinquency and gang violence. Although they have always existed, gangs proliferated in Chicago and the United States between the 1970s and 1990s and constitute a major theme of late twentieth-century American urban history. The U.S. Department of Justice records that the nation “experienced gang problems in more identified localities than at any other time in history.”<sup>30</sup> Fewer than twenty-five states reported gang problems in the 1970s; every state, as well as the District of Columbia, identified gang activity by the late 1990s. Relative to other states, Illinois was a gang hub. It trailed only California in the number of gang cities (300 to 232). Among all U.S. counties, however, Cook reported the highest number of gang cities, outpacing Los Angeles County. Gangs were conspicuous in the collar counties as well; based on the rates of gang cities per county population, McHenry, Will, Lake, and Du Page comprised four of the top five counties.<sup>31</sup> The number of gangs and members is difficult to precisely pinpoint. The *Chicago Tribune* did estimate in 1987 that 135 gangs operated in Chicago. In a study in the early 2000s, the City of Chicago’s Crime Commission estimated seventy gangs in metropolitan Chicago, with a membership of over 25,000.<sup>32</sup>

In Chicago, homicide rates had a number of characteristics. First, firearms were by far the most favored method of fatal violence among offenders. Handguns and assault weapons help to account for the escalation in deadly violent crime. Second, victims and perpetrators of homicides were typically young and male. Sixteen percent of the city’s homicide victims were between the ages of 11 and 20 in 1974; that number reached 30

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<sup>30</sup> Walter B. Miller, *The Growth of Youth Gang Problems in the United States, 1970-1998* (Washington, D.C., U.S. Department of Justice, 2001), vii.

<sup>31</sup> Miller, 19, 27-29.

<sup>32</sup> Anne Keegan and Jerry Thornton, “Chicago Losing Ground in War on Street Gangs,” *CT*, 30 July 1986; Chicago Crime Commission, *The Chicago Crime Commission Gang Book: A Detailed Overview of Street Gangs in the Chicago Metropolitan Area* (Chicago: Chicago Crime Commission, 2006), 11.

percent in 1994. On the whole, homicide was most apparent in African American areas, where young Black males were usually the victims and offenders.<sup>33</sup> Homicide was less frequent among young Latino men, except for the years 1977 to 1981, when this cohort was at higher risk than non-Latino Black teens; slayings on the Near Northwest Side were a major contributor. Appraising Chicago murders from 1965 to 1994, Block summarizes: “The risk of being murdered has been far higher for males than females and generally higher for non-Latino blacks than for Latino and non-Latino whites.”<sup>34</sup>

In regard to street gang homicide, a good deal of fluctuation existed, chiefly as a consequence of the fact that deadly violence typically occurred in bursts. Years of relative dormancy could be followed by eruptions in lethal gang violence (Table 9). Confrontations over the control of turf and, less often, for control of drug markets, were the primary sources of violence. Drug related fatalities sharply rose in the city after 1987, partly as a result of clashes over crack cocaine markets, as well as the formation of two “supergangs,” the “People” and the “Folks.” Gang violence did not usually occur on a citywide basis, but in specific neighborhoods and blocks, and among specific gangs. It is important to contextualize gang fatalities; gang activities constituted 7 percent of all Chicago homicides between 1965 and 1990, whereas “expressive confrontations”—those between friends, neighbors, acquaintances, or others who knew each other but were unrelated—were the most frequent type of fatality (30 percent).<sup>35</sup>

<sup>33</sup> Lurigio, 48; Skogan, 36; Block, *Major Trends in Chicago Homicide, 1965-1994*, 2-4, 17.

<sup>34</sup> Block, *Major Trends in Chicago Homicide*, 2.

<sup>35</sup> Carolyn Rebecca Block and Richard Block, “Street Gang Crime in Chicago,” National Institute of Justice, December 1993; Block, *Major Trends in Chicago Homicide*, 10-20.

**Table 9. Chicago Street Gang-Related Homicides by Year of Occurrence, 1965-1996<sup>36</sup>**

Year	Number	Year	Number
1965	10	1981	87
1966	14	1982	54
1967	18	1983	75
1968	44	1984	75
1969	58	1985	51
1970	70	1986	61
1971	62	1987	61
1972	50	1988	74
1973	37	1989	77
1974	36	1990	101
1975	15	1991	132
1976	23	1992	119
1977	33	1993	129
1978	24	1994	293 <sup>37</sup>
1979	65	1995	212
1980	42	1996	223

Successive mayors bemoaned interpersonal violence. Commonly, they blamed the widespread availability of firearms. Measures were taken. To process gun crimes, Richard J. Daley created a special court. His support was also crucial to the successful passage of a new ordinance in 1968, which required that all firearms be registered with the city. Also, the loss, theft, or sale of any weapon had to be reported. Another ordinance passed in the same year barred certain categories of people from possessing guns: those under eighteen years of age, the mentally handicapped, narcotics addicts, and people who had been convicted of a felony, or released from a reformatory, mental institutions, or prison within the previous five years.<sup>38</sup> Jane Byrne strongly supported an ordinance to ban the sale and registration of handguns in the city, publicly referring to the assassination attempts of Pope John Paul II and Ronald Reagan, as well as the daily

<sup>36</sup> Block, *Major Trends in Chicago Homicide, 1965-1994*, 10.

<sup>37</sup> Changes in the CPD's definition of "street gang" partially contributed to the large jump in 1994.

<sup>38</sup> Jay McMullen, "Daley Pushes New Curbs on Gun Sales," *CDN*, 3 January 1968; "Daley Gives Council His Gun-Control Bill," *CDN*, 5 January 1968; "New Gun Control Law in Force," *CDN*, 15 April 1968; "Judge Upholds City Gun-Control Ordinance," *CDN*, 10 May 1968; "A Last Minute Deluge of Guns Here," *CDN*, 15 May 1968.

violence in Cabrini Green, to marshal support for her position.<sup>39</sup> Under Byrne, Chicago was the first major city in the U.S. to adopt a handgun freeze in 1982, although it was generally ineffective as most collar counties had not adopted similar legislation. Harold Washington during the 1983 mayoral election acknowledged that Chicago was “crippled by crime,” while Richard M. Daley began his tenure as mayor by declaring that Chicago and cities everywhere were “under siege,” pointing to crime, drugs, and guns, as well as a bearish economy and failing schools.<sup>40</sup> Daley also in 1992 encouraged a ban on the selling of assault weapons, which the Chicago City Council passed.<sup>41</sup>

### *Criminological Liberalism*

The interpersonal violence that stalked Chicago and the rest of the nation, which civil disorders and soaring violent crime rates threw into bold relief in the 1960s and 1970s, raised profound questions about the viability of American cities as well as how to most effectively safeguard citizens. Historians such as Philip Jenkins have explained that the dominant approach to crime in the early and mid-1960s was decidedly “liberal.” Offenders were not evil or hopelessly incorrigible. Rather, they were victims themselves to a degree; psychological pressures or social inequalities fomented their criminal activity. Reforms that addressed these problems, such as programs that mitigated poverty or unemployment, were the most effective tools against crime.<sup>42</sup> Gun control, another

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<sup>39</sup> “Mayor Byrne Testifies for Handgun Law,” *CD*, 24 February 1982. The suburb of Morton Grove was the first U.S. municipality to ban handguns’ sale, transportation, and ownership. Eli Rubin, “Gun Control,” in *Encyclopedia of Chicago*.

<sup>40</sup> “City Crippled by Crime, says Washington,” *CD*, 21 February 1983; “Mayor: City Under Siege,” *CD*, 7 May 1991.

<sup>41</sup> Chinta Strausberg, “Mayor, Martin Call for Statewide Gun Control Law,” *CD*, 10 January 1991; “City Declares War on Illegal Guns, Drugs,” *CD*, 7 February 1991; Rubin, “Gun Control.”

<sup>42</sup> Philip Jenkins, *Decade of Nightmares: The End of the Sixties and the Making of Eighties America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 134-9.

principal part of the liberal plank, would also ease crime and save lives.<sup>43</sup> The violent and often racially-charged urban explosions, relentlessly high crime rates, and the exposure of serial murderers in the 1970s heralded a shift in public attitudes. An increasing number of Americans adopted a “conservative” criminology, which helped propel Richard Nixon to the presidency. Conservatives held that disrespect for traditional morality and evil intent rather than soluble social conditions were criminals’ normative motivation. Attempts to root out injustice were ineffectively deterring crime. In respect to punishment, incarceration and suppression, rather than rehabilitation and intervention, were upheld. The U.S. Supreme Court’s 1976 defense of capital punishment’s legality seemed to harmonize with one of the most uncompromising tenets of conservative criminology. The issue of law and order once again became paramount in the 1980s. Following public opinion, Republican president Ronald Reagan’s “get tough” strategy emphasized harsher and lengthier penalties. Along with the president’s “war on drugs,” which was declared in 1982, state policies such as determinate sentences and the elimination of early release ballooned prisoner numbers.<sup>44</sup> Illinois was one state that in the late 1970s “got tough” with offenders via, for example, a determinate sentencing system, a new class of felonies with mandatory prison time, and increased prosecution of drug-related charges, which translated into overcrowded prisons especially in Cook County.<sup>45</sup>

In their approach toward this important ideological flashpoint, archdiocesan leaders and notable Chicago Catholic “movers and shakers” exhibited a pragmatic

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<sup>43</sup> Flamm, 138.

<sup>44</sup> Jenkins, 236-8; Gil Troy, *Morning in America: How Ronald Reagan Invented the 1980s* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005), 86-90.

<sup>45</sup> Lurigio, 58, 61. Under a determinate sentencing system, each convicted offender “is sentenced to a fixed number of years in prison with no possibility of parole.”

liberalism. In their insistence that sociological structures fostered crime and interpersonal violence, gun control was an exigency, and rehabilitation rather than tough punishment of offenders would best allay crime, Catholics such as Cardinals Cody and Bernardin were left of the social center and, if opinion polls are any indication, left of most American Catholics.<sup>46</sup> However, their liberalism was “moderate” insofar as it was pragmatic, generally without illusions, and incorporated a spiritual dimension. Crime was not simply sociological but a moral problem as well. While structures engendered crime and violence, offenders were also responsible.

Religious reciprocity was evident in the approaches of Cardinals Cody and Bernardin toward gun control, insofar as they emphasized the common good and underscored that Chicagoans had a responsibility to curtail the manufacture and sale of deadly firearms. During his tenure, Cody made symbolic gestures and issued pleas on behalf of gun control to Catholics and legislators, which were occasional but passionate. Three years after arriving in Chicago, Cody publicly threw the archdiocese’s weight behind Mayor Richard J. Daley’s proposed city gun ordinance. Father Edward Kelly, representing the archbishop, personally appeared at City Hall to support the bill as it was being debated.<sup>47</sup> Cody’s most uncompromising condemnation of firearms came in March 1974 in a letter to archdiocesan priests. Gun violence on local streets was endangering the community. To make his point, Cody marshaled Chicago Police Department statistics of gun-inflicted homicides, as well as evidence that there were three times the number of guns on U.S. streets (170 million) as American families. Cody attacked the

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<sup>46</sup> A 1991 Gallup Poll found that more than 75 percent of Catholics in the United States backed a capital punishment option—a percentage similar to all Americans in general. Jay Copp “Illinois Bishops Oppose Gacy Execution,” *CNW*, 6 May 1994.

<sup>47</sup> Edward Schreiber, “Council OK’s Gun Controls,” *CT*, 11 January 1968.

profit-minded opponents of gun regulations who had “obvious vested interests.” The “right to arm” was an “anachronism” in modern U.S. life, and the public’s safety and common good should take precedence over “the would-be ‘sportsmanship’ of handguns”—“a luxury of the few.” Beseeching priests to petition their congressional representative in support of gun controls, Cody concluded with an unexpected flourish: all guns needed to be immediately outlawed.<sup>48</sup> Three years later in January 1977, Cody repeated this appeal, adding that “concern about disarmament must begin in our neighborhoods and our city streets if a mentality supporting life and peace is to prevail at the world level.”<sup>49</sup> Moving beyond rhetoric, the archbishop supported “Survival Days in Chicago,” which Mayor Michael Bilandic and the Chicago Committee for Handgun Control inaugurated a few months later in May. The program asked Chicagoans to relinquish their handguns to city officials at police stations, churches, or synagogues. Although the Cardinal publicly discouraged owners from turning over firearms to Catholic churches, he concurrently reemphasized that handguns were “a needless source” of Chicago violence.<sup>50</sup> Joseph Bernardin also advocated gun control. He oversaw efforts of the archdiocese’s Ministry of Peace and Justice in 1988, which strongly urged parishes to petition the U.S. Congress to place more curbs on handgun purchases and enhance the 1968 Gun Control Act, which it was debating.<sup>51</sup> In the early 1990s, Bernardin specifically took aim at assault weapons, although he recognized that they accounted for only a fraction of homicides in the area. He relentlessly insisted that their manufacture, sale, and possession be banned, harnessing Catholic social teaching to argue that “A ban

<sup>48</sup> “Cardinal Cody Asks Firearms Controls,” *CNW*, 15 March 1974.

<sup>49</sup> “Cardinal Cody Asks Halt to Violence,” *CNW*, 7 January 1977.

<sup>50</sup> “Cardinal Supports Local Gun Collection Program,” *CNW*, 20 May 1977.

<sup>51</sup> “Handgun Curbs Sought,” *CC*, 8 April 1988.

on assault weapons will serve the common good... Sometimes, individual claims must yield to those of the larger community in order for a fuller measure of justice to prevail. In the case of assault weapons, the benefits of banning them will far outweigh the cost of any infringement on individual rights.”<sup>52</sup> In 1994, Bernardin as archbishop of Chicago and as a member of the Catholic Conference of Illinois, publicly supported efforts of the Illinois Association of Police Chiefs to outlaw assault weapons in Illinois. Catholic clergy did the same, using the pulpit in May to encourage parishioners to join the cause. When Governor Jim Edgar refused to sign the bill into law, Bernardin expressed dismay and regret.<sup>53</sup>

In their explanation of crime and interpersonal violence, as well as their approach toward offenders, Cardinals Cody but more noticeably Bernardin exhibited a moderate liberalism. Both laid stress on sociological factors, although these did not exculpate offenders who made conscious decisions to commit crimes. Bernardin made clear that sociological factors were a critical accelerant of violence. In his *Pastoral Statement on Youth*, the Cardinal observed, “Often, violence occurs because people don’t have jobs; they don’t have access to good jobs; they don’t have access to good housing. So there are many social ills that have helped perpetuate violence, and we must attend to them.”<sup>54</sup> In respect to punishment, Cody and Bernardin publicly regretted elements of conservative criminology, and in particular the death penalty; in doing so, they reflected the Catholic Church’s increasingly vocal opposition to capital punishment under the pontificates of

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<sup>52</sup> Joseph Bernardin, “Assault Weapon Ban the First Step Toward Curbing Gun Violence,” *CNW*, 10 June 1994.

<sup>53</sup> Jay Copp, “Assault Weapon Ban Unlikely Despite Support of Clergy,” *CNW*, 27 May 1994; Joseph Bernardin, “Assault Weapon Ban the First Step Toward Curbing Gun Violence,” *CNW*, 10 June 1994.

<sup>54</sup> Joseph Cardinal Bernardin, “Here and Now: Pastoral Statement on Youth,” in *Selected Works of Joseph Cardinal Bernardin*, ed. Alphonse P. Spilly, vol. 1 (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2000), 225.



Paul VI and John Paul II.<sup>55</sup> Cody yoked capital punishment to abortion; both were grievous social mistakes. “There must be a better way to deal with problem people—better ways than putting them to death,” Cody insisted in a 1977 letter to priests. Capital punishment was a depressing “reflection on a civilization, a culture, and a country.” The potential spectacle of televised executions was particularly horrifying to the archbishop.<sup>56</sup> Bernardin also strongly opposed the death penalty. Perhaps most controversially, he and the other Catholic bishops of Illinois asked the state to remit the death penalty of John Wayne Gacy in 1994. Although they had little sympathy for the serial murderer, the bishops’ argument was made on the grounds that all life was made in the image of God and was therefore sacred.<sup>57</sup>

Violence genuinely grieved Cody and Bernardin. Coincidentally, both had served as chairman of the NCCB’s Pro-Life Committee, a position wherein the vocal articulation of Catholic Church teaching on life issues was requisite. And indeed, a string of USCC/NCCB statements by and large buttressed Cody and Bernardin’s positions in respect to crime and violence and the effective treatment of offenders. In 1974, the USCC’s statement, “The Reform of Correctional Institutions in the 1970s,” publicly opposed capital punishment and criticized stiff prison sentences for youth. Likewise, the

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<sup>55</sup> In a customarily thorough and articulate synopsis in 2001 of Catholic Church teaching and capital punishment, Fordham University theologian Avery Cardinal Dulles summarized: “The doctrine remains what it has been: that the State, in principle, has the right to impose the death penalty on persons convicted of very serious crimes...[But] the principle still leaves open the question whether and when the death penalty ought to be applied. [Pope John Paul II] and [the U.S. Bishops]...have concluded that in contemporary society, at least in countries like our own, the death penalty ought not to be invoked, because, on balance, it does more harm than good.” See Avery Cardinal Dulles, “Catholicism and Capital Punishment,” *First Things* (April 2011).

<sup>56</sup> John Cardinal Cody, “New Year’s Day Message, 1977,” *CNW*, 21 January 1977; “Cardinal Cody to Clergy: Speak Out,” *CNW*, 21 January 1977.

<sup>57</sup> Jay Copp “Illinois Bishops Oppose Gacy Execution,” *CNW*, 6 May 1994. Incidentally, Gacy was a baptized Catholic who, in prison at Menard Correctional Center, attended weekly Mass. Gacy asked Catholic chaplain Father Leo Layes to say Mass in his cell the evening prior to his death by lethal injection. See “Gacy Attends Mass Weekly,” *CNW*, 6 May 1994.

USCC's Committee on Social Development and World Peace issued, with the approval of the body's Administrative Board, in March 1978 "A Community Response to Crime," which attributed rising levels of crime and interpersonal violence to "false values," such as materialism and greed; social injustice such as "economic and social deprivation"; the deterioration of neighborhood and family life; and the paucity of moral leadership from government, civic, and religious heads, particularly in regard to white collar crimes. Personal responsibility was also emphasized, although the bishops reminded readers that individual choices "are influenced by community and social factors." "Any effective response to crime ought to focus on improving our community life, on strengthening our families and neighborhoods, on rooting out economic deprivation and social injustice, and on teaching basic values of personal responsibility, human dignity, and decency."<sup>58</sup> Cody and Bernardin's sentiments toward causation and punishment, therefore, did not radically depart from the consensus among bishops.

In regard to firearms, the USCC also fell left of center. "A Community Response to Crime" called for the prohibition of the "importation, manufacture, sale, possession and use of handguns."<sup>59</sup> That Cody requested a ban on all guns one year prior is striking—and uncharacteristic of a prelate who rarely diverged from ecclesial consensus on flashpoint issues. Cody's personal experience sheds light. The destructive 1968 West Side riots genuinely disturbed him; riding in a car and surveying the devastation with Mayor Daley, both men wept.<sup>60</sup> That he was also a personal victim of crime seems to have jolted Cody, as he experienced firsthand the danger of guns and interpersonal

<sup>58</sup> USCC Committee on Social Development and World Peace, "A Community Response to Crime," *Origins* 7, no. 128 (9 March 1978).

<sup>59</sup> USCC Committee on Social Development and World Peace, "A Community Response to Crime," *Origins* 7, no. 38, 9 March 1978.

<sup>60</sup> Rachel Zoll, "On 9/11, Cardinal Consoles a City," *Forbes*, 31 August 2011.

violence. Exiting a gathering at Holy Name Cathedral in February 1974, the archbishop and his chauffeur were accosted by two men. One pointed a gun at Cody and demanded money. Although physically unscathed, the incident seems to have shaken the archbishop, who nonetheless remained publicly reticent about his experience. That the USCC issued its anti-gun statement one year later should not diminish the singularity of Cody's demand for the abolition of firearms.<sup>61</sup>

Bernardin also experienced gun violence, but after his public stance on gun control was firmly established. In 1994, two intoxicated off-duty Milwaukee police officers fired a semi-automatic pistol on his Gold Coast home on the 1500 block of North State Parkway. Bernardin was sleeping inside. Three bullets hit the entrance of his home, and one penetrated the wooden door. Although no one was injured, the incident did suggest that few were completely safe from gun violence.<sup>62</sup>

#### *Community Approach in Woodlawn*

The impulse to foster reciprocity to stifle bloodshed was unmistakable among theologically motivated Catholics and eventually the archdiocese. Inculcating in crime-prone youth recognition that they did not dwell in isolation and sensitizing residents to the importance of collective community action were vital to alleviating gang violence. Reciprocally, the lives of some Catholics indicated that spiritual renewal could blossom from exposure to alienated and possibly violent young males. Whereas theologically

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<sup>61</sup> Jack Fuller and James Elsener, "2 Rob Cardinal Cody," *CT*, 15 February 1974; Joseph A. Reaves, "I Am Obligated to Speak Out..." *CT*, 2 May 1982.

<sup>62</sup> Jim Casey and Philip J. O'Connor, "2 Cops Held in Fatal Shooting Spree – Bernardin Home Hit," *CST*, 28 May 1994; Maurice Possley, "Ex-Milwaukee Officer Convicted of Murdering Bouncer," *CT*, 25 January 1996.

motivated Catholics operated independently or in small groups to resolve violence during the Cody era, Bernardin's ascendancy heralded a programmatic archdiocesan plan.

The response of Carmelite priest Tracey O'Sullivan to gang violence in Woodlawn in the mid- to late-1960s exhibited Chicago Catholic reciprocity. At that point in time, the community area was perhaps the most contested turf in Chicago.<sup>63</sup> Social conditions facilitated gang growth. Woodlawn experienced rapid demographic turnover in the 1940s and 1950s, transforming from largely White, Irish American, and Catholic to overwhelmingly African American and majority Protestant. Collectively, newcomers had fewer financial resources than out-goers. The total population of Woodlawn plummeted by approximately 30,000 in the 1960s, although the percentage of youth in proportion to the general population swelled. In addition to demographic change, the social upheavals of the period—namely, the riots that followed Martin Luther King's assassination—bred structural devastation. Between 1950 and 1970, the total number of housing units contracted from 27,624 to 22,261—of which 3,279 were unoccupied.<sup>64</sup>

The blend of poverty, a high proportion of youth, and unoccupied structures invited gang formation. In Woodlawn, two nascent and increasingly violent street gangs dueled, the Eastside Disciples and the Blackstone Rangers (later the Black P. Stone Nation and then El Rukn). Generally, these youth belonged to an “unrepresented, unrecognized underclass in a poor black community, a rung below the hard core poor.” They were products of “the school system, the welfare system, unemployment situation,

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<sup>63</sup> Woodlawn was bounded by Martin Luther King Drive to the west, Hyde Park to the north, Jackson Park to the east, and Sixty Seventh Street to the south.

<sup>64</sup> Rev. Msgr. Harry C. Koenig, S.T.D., *A History of the Parishes of the Archdiocese of Chicago*, vol. 1 (Chicago: Catholic Bishop of Chicago, 1980), 191, 362; Carolyn R. Block and Richard Block, “Street Gang Crime in Chicago,” *National Institute of Justice Research in Brief* (December 1993).

police strategies, and poverty in Woodlawn.”<sup>65</sup> Woodlawn Avenue roughly divided the two gangs’ turf. In the mid-1960s, the one thousand members of the Disciples were an affiliate of the Disciple Nation, centered in neighboring Englewood. They outnumbered their rivals until Rangers’ leader Jeff Fort initiated an ambitious recruiting scheme, ballooning the gang of two hundred to a confederation of two or three thousand members between the ages of thirteen and twenty five, with a “Board of Directors” or the “Main 21.” The growth, posturing, and violence of the gangs—thirty slayings were credited to the Disciples and Rangers between 1966 and April 1968—alarmed Woodlawn residents.<sup>66</sup>

To quell slayings, civic and religious leaders espoused a “community approach,” a method of deterrence then enjoying popularity in U.S. cities. Initially designed to avert future urban riots, the community approach essentially used neighborhood residents and organizations to reach out to crime prone youth and make accessible counseling, conflict management, social service programs, and job services. Resources and opportunities were extended. The approach also held that at-risk youth were potentially a “source of local social organization that might be utilized to funnel federal resources and opportunities into poor urban neighborhoods.”<sup>67</sup>

Woodlawn became the community approach’s most infamous test case. In the late 1960s, The Woodlawn Organization (TWO) and its acting president Arthur Brazier

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<sup>65</sup> John Hall Fish, *Black Power/White Control: The Struggle of the Woodlawn Organization in Chicago* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1973), 118-119.

<sup>66</sup> Arthur M. Brazier, *Black Self-Determination: The Story of The Woodlawn Organization* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdman’s, 1969), 69; Ron Chepesiak, *Black Gangsters of Chicago* (Fort Lee, NJ: Barricade, 2007), 132; Edmund J. Rooney, “Gang Chiefs Making Good, Place Peacemakers in the City,” *CDN*, 9 April 1968.

<sup>67</sup> George A. Tita and Andrew Papachristos, “The Evolution of Gang Policy: Balancing Intervention and Suppression,” in *Youth Gangs and Community Intervention: Research, Practice, and Evidence*, ed. Robert J. Chaskin (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010), 28.

of the Apostolic Church of God initiated a program called the Youth Manpower Demonstration (YMD) to engage the Disciples, Rangers, and other alienated and at-risk youth. TWO acknowledged the gangs as legitimate organizations that captivated neighborhood youngsters, and which therefore could direct delinquents into YMD work and job training programs. A bevy of private and public supporters funded YMD; the federal government in fact funneled \$927,000 War on Poverty funds.<sup>68</sup> YMD soured after TWO affiliate, the Reverend John Fry of the First Presbyterian Church in Chicago (64<sup>th</sup> and Kimbark), allowed the Rangers to establish headquarters in his church basement, which Fry thought would curb criminal activity. A public and police outcry followed. It was alleged that Fry was coddling the Rangers with his “open door policy.” A congressional investigation eventually charged Rangers with defrauding the U.S. government; members had apparently tried to purchase weapons and drugs. YMD ended.<sup>69</sup>

In the 1960s, the archdiocese and some Chicago Catholics favored the community approach, which lent impetus to religious reciprocity. On the one hand, it must be stated that by no means did all Catholics who dealt with gangs in the 1960s categorically embrace the community approach. Some recognized that efforts to socialize alienated, violent, and non-Catholic youth were blithe and would be fruitless.<sup>70</sup> On the other hand,

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<sup>68</sup> Malcolm W. Klein, *The American Street Gang: Its Nature, Prevalance, and Control* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 83; More and Williams, 57; Brazier, 75.

<sup>69</sup> Brazier, 76-91; More and Williams, 49; Fish 122; Natalie Y. Moore and Lance Williams, *The Almighty Black P. Stone Nation: The Rise, Fall and Resurgence of an American Gang* (Chicago: Lawrence Hill Books, 2011), 52; Lynn Emmerman, “The Most Dangerous Game,” *CT*, 9 January 1983. Fort was imprisoned, where he adopted Islam, renamed himself “Prince Malik,” and solidified his organization, which became known as El Rukn. In the late 1980s, Fort was charged with trying to purchase a rocket launcher from an undercover federal agent, and conspiring with Libya’s Moammar Gadhafi to commit terrorist acts in the U.S. See Tom Brune and James Ylisela, Jr., “The Making of Jeff Fort,” *Chicago Magazine*, November 1988.

<sup>70</sup> Gangs could genuinely frighten priests. Blackstone intimidation was one reason that Father Martin “Doc” Farrell left Woodlawn, according to his protégé Father Anthony Vader. Farrell ended his

the Catholic School Board did find favor with the community approach insofar as it delegated one hundred Neighborhood Youth Corps positions to the Conservative Vice Lords on the West Side in 1968.<sup>71</sup>

Witness also the efforts of TWO associate Father Tracey O’Sullivan in Woodlawn to interconnect at-risk youth with the community via job and skill training. O’Sullivan’s background, theological convictions, diagnosis of Woodlawn’s dismal social problems, as well as the location of his parish, influenced his approach to gangs. He was in the 1960s the Irish-American pastor at St. Cyril. The parish school was located at 6348 Blackstone Avenue—the street from which the Rangers derived their name. The Chicago Carmelites managed St. Cyril, as well as nearby Mount Carmel High School. O’Sullivan was rooted in the community. He was bred there in the 1940s and 1950s, when Woodlawn was an Irish American stronghold. The conditions in 1960s’ Woodlawn also exasperated him. Demographic change had wrought serious problems for Catholic parishes in the area like St. Cyril, which faced slumping rolls and income. The brutality of poverty and gang violence, and consequent public indifference, nauseated O’Sullivan. The church had to engage youth and address their alienation to

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participation with TWO in Woodlawn and was transferred to St. Mary in Desplaines for three reasons: his missionary plan to African Americans was being rejected by many parishes who would rather rely on archdiocesan subsidy to survive; friends had left the priesthood, which upset Farrell; and “one night at TWO when Doc was pushing for a program to make the neighborhood safe from the Black P. Stone Nation...Three gang members came into the hall and stood behind Doc and dared anyone to vote with the proposal to rid the neighborhood of terrorists. Even the Ministerial Alliance would not support its founder.” See Tony Vader, “A Eulogy for Doc Farrell,” Edward Marciniak Papers, Box 14, No folder, AAC.

<sup>71</sup> David Dawley, *A Nation of Lords: The Autobiography of the Vice Lords*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland, 1993), 166. Jack Star, “What Showed a Cat was Powerful was Turf,” *CT*, 29 April 1973.

“stop the killing.” “It was just a bunch of poor blacks killing each other, no one gave a damn,” O’Sullivan recollected.<sup>72</sup>

The priest’s diagnosis was that conditions in Woodlawn, and the injustices that mainstream White society perpetrated against Blacks, bred gang violence. Poverty, structural devastation, and alienation in Woodlawn translated into lawlessness. The lives of many young people were chaotic. Gang bangers who discerned the “phoniness of white society” and the hostility of law enforcement realized there was “a need for organization.” “Violence is part and parcel of life out here,” O’Sullivan observed in 1968, “and these boys use the resources at hand.” The priest spoke in glowing terms of Fort’s leadership, cunning, and “political genius.” Reverend Fry, with whom O’Sullivan occasionally collaborated, was “one of the best Christians I know.”<sup>73</sup> It was true that gangs had no credibility among the Black middle class. But the Disciples and Rangers evinced a “Robin Hood character” to some of the grievously poor, as the gangs were “beating the system.”<sup>74</sup>

With TWO, O’Sullivan prioritized cultivating partnerships between South Side institutions and area gangs, as well as familiarizing members with social, economic, and political opportunities. After soliciting the support of St. Cyril’s Father Bellarmine Wilson, O’Sullivan used parish facilities to host a Neighborhood Youth Corps program.

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<sup>72</sup> Don Terry, “In Chicago Courtroom, Nation’s First SuperGang Fights for Life,” *NYT*, 19 May 1991; Koenig, 191 and 362; Tom Brune and James Ylisela, Jr., “The Making of Jeff Fort,” *Chicago Magazine*, November 1988.

<sup>73</sup> “Gang Chiefs Making Good, Place Peacemaker in City,” *CDN*, 9 April 1968; Michael McGuire, “Asks Prayers for Minister Linked to Gang,” *CT*, 24 June 1968.

<sup>74</sup> In one instance, for example, Fort and other Rangers helped representatives of a local community organization move into what they charged was an unused Catholic convent at St. Laurence parish at 1349 E. 79<sup>th</sup> Street. The group alleged that the archdiocese planned to transform the convent into a halfway house, which they opposed. They demanded that Cardinal Cody turn the building over to them, as it was in their community and could be put to better use. See “Neighborhood Group Seizes Old Convent,” *CT*, 14 July 1969; Don Terry, “In Chicago Courtroom, Nation’s First Super Gang Fights for Life,” *NYT*, 19 May 1991.



Approximately fifty-five Blackstone Rangers were employed to tutor neighborhood children. Additionally, the priest encouraged at-risk and veritably “unreachable” youngsters to use the parish school’s recreation room and gymnasium during every week day from 3:30 to 10:00 p.m. Roughly one hundred fifty young people between the ages of twelve and nineteen attended daily. O’Sullivan solicited the help of student volunteers from nearby Mount Carmel and Aquinas high schools and asked them to tutor neighborhood youth, many of whom were gang members. Girls were not excluded; cooking and charm classes were held at St. Cyril’s. O’Sullivan touted the unique approach of his ministry. His staff members displayed respect to gang youths: “Outside, many of the teen agers believe the world is against them. Here, we make them feel respected and welcomed.”<sup>75</sup>

Several factors ultimately hampered the efficacy of O’Sullivan’s efforts. First, he had limited resources at his disposal, as a programmatic archdiocesan attempt to resolve gang violence was not immediately forthcoming. Second, plunging parish rolls translated St. Cyril’s merging with nearby St. Clara in 1969. Third, the community approach fell out of public favor after the YMD debacle.<sup>76</sup>

### *Sanctity in the Projects*

Thereafter in Chicago and other urban centers around the nation in the 1970s and early 1980s, gang “suppression” rather than intervention became the normative approach of law enforcement officials, many civic officials, and legislators. Investigations, arrests, and penalizations, rather than attempts to understand and implement community

<sup>75</sup> Moore and Williams, 52; Fish, 146; Ellen McKenney, “Gang Members Give No Problem to Priest,” *CT*, 5 March 1967.

<sup>76</sup> Koenig, 191.

strategies, were favored. Consider that police departments throughout the nation in the 1970s and 1980s formed specialized gang units.<sup>77</sup> Among a segment of Chicago Catholics and eventually the archdiocese, however, solely advocating suppression was counterintuitive. Instead, noteworthy efforts were made to understand, intervene, and reach out to at-risk youth. The realization that urban trauma was potentially edifying to personal sanctity also encouraged religious reciprocity, as the words and deeds of William Wylie Tomes, Jr., or Brother Bill, make plain.

Tomes' background did not necessarily augur a life of ministering to violent youth. He was bred in prosperous Evanston, a growing edge city to the north of Chicago. Tomes attended private schools, St. Athanasius Catholic School and Loyola Academy, and eventually earned a Master's Degree in Social Work from the University of Notre Dame. Although he was not particularly prayerful as a young man, Tomes in 1980 experienced a religious epiphany while imploring God for guidance at St. Joseph's Ukrainian Church (5000 N. Cumberland). His vision reportedly blurred. According to Tomes, he then saw nothing but "the face of Christ on a painting near the altar." The vision reoccurred over the next three years. Each time, Tomes heard a voice, which he believed to be Jesus Christ. It instructed: "Love. You are forbidden to do anything other than that," which was thrice followed by "I'll lead, you follow," "Don't be afraid," and "Give all your trust." Other messages would sometimes be communicated: "You must forgive everyone, everything," and "Judge not, and you will not be judged." Reading Sacred Scripture, he repeatedly encountered Christ's commandment to his apostles, which Tomes considered providential: "Take nothing with you for the journey." His confidant Father Thomas Ventura of St. Athanasius Parish in Evanston concluded that the

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<sup>77</sup> Tita and Papachristos, 29.

Lord was calling Tomes to forsake worldly possessions. Tomes eventually complied, moved in with a friend, and began sleeping on cardboard.<sup>78</sup>

Musing on his visions and experiences, Tomes concluded that his vocation was to labor among Chicago gangs. After reading a 1983 *Chicago Tribune* article about the poorest city parish, he volunteered to become a youth minister at St. Malachy's on the West Side (2248 W. Washington Blvd.) and commenced visiting the nearby Henry Horner Homes and Rockwell Gardens. Gangs like the Vice Lords were unsure how to respond; they took a vote to determine if the brazen trespasser should be eliminated, but instead decided to protect Tomes. Theological beliefs fueled Tomes, who recollected that "Christ said: 'Do not be afraid, for I am with you'" to justify his behavior. The layman tread Chicago housing project pavement because he intended to "change the attitudes" of gangsters: "Through me, Christ is out there trying to accomplish something for their sake. If I die, then it is Christ who dies over again for their sake." Tomes' method of gang engagement and deterrence was to stroll Henry Horner and Rockwell during the day and night, and converse with youth. Sometimes, he waded into open gunfire, which then typically ceased. When street warfare was likely, youth cognizant of Tomes' pacifying presence pleaded with him to thwart the bloodshed. His efforts sparked a few other unabashed souls who sometimes joined him, such as Jesuit seminarians Jerry Drolshegan and Thomas Garner.<sup>79</sup> St. Malachy's pastor, Father Stephen Mangan, decided that "some form of religious identification" was suited to, and may help protect, Tomes and therefore

<sup>78</sup> Ron Stodhill II, "In the Line of Fire," *Time Magazine*, 151, no. 15, 20 April 1998; Grant Pick, "Brother Bill," *Chicago Reader*, 30 May 1990.

<sup>79</sup> In 1986, a bullet skimmed Garner's arm while he walked with Tomes.

dubbed him “Brother Bill.” As a tribute to St. Francis of Assisi, Tomes fashioned a patchwork denim cassock, which he began to don in the projects.<sup>80</sup>

The layman built bridges to youth. That he assimilated and used gangs’ arcane idioms was crucial to communication. Tomes underscored that these youths were children of God and therefore his “brothers.” Haranguing, issuing advice, or otherwise coercing gang members to redirect their lives was useless. “Other people might want to change these kids,” Tomes remarked, “but I recognize them for who they are, and for how great they are as children of God.” They were also properly members of society, and therefore should not sense and behave as if they were sequestered. To that end, Brother Bill periodically transported gangsters to the University of Notre Dame, his alma mater, to attend the games and practices of sports teams. Gang members in turn explained their way of life to students and faculty at university workshops, or the campus’s Center for Social Concerns. Tomes’ chief intention was to coax youth to respect themselves and discover that all life, as a gift from God, was sacred. He held that this method more effectively deterred crime than penalization, or even education and employment programs.<sup>81</sup> Tomes’ reciprocal approach to gangs elicited the approval of Cardinal Bernardin. In the mid-1980s, the archbishop met Brother Bill, was impressed, and consequently requested that Tomes expand his work to gangs throughout Chicago. Bernardin placed Tomes on the Chicago Catholic Charities’ payroll as a consultant.<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> Ron Stodhill II, “In the Line of Fire,” *Time Magazine*, 151, no. 15, 20 April 1998; William Recktenwald, “His Calling is Shots in the Night,” *CT*, 25 March 1985.

<sup>81</sup> Ron Stodhill II, “In the Line of Fire,” *Time Magazine*, 151, no. 15, 20 April 1998; Grant Pick, “Brother Bill,” *Chicago Reader*, 30 May 1990.

<sup>82</sup> Cardinal Bernardin, “Cabrini Green: Hope in the Midst of Fear,” *CNW*, 15 May 1992; Grant Pick, “Brother Bill,” *Chicago Reader*, 30 May 1990.

### *Killing Our Children*

The archdiocese gradually developed a plan to curb gang violence in the mid-1980s after Bernardin was settled in Chicago. A handful of priests, several of whom were from the Near Northwest Side communities, helped to stimulate archdiocesan action. Here, parishes had a palpable presence and the area was strongly Catholic and increasingly Latino, unlike the Black and majority Protestant Woodlawn. In the mid-1970s and early 1980s, the Near Northwest Side communities of Humboldt Park, Logan Square, and West Town experienced a rash of gang slayings. Staggeringly high school dropout rates, gang growth, needless violence, and especially the unprecedented number of dead children aggrieved clerics, who insisted that the archdiocese develop a programmatic agenda to resolve gang violence. The plan ultimately emphasized interdependency; it focused on publicizing the causes of gang growth, encouraging community members to recognize their common reliance on one another, and kindling neighborhood collective action to resolve gang violence.

Violence spiked in the 1970s in Humboldt Park, Logan Square, and West Town.<sup>83</sup> Historically, residents referred to the three community areas as the Northwest or Milwaukee Corridor, so named for the diagonal street that pulsed northwest from downtown to the suburbs. Gangs had long stalked Near Northwest Side streets, although the 1970s witnessed unprecedented levels of deadly gang-fueled violence.<sup>84</sup> That as many as forty two of Chicago's recognized 110 gangs were centered there indicated that Humboldt Park, Logan Square, and West Town was intensely contested turf. The few

<sup>83</sup> Some residents alternatively referred to West Town as East Humboldt or Wicker Park.

<sup>84</sup> Dominic A. Pacyga and Ellen Skerrett, *Chicago: City of Neighborhoods* (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1986), 165, 178.

primarily White gangs that remained were ebbing in strength and therefore defensive. Largely Latino and to a lesser degree Black gangs, such as the Latin Kings and Maniac Latin Disciples were increasingly organized and well-armed. Some academic gang experts such as Irving Spergel of the University of Chicago argued that the neighborhoods had collectively become one of the most deadly urban areas in the nation. In 1984, the areas' twenty-nine gang-related slayings were unparalleled.<sup>85</sup>

Familiar factors stoked violence. Middle-class Whites of German, Polish, and Italian heritage had been migrating out of the area for decades, as a consequence of the construction of the Kennedy Expressway, the in-migration of lower income minorities such as Puerto Ricans, Mexicans, and African Americans, and employment shifts. Private investment in the area plunged in the 1950s and 1960s. One upshot was dilapidated and abandoned residences, which indicated physical decay and invited illegal activity. Housing stock in Humboldt Park and West Town was particularly devastated; the total number of units in the latter drastically dipped by 10,600 or 22 percent between 1960 and 1980. Fires constantly threatened. Arsons especially afflicted West Town. Surveying the dreary situation, Mayor Michael Bilandic felt pressed to form the West Town Arson Task Force in 1976. Members patrolled streets.<sup>86</sup>

Alienation from mainstream American society, the lack of socialization among Mexican and Puerto Rican newcomers, unstable employment, and family distress potentially bred gang formation. In 1978, Father Lawrence Craig, then a young associate

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<sup>85</sup> Joseph Cardinal Bernardin, "Humboldt Park – Logan Square – West Town Community Meeting," 5 February 1985, Mayoral Records, Central Files Series, 1981 to 1985, Files of Delores Woods, Box 37, Folder 1, CPLHW. ; Jean Davidson, "Church Tells Plan to Fight City Gangs," *CT*, 29 December 1984; "Chicago Violence Kills Another," *Milwaukee Journal*, 13 December 1984.

<sup>86</sup> Pacyga and Skerrett, 177-178; Chicago Fact Book Consortium, eds., *Local Community Fact Book, Chicago Metropolitan Area, 1980* (Chicago: Chicago Review Press, 1984), 55, 60, 62; "Aloof City, Scared Private Investors and Divided Community Watch as Housing Destruction Devastates East Humboldt Park," *CR*, February 1970.

pastor at St. Sylvester (2157 N. Humboldt) who would eventually help spearhead archdiocesan anti-gang efforts, warned that the “lack of real Puerto Rican culture, tradition, and identity” facilitated gang growth. Youth were forced to negotiate parents’ desires to maintain Puerto Rican cultural traditions on the one hand, and on the other mainstream American culture, which generally did not accept them. For their part, many young Mexican males were not U.S. citizens and thus felt as if they “have nothing to lose. They are on the streets, and drink heavily.” Craig explained that generally, gang members were “typical ghetto kids—school problems, can’t read, many from broken homes.” They had fathers who were either absent or employed at “menial factory jobs,” and “spend times in taverns.”<sup>87</sup> St. Stanislaus priest Father Anthony Bus was emphatic that inattentive parents were complicit. The depressing absence of a general social compass was also blameworthy: “We’re too soft on kids. America is good at protecting individual rights but has no concept of the common good. The individualistic, narcissistic culture undermines the family.” Father Bus suggested that teaching youth the Gospel, coupled with Catholic moral teaching, might reduce the seductiveness of gang life.<sup>88</sup>

The number of Catholic parishes in the area, vestiges of European settlement on the Near Northwest Side, was not small. Parishes included St. John Berchmans (2717 W. Logan), St. Hedwig (2226 N. Hoyne), St. Mary of the Angels (1850 N. Hermitage), St. Sylvester (2157 N. Humboldt), St. Francis Xavier (2840 W. Nelson), St. Philomena (1921 N. Kedvale), Maternity of the Blessed Virgin Mary (3647 W. North), and St. Stanislaus Kostka (1351 W. Evergreen). Despite the significant presence, clerics on the

<sup>87</sup> Father Vincent J. Giess, “Gangs Thorn on Northwest Side,” *CC*, 3 February 1978; Larry Craig, “Latin Gangs (Handle with Care),” *Upturn*, September 1980, CHM.

<sup>88</sup> Jay Copp, “Churches Grapple with Mounting Gang Violence,” *CNW*, 16 September 1994.

Near Northwest Side regretted the absence of programmatic Catholic action in regard to gangs in the 1970s. Craig noted that Puerto Ricans and Mexicans had by and large replaced Whites as the dominant ethnic groups on the Near Northwest Side, but the archdiocese was “not reaching out” to them.<sup>89</sup> Slayings of young people—some priests by the early 1980s had celebrated over half a dozen funerals for dead children—were most unnerving and numbing. Maternity BVM’s Father Gary Graf remarked that “there are so many priests who have shared the futility and senselessness of these deaths, that something has to be done.” Father Charles Kyle, then associate pastor of St. Francis Xavier in Logan Square and one of the area’s most active spokesmen for at-risk youth, pronounced that “The gang situation is paralyzing the city.” “Just yesterday,” he remarked in December 1984, “two priests contacted me, just in one day, saying ‘Hey, this is crazy. I buried a kid last week’... Or, ‘I buried four in the past two weeks.’ It’s unbelievable.”<sup>90</sup>

The financial distress of individual parishes and the archdiocese was part of the problem. Congregations solicitous with affording church and school monthly bills were unlikely to invest much money in ancillary social programs, such as gang prevention. White Catholic apathy, as well as the paucity of Latino priests and Chancery officials, also accounted for inadequate parish and archdiocesan outreach to Latinos. That Latinos could not afford Catholic schools aggrieved Father Kyle, who observed that Latinos were “the first immigrant group that we have not offered the Catholic education system to.” Catholic but low income, roughly 90 percent of Chicago Latino youth had to enroll in public schools, which gangs had too often infiltrated and where drop-out rates were

<sup>89</sup> Father Vincent J. Giess, “Gangs Thorn on Northwest Side,” *CC*, 3 February 1978

<sup>90</sup> Mark Zambrano, “Gang Deaths Jar Priests into Action,” *CT*, 18 December 1984.



ballooning. Kyle posited that the archdiocese should launch a major fund drive to defray school tuition in the poor parishes of Chicago, and become more involved with pupils in the public schools: “We must make sure that schools are safe enough for parents to send their kids to. The schools must become sanctuaries.”<sup>91</sup>

Kyle’s zeal was crucial to kindling a programmatic archdiocesan response to gang growth. In December 1984, the priest composed a lengthy analysis of gang growth and activity in West Town, Humboldt Park, and Logan Square, as well as the Catholic Church’s possible reaction, and submitted it to the Father Frank Kane, head of the archdiocese’s Division of Community Services. Not short on scholarly citations, the report argued that the three community areas “have the highest incidence of gang violence in Chicago.” Kyle hypothesized that area gangs essentially “served as a partial support and developmental institution” for youth who inadequately made the cultural and social transition “from family to school and work.” Gang members were isolated from the broader community. Violence and intimidation had paralyzed public schools. Hitherto, the Church’s principal interaction with gang violence had taken place after the fact, i.e., priests’ officiating of funerals. Drawing from University of Chicago researchers, Kyle maintained that area churches were cognizant that gangs were a serious problem, but feared wrestling with the problem “mainly to protect their immediate families, property, and membership.” Kyle encouraged measures to prevent, mediate, and control gang violence, although he underscored that the latter was generally the responsibility of police and state lawmakers. More effective educational and recreational

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<sup>91</sup> Bruce Buursma and Manuel Galvan, “Archdiocese Opening Arms to Hispanics,” *CT*, 24 June 1984; Mark Zambrano and Linnet Myers, “Priests Get \$250,000 to Fight Gangs,” *CT*, 21 December 1984. Kyle later co-authored a book that centered on the Latino youth and Chicago public schools. See Charles L. Kyle and Edward R. Kantowicz, *Kids First – Primero Los Ninos: Chicago School Reform in the 1980s* (Springfield: Sangamon State University, 1992).

opportunities, job training, and individual counseling could integrate youth with the broader community. Parents and youth had to be educated about identifying gang presence and intimidation. Courses should be Spanish-language. Latinos should staff the relevant newly created archdiocesan programs. Parishes should be forums for the presentations of Latino gang crimes unit officers. Kyle recommended that the archdiocese sponsor a Spanish-language conference on gangs for area parishes to foster a “grass roots approach.” It should also hold meetings on community needs with local leaders and political officials. Finally, Catholic schools on the Near Northwest Side had to remain viable, and public schools made safer, more effective, and free of narcotics and gang domination. Ecumenism was crucial to success.<sup>92</sup>

Kyle’s exhortation was heeded. A few weeks later, Bernardin organized a meeting with priests to discuss gangs and the archdiocese’s reaction to them. The shooting death of Simeon Vocational High School basketball standout Ben Wilson, and the subsequent outcry, gave impetus to the archdiocese.<sup>93</sup> Priests formed the Gang Intervention Project Committee, and began to meet regularly to devise remedies to gang

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<sup>92</sup> Rev. Charles Kyle to Frank Kane, “Possible Response of the Catholic Church to Gang Violence on the Near Northwest Side of Chicago,” 10 December 1984, Records of the Office of the Chancellor, Box: Executive Records, Subject Files, Gangs, No Folder, AAC.

<sup>93</sup> Wilson’s death also hastened the creation of Mayor Harold Washington’s Task Force on Youth Crime Prevention, which invited a representative of the archdiocese to become a member. Bernardin appointed Kyle. Other members of the Task Force included C. Vincent Bakeman, Committee Chairperson; Judith Walker, Commissioner; Raymond Curran, Safer Foundation; Ray Vazquez, Symons YMCA; Leo Webster, Demicco Youth Services; Richard Mell, Alderman; Jean Lewis, Habilitative Systems, Inc.; Terra Thomas HRDI; Leslie Jacobs, Mayor’s Office. See “Mayor’s Task Force on Youth Crime Prevention, Program Development Committee, Minutes of Meeting,” 21 January 1985, Mayoral Records, Public Safety/Regulatory Sub-Cabinet Series, 1983-1987, Box 8, Folder 2, CPLHW. See also Anne Keegan and Jerry Thornton, “Chicago Losing Ground in War on Street Gangs,” *CT*, 30 July 1986. Some of those who attended archdiocesan meetings on gangs included, in addition to Bernardin and Kyle, Roach, Bishop Placido Rodriguez, Bishop Wilton Gregory, Rev. Jerry Cleator, OP, and Rev. James Miller. See “Background Information: Archdiocesan Meeting, Re: Gangs,” 28 December 1984, Joseph Cardinal Bernardin Papers, Box: CBC Agency Files, Folder: Archdiocese of Chicago, Gangs, and Gang Project, 1984, AAC.

violence.<sup>94</sup> Bernardin pledged \$250,000 to help resolve gang problems, which was admittedly a “modest amount,” but “as much money as I have available” to put “into this particular program at this time.” An additional \$50,000 in private donations had been raised by June 1986. Money was doled out through Father Kane’s Division of Community Services.<sup>95</sup>

During the following months, Bernardin also addressed gangs in several lengthy public speeches before parishes and civic leaders. In February 1985, the Cardinal spoke at St. Aloysius Catholic Church (2300 W. Lemoyne St.), specifically centering on the violence in Humboldt Park, Logan Square, and West Town. Over 700 attended, including priests and Chicago civic leaders such as Mayor Harold Washington, State’s Attorney Richard J. Daley, and Police Superintendent Fred Rice, to honor twenty nine area youths who had been killed in gang-related violence during the previous year. Bernardin expressed sorrow for children who felt no recourse but to join gangs; high death tolls; the jarring numbers of weapons in schools and on the streets; underemployment; poverty and the inaccessibility of satisfactory social and medical resources; and tragically high dropout rates—about 70 percent in Chicago high schools in the past decade. The archbishop underscored a theme that would become central to archdiocesan solutions: the collective action of community residents, as well as strong families, was indispensable to alleviating gang violence and intimidation. The Cardinal urged reciprocity. Fearful Chicagoans must not retreat into their homes or segregate themselves from one another or at risk youth, which would simply exacerbate problems

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<sup>94</sup> Jean Davidson, “Church Tells Plan to Fight City Gangs,” *CT*, 29 December 1984; Bob Reczek, “Gang Effort Still On,” *CC*, 30 May 1986.

<sup>95</sup> Jack Houston, “Bernardin Decries Anti-Gang Plan Impasse,” *CT*, 18 May 1985; Father Bob Rybicki and Sr. Robert Popara, OP, to Father Frank Kane, 23 January 1985, Records of the Office of the Chancellor, Box: Executive Records, Executive Subject Files, Gangs, No Folder, AAC.

and render individuals more vulnerable: “In not reaching out to help others, they can expect no help themselves.” Communities had to be strengthened, and ethnic suspicions overcome. He averred, “To unite this community in the face of serious problems means that you must take down any fences which separate people from one another. The fences are destructive...They also make it impossible for us to confront common problems, which can only be resolved through joint efforts.” Commonly, Bernardin said, the most vulnerable—those who lack adequate education, housing, income, or health care—are too often the ones who “have to stand by helplessly as their children are convicted and imprisoned as juvenile offenders.” Loving families that inculcated moral virtues and personal responsibility in children were vital. Additionally, that every human life had dignity must be taught. Homes should be oases of love, safety, and communication. The Church could help with short-term relief measures. The Cardinal personally pledged to “walk every street in this city, if necessary, until this problem is resolved.” “We can do together what we could never do alone,” he ended.<sup>96</sup> Bernardin echoed his message elsewhere. To the pastoral council members of the archdiocese, he reemphasized that key solutions to curtailing gang violence were helping the poor, strengthening families, and uniting people. The archbishop regretted that Chicago-area suburbanites “don’t understand the full ecclesial impact of gangs and gang violence.” The Church could not resolve all gang violence, but could be “a catalyst which brings people together to face our common problems.”<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> Joseph Cardinal Bernardin, “Humboldt Park – Logan Square – West Town Community Meeting,” 5 February 1985, Mayoral Records, Central Files Series, 1981 to 1985, Files of Delores Woods, Box 37, Folder 1, CPLHW.

<sup>97</sup> Joseph Cardinal Bernardin, “Archdiocesan Pastoral Council Formation Meeting,” 2 September 1985, Joseph Cardinal Bernardin Papers, Box: Gangs and Gang Project, 1984-1985, Folder 67, AAC; Joseph Cardinal Bernardin, “Address to Leaders of Chicago,” 29 October, 4, 5 November 1985, Joseph Cardinal Bernardin Addresses and Talks, Box 24, Folder 18, AAC. Bernardin also addressed gangs during

A “community based gang intervention plan” was devised by the Gang Intervention Project Committee and embraced by Bernardin. With the initial \$250,000, several projects were funded. First, Mobile Teams were created under the coordination of Father Craig. Two teams with two trained persons each would help gang-plagued neighborhoods to address illegal activity in their area. Teams were interracial and bilingual, and based at Kolbe House at Assumption Parish (2434 S. California Ave.), the archdiocesan center that coordinated ministry to prisoners, their families, and other households facing severe difficulties. One team was principally available to Black-White communities; the other to Hispanic-White communities. Members included Tony Brewer, Linda Martinez Roman, Joe Aleman, a former gang leader and DePaul University graduate, and Joe Grant, a native South Sider and former seminarian. Teams focused on information and education. They helped parents to identify and respond to gang presence and intimidation of their children. In a similar manner, they instructed parishes, schools, and youth ministers. Teams worked directly with youth to counsel them about alternatives to gangs. They also partnered with social service agencies to cultivate jobs and after school programs for at-risk youth.<sup>98</sup> Second, a youth center in Pilsen was initiated near Benito Juarez High School. Educational, spiritual, and social

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an April speech at the Rockwell Gardens public housing site. Critical of the glaring social problems in high rise housing, he notably called for the “soon study of the possibility of alternatives to the city’s public housing.” See Joseph Cardinal Bernardin, “Address, Rockwell Gardens,” 1 April 1985, Joseph Cardinal Bernardin Addresses and Talks, Box 22, Folder 18, AAC.

<sup>98</sup> Joseph Cardinal Bernardin, “Humboldt Park – Logan Square – West Town Community Meeting,” 5 February 1985, Mayoral Records, Central Files Series, 1981 to 1985, Files of Delores Woods, Box 37, Folder 1, CPLHW; Mark Zambrano, “Grass Roots Program Helps Weed Out Gangs,” *CT*, 28 April 1985; Father Vincent J. Giese, “Task Force Helping Youths to Resist Gangs, Drug Culture,” *CNW*, 30 March 1990; “Proposal: Mobile Teams for Gang Education/Information,” Records of the Office of the Chancellor, Box: Executive Records, Executive Subject Files, Gangs, No Folder, AAC; Terry Bradford to Cardinal Bernardin, 18 February 1986, Joseph Cardinal Bernardin Papers, Box: Gangs and Gang Project, 1984-1985, Folder: Archdiocese of Chicago, Gangs and Gang Project, 1985, AAC.

programs for teenagers were implemented. Stemming the drop-out rate was a chief task.<sup>99</sup> Third, a “Lights On!” program was funded. Two Catholic high schools and twelve grade schools introduced extensive after school and early evening educational and recreational opportunities.<sup>100</sup> Fourth, an attempt was made to revitalize the Catholic Youth Organization, which pleased Kyle, who remarked in 1985 that “In my fifteen years here, I haven’t seen one CYO activity in the area...zero.” Basketball leagues for high school age players were established, boxing training was offered, and a Catholic Committee on Scouting was sponsored.<sup>101</sup>

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Police statistics suggest abnormally high levels of violent crime in Chicago between 1965 and 1996. As catalysts of violence, scholars have cited the dilapidation of the built environment, severe economic strain, deterioration of instruments of socialization such as families and schools, young minorities’ alienation with the social mainstream, and narcotics use and drug sales. The number and size of gangs, as well as Chicagoans’ sense that handguns had flooded sections of their city, bred a feeling of profound unease and sometimes terror.

For Catholics in violence-plagued communities like Woodlawn in the 1960s, and the Near Northwest Side in the 1970s and 1980s, the well-being of lives and property, as well as the viability of parishes, was threatened. In Catholics’ eventual and necessary confrontation with interpersonal violence and street gangs, liberalism and religious

<sup>99</sup> Bob Reczek, “Gang Effort Still On,” *CC*, 30 May 1986.

<sup>100</sup> Nancy Ryan, “Fight Back Against Gangs,” *CD*, 14 July 1986; “Proposal: Lights On!; “Proposal: Lights On!” Records of the Office of the Chancellor, Box: Executive Records, Executive Subject Files, Gangs, No Folder, AAC.

<sup>101</sup> Mark Zambrano, “In Fight Against Gangs, CYO a Contender Again,” *CT*, 17 February 1985; Joseph Cardinal Bernardin, “Address, Rockwell Gardens,” 1 April 1985, Joseph Cardinal Bernardin Addresses and Talks, Box 22, Folder 18, AAC.

reciprocity were unmistakable impulses. Both Cody and Bernardin insisted that sociological structures helped to foster crime and interpersonal violence, gun control was an urgent necessity, and rehabilitation rather than penalization of offenders would best alley crime. Regarding gangs, individuals such as Father Tracey O'Sullivan, Father Charles Kyle, and eventually Cardinal Bernardin emphasized that neighborhood action and interconnecting crime prone youth to their communities was the best method to alleviate deadly violence. Intervention rather than suppression was urged. Reciprocally, some individuals such as Brother Bill Tomes insisted that violence also afforded opportunities; reaching out to, and suffering with, crime prone youth could lead to spiritual renewal.

Religious reciprocity was marshaled to grapple with the seemingly insoluble problems of the profoundly alienated and economically disadvantaged. As the 1983 election of African American Democratic reformer Harold Washington demonstrates, reciprocity could also be exercised among powerful city lawmakers. That the archdiocese and some theologically motivated Catholics attempted to salve political rifts and racial animosity indicates the strength and popularity of the reciprocity impulse.

## *Chapter 4*

### *The 1983 Mayoral Election*

#### *Brawling City*

Scholarly analyses of Harold Washington's ascendancy and mayoral tenure in Chicago (1983-1987) have often underscored the accompanying political polarization, intense racial antipathy, and legislative gridlock. This principally stemmed from public quarrels Washington and his supporters had with incumbent Jane Byrne and Cook County State's Attorney Richard M. Daley in the 1983 Democratic mayoral primary; with White Republican Bernard Epton in the general election; with apprehensive White "ethnic" neighborhoods, particularly on the Southwest and Northwest Sides, who were fearful that an African American Hyde Park politician might confiscate their city jobs, hasten racial change in their communities, or neglect them altogether; with White racists; and with Democratic machine-affiliated aldermen, who regularly tangled with the new administration and impeded Washington-sponsored appointments and legislation.<sup>1</sup> That books chronicling the 1983 mayoral election and subsequent "Council Wars" often emphasize racial and political animosity is unsurprising, as journalistic accounts from the period did as well. Memorably, two *Wall Street Journal* correspondents in the summer of

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<sup>1</sup> Paul Kleppner's exhaustive account of the 1983 mayoral election emphasizes that Chicago was a "city divided," which is a description journalist Gary Rivlin also employs as a chapter heading in *Fire on the Prairie: Chicago's Harold Washington and the Politics of Race*. To convey the primary's acrimony, Paul M. Green repeatedly evokes the battlefield: Washington, Byrne, and Daley were "combatants" who engaged in "opening skirmishes" before "declar[ing] war" on one other. Kerwin C. Swint appraises that the general election between Washington and Epton was the ninth most negative political campaign in U.S. history, as it featured course appeals to racism that aggravated voters' sensitivities. Even for "the rough and tumble world of Chicago politics," Swint judges, it was a "shockingly brutal campaign." See Paul Kleppner, *Chicago Divided: The Making of a Black Mayor* (DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 1985); Gary Rivlin, *Fire on the Prairie: Chicago's Harold Washington and the Politics of Race* (New York: Henry Holt, 1992); Paul M. Green, "The 1983 Chicago Democratic Mayoral Primary: Some New Players—Same Old Rules," in *The Making of the Mayor: Chicago 1983*, eds. Melvin G. Holli and Paul M. Green (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1984), 17-30; Kerwin C. Swint, *Mudslingers: The Top 25 Negative Political Campaigns of All Time* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2006), 143.



1984 agreed with the characterization of Chicago as a “brawling city” and a “Beirut by the Lake,” evoking the war ravaged Lebanese city.<sup>2</sup> Notwithstanding journalistic hyperbole, or the actual accuracy of such comparisons, these monikers did capture an interpretation of the city widely-held in the national media.

Washington’s victory in 1983, which a host of long and short term factors facilitated, was unprecedented because it ushered into City Hall Chicago’s first African American mayor, reformer, and Hyde Parker. In the process, Washington defeated the Democratic political machine, or the “regular” Democratic Party, which had retained political power for a half century. That Washington was a Black independent Democratic reformer buoyed his voting base of African Americans, White liberals, and some Latinos, but vexed the political opposition, thereby catalyzing quarrels with machine-backed candidates and alderman, as well as the Republican Party.

Washington’s political ascendancy aroused unease among many Catholics in White and principally Catholic “ethnic” neighborhoods, such as those on the Southwest Side, which this chapter examines. Some of these communities, and most notoriously Chicago Lawn and Gage Park, had been sites of racially-charged confrontations in the 1960s and 1970s.<sup>3</sup> Chiefly to mitigate racially polarizing forces in the community, maintain property values, and protect residents’ general welfare, the Southwest Parish and Neighborhood Federation (SPNF) was established in 1972. The Catholic Church was a vitalizing and crucial component of the federation, which received financial and

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<sup>2</sup> John Helyar and Robert Johnson, “Brawling City: Chicago’s Political Rift Deepens, Worsening City’s Many Problems,” *WSJ*, 6 August 1984.

<sup>3</sup> By no means should Southwest Side White Catholics be singled out as racists. John T. McGreevy and Steven M. Avella have documented that White Catholic animus to African Americans was in evidence throughout the city in the middle decades of the century. John T. McGreevy, *Parish Boundaries: The Catholic Encounter with Race in the Twentieth-Century Urban North* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996); Steven M. Avella, *This Confident Church: Catholic Leadership and Life in Chicago, 1940-1965* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1992).

human resources from Catholic Charities, had many Catholic members, utilized Catholic churches and schools, and worked closely with local Catholic religious. Be that as it may, the heated confrontation between federation leaders and archdiocesan officials that occurred as a consequence of Washington's mayoral victory painfully exposed misgivings between federation leaders and archdiocesan officials. Disagreements over religious reciprocity formed the crux of the matter. When the SPNF helped to form a White "ethnic" coalition in 1984, the archdiocese denounced some of its aims and goals, which were allegedly incendiary, divisive, and unnecessary.

Not all of the city's Catholics were apprehensive about a Washington mayoralty; an admitted minority was receptive. In fact, several influential Black and White Catholic laypeople and clergy, including Cardinal Bernardin, seized the unprecedented opportunity to foster religious reciprocity by encouraging dialogue between races and political factions. For his part, *Chicago Reporter* editor John McDermott harnessed the inclusive vision of Jesus Christ and Martin Luther King, Jr. to publicly and repeatedly urge racial amity. McDermott also believed that it was the Catholic Church's responsibility to initiate dialogue with the new Black political leadership and sensitize it to the needs and fears of the city's White Catholics.

### *Beirut by the Lake*

Harold Washington was the son of a precinct captain who generally espoused the political positions of the Cook County Democratic Caucus as a member of the Illinois General Assembly (1965-1976) before increasingly voting as a Democratic independent as a state senator (1976-1980), and then winning a seat in the U.S. House of Representatives. In addition to Washington's own personal charisma and political savvy,

a host of factors facilitated his victory in the 1983 mayoral election, which are briefly explained here to contextualize the remainder of the chapter. First, the post-World War II African American demographic surge, in combination with White outmigration, translated into a higher percentage of Black city residents. By April 1983, 40 percent of Chicago's inhabitants, or nearly 1.2 million, were African American; about 667,000 were registered voters. That the vast majority supported Washington greatly helped to sweep him into City Hall.<sup>4</sup>

The progressive splintering of the Democratic political machine was another factor. Irish Americans had dominated the regular Democratic Party and City Hall for nearly half a century.<sup>5</sup> Mayor and chairman of the Democratic Central Committee of Cook County Richard J. Daley fortified machine power, fusing a Democratic coalition of White ethnics, African Americans, downtown businesspeople, and government employees, which nonetheless began to unravel prior to Daley's death.<sup>6</sup> Two blocs were primarily responsible; racially-fueled distrust impeded their political wedding. Eastern European Americans, particularly Poles, chafed at what they considered a lack of power in the machine. African Americans, whose relationship with the party had exchanged votes for jobs, services, and token city appointments, gradually realized their potential electoral clout and were unsatisfied that Black moderate and usually Catholic Daley

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<sup>4</sup> Abdul Alkalimat and Doug Gills, *Harold Washington and the Crisis of Black Power in Chicago: Mass Protest* (Chicago: Twenty-FirstCentury Books, 1989), 51-53; Kleppner, 148, 166.

<sup>5</sup> Milton L. Rakove could still accurately remark in 1975 that "There is an old cliché about the city of Chicago that the Jews own it, the Irish run it, and the blacks live in it. The cliché is only about half true. The Jews do not own Chicago. White Anglo-Saxon Protestant businessmen, who live in suburban communities like Lake Forest and Kenilworth, control the economic life of the city. And the blacks still number less than half of the population of the city. But the Irish do run the city." See Rakove, *Don't Make No Waves, Don't Back No Losers: An Insider's Analysis of the Daley Machine* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1975), 32.

<sup>6</sup> Alkalimat and Gills, 114.

appointees prioritized machine imperatives over constituents' needs.<sup>7</sup> Daley's death also reenergized a third Democratic faction that ultimately guided the machine in the post-Daley era: the "Young Turks," or White aldermen such as Edward Burke (14<sup>th</sup>) and Edward Vrdolyak (10<sup>th</sup>) who felt that the deceased mayor had stifled their access to power and privileges. Party divisions were evident in the 1977 special mayoral election that followed Daley's death. State Senator Harold Washington and Polish Alderman Roman Pucinski unsuccessfully challenged the machine candidate, Alderman Michael Bilandic. By 1983, however, the regular Democratic Party's disarray facilitated Washington's victory; the machine supported Jane Byrne who nonetheless split the White vote with Richard M. Daley.<sup>8</sup>

African American frustration with machine politics and the subsequent mobilization of Black voters were other factors that facilitated Washington's ascent. Paul Kleppner explains that the Chicago Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s galvanized African Americans and White reformers, who increasingly publicized Blacks' disadvantages in education, public employment, and housing, as well as their unjust treatment by law enforcement. Rather than fashion difficult political compromises to alleviate these grievances—thereby potentially alienating White ethnic voters or triggering their out-migration from the city—the regular Democratic Party essentially dismissed them and guaranteed “continued white dominance” in city administration. As a consequence, Kleppner states, “White ethnic voters saw the mayor and his machine as

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<sup>7</sup> Kleppner, 73-4; Alkalimat and Gills, 90. Catholic African American Daley-appointees included Ralph Metcalfe, Joseph Robichaux, William Shannon, and John Stroger. See William J. Grimshaw, *Bitter Fruit: Black Politics and the Chicago Machine, 1931-1991* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 132-3.

<sup>8</sup> Grimshaw, 144; “Race in the Race: The Candidates and Their Strategies,” *CR*, March 1983. The Shakman Decrees, which prohibited “political hiring and firing” and the separation of the mayor's office from the Party Chairman also weakened the machine. See Grimshaw, 164.

defenders of their values and interests, as the last hope for continued white control.”<sup>9</sup> Post-Daley party leaders could maintain this status quo insofar as historically high White ethnic voter rates, and low Black voter turnout, persisted. National and local events in the late 1970s and early 1980s, however, galvanized Black voters. President Ronald Reagan’s drastic reductions in federal financial assistance to the poor, and government employment opportunities—the African American middle class “derived a disproportionate share of its income from government employment”—provoked Chicago Blacks to charge that the administration was apathetic or hostile to their well-being.<sup>10</sup> Second, the unprecedented importance of middle-class African American South Side wards in securing Democratic independent Jane Byrne’s victory in the 1979 mayoral election disclosed machine vulnerability.<sup>11</sup> Betrayed by what they perceived to be Byrne’s subsequent *volte face* and open collaboration with party regulars, African American organizations such as Jesse Jackson’s Operation PUSH, as well as grassroots coalitions like People Organized for Welfare and Employment Rights (POWER), initiated an unprecedented voter registration drive in Fall 1982 in anticipation of the 1983 mayoral election, which ultimately abetted Washington.<sup>12</sup>

A series of inflammatory statements and regrettable events antagonized racial sensitivities and polarized political factions during Washington’s campaign and first years in office, thereby buttressing stereotypes of Chicago as a brawling city. Days before the February 22 primary vote, White Democratic alderman and Byrne supporter Edward Vrdolyak remarked to Northwest Side party workers that the Democrats should

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<sup>9</sup> Kleppner, 83-4.

<sup>10</sup> Grimshaw, 168; Kleppner, 135-6.

<sup>11</sup> Grimshaw explains, “No independent mayoral candidate had ever come close to carrying them before.” See Grimshaw, 167.

<sup>12</sup> Grimshaw, 168; Kleppner, 145; Alkalimat and Gills, 40-1, 102.

unite behind the incumbent and forsake Daley as a vote for the latter “was a vote for Washington.” “After all,” Vrdolyak candidly confessed, “it’s a race thing.”

Occasionally, Washington’s public pronouncements were equally unhelpful to Chicagoans’ camaraderie. He infuriated admirers of the deceased Richard J. Daley and Richard M. Daley supporters, scorning the late mayor as “A racist to the core, from head to toe, from hip to hip.” Washington continued, “I give no hosannas to a racist, nor do I appreciate or respect his son....He is an insult to common sense and decency.” Racial animosity and political polarization intensified during the general election between Washington and fellow Hyde Park resident and state assemblyman, Bernard Epton. The Republican routinely questioned Washington’s integrity, alluding to his opponent’s criminal record: in 1970, Washington was charged with accepting payments from clients without having completed the work and his law license was suspended; two years later, he was indicted for failing to file income tax returns. Epton-sponsored television ads that flashed “Epton—Before It’s Too Late” were widely regarded as deliberately irritating White panic.<sup>13</sup> That race was a combustible flashpoint in the election was distressingly evident in March, when Washington and former vice president Walter Mondale attended Palm Sunday Mass at St. Pascal’s Catholic Church on the Northwest Side at the invitation of Father Frank Ciezadlo.<sup>14</sup> Washington, who planned to address congregants after Mass, unexpectedly arrived at the end of the service rather than the beginning. The media that flanked the visitors captured the crowd of visibly angry protesters, many who donned Epton banners and buttons and accosted the visitors near the church building.

<sup>13</sup> Alkalimat and Gill, 87; Melvin G. Holli, “The Daley Era: Richard J. to Richard M.” in *The Mayors: The Chicago Political Tradition*, eds. Paul M. Green and Melvin G. Holli, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 2006), 225; Kleppner, 205-7; Grimshaw, 179.

<sup>14</sup> Epton was also invited, but was unavailable. “Priest ‘Unafraid’ of Mob at Church,” *NYT*, 30 March 1983.

They jeered the politicians with chants of “tax cheater,” “go home,” “Epton, Epton, Epton,” “carpetbagger,” and “baby killer,” in reference to the politicians’ pro-choice position. The words “Nigger Die” had been spray painted on one door of the church. Several national publications such as *Newsweek* and *People Magazine* vividly recounted the event.<sup>15</sup> Racially-charged political rhetoric that persisted after Washington was settled in City Hall cemented Chicago’s reputation as a rancorous city. Vrdolyak, who had been appointed chairman of the Cook County Democratic Central Committee, helped to assemble a coterie of twenty-nine councilmen who routinely thwarted Washington-sponsored legislation, municipal appointments, and city contracts.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Doris Graber, “Media Magic: Fashioning Characters for the 1983 Mayoral Race,” in *The Making of the Mayor: Chicago 1983*, eds. Melvin G. Holli and Paul M. Green (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1984); Don Rose, “How the 1983 Election was Won,” in *The Making of the Mayor: Chicago 1983*, eds. Holli and Green (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1984), 120; “Cardinal Urges Chicagoans Not to Vote on Racial Basis Tuesday, *NYT*, 9 April 1983. As this footnote suggests, Washington’s unwelcome reception at St. Pascal’s has invited scholarly comment. Without exculpating any Catholics who screamed epithets at Washington and Mondale, a few details should be mentioned here for the sake of historical accuracy, and as this chapter principally dwells on Southwest rather than Northwest Side Catholics. First, Ciezadlo acknowledged that he recognized only a handful of St. Pascal protesters as parish members. Second, the *Chicago Defender*, which reported on many instances of racially-fueled anti-Washington animus during the election, calculated that St. Pascal’s was a “carefully orchestrated affair” that was “designed to make Catholics look like rabid Eptonites and fierce hatemongers.” The *Defender* implied that Epton’s “high powered east coast agency” Baily Deardourff was responsible for coordinating the event. See “Racist Epton Catholics,” *CD*, 6 April 1983. Third, roughly three dozen St. Pascal parishioners and neighborhood residents released a letter on March 29 condemning the “actions of a small but vocal group of people” and sought to “dissociate our families from the hysteria.” “Thinking, feeling human beings cannot tolerate the turning of our church, and our sacred holy day, into a battleground for race prejudice.” See “Letter to Friends,” 29 March 1983, Harold Washington Archives and Collections, Pre-Mayoral Records, Mayoral Campaign Records, 1980-1983, Series: Central Office Activities, Box 23, Folder 18, CPLHW. Finally, St. Pascal’s was not the only church where Washington was jeered. Approximately seventy-five White demonstrators accosted the candidate and yelled anti-Washington epithets on April 4 at Saint Nicholas Orthodox Church, 2701 N. Narragansett. Again, the *Defender* observed that most protesters did not seem to be church members. See Juanita Bracher, “Jeering Whites Meet Washington at Church,” *CD*, 4 April 1983.

<sup>16</sup> Helyar and Johnson, “Brawling City: Chicago’s Political Rift Deepens, Worsening City’s Many Problems,” *WSJ*, 6 August 1984; Preston Greene, “Race After Washington: Beirut on the Lake,” *Commonweal* (7 April 1989): 199.

*Berlin on the Southwest Side*

Washington's ascendancy disconcerted predominantly White "ethnic" and Catholic neighborhoods on the Southwest Side.<sup>17</sup> A number of residents who were genuine racists alleged that an African American was incapable of governing the city. Most who admitted apprehension, however, emphasized that personal well-being and neighborhood integrity were their overriding concerns. They dismally forecasted that Washington would redirect city funds away from their communities and exacerbate the influx of collectively poorer minorities, thereby diminishing property values and jeopardizing the safety and standards of their neighborhoods and schools. These middle- and working-class Democrats also assumed that they would be marginalized by a party effectively controlled by African Americans, White "Lakefront liberals," and activists, and that Washington would redistribute city jobs—essentially the only unskilled but well-paid employment in deindustrializing Chicago—to minorities.<sup>18</sup>

The expansion of the "Black Belt" into White neighborhoods, the subsequent decline of property values, and wholesale White outmigration and re-segregation had for decades been a dominant demographic motif in Chicago, particularly on the South and West Sides. In fact, Whites by the mid-1960s had evolved a particular lexicon to

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<sup>17</sup> Although this chapter uses "ethnic" to connote middle and working class European Americans, the term should not obscure salient inter-ethnic differences. On the Southwest Side, for example, the Lithuanians in Chicago Lawn and Gage Park in particular maintained a vigorous ethnocentrism and notable separatism from other Whites for a few reasons: the community laid roots around the turn of the twentieth century but received a fresh infusion of immigrants around 1940 during the Nazi and Soviet occupation of Lithuania; the Chicago Lithuanian community was the largest in the world outside Lithuania; and, as Lithuania was under Soviet influence in the 1970s and 1980s, the Marquette Park area became "the nerve center of their struggle to preserve culture and language and to restore liberties in the motherland." See Rasa Gustaitis, "The Battle of Marquette Park," *The Progressive* (January 1979): 45-6; Irving Cutler, *Chicago: Metropolis of the Mid-Continent*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 2006), 114.

<sup>18</sup> Thomas F. Roeser, "Party's Breaking Up in Chicago," *WSJ*, 24 June 1987; Pierre de Vise, "Racial Politics and the Black Backlash," *CD*, 11 April 1983.



characterize the trend, which Father William E. Hogan in 1965 coined “White Chicagoese”: “Englewood is *gone*. Park Manor *went* a number of years ago. Woodlawn *went rapidly*. Auburn Park is *going fast*.”<sup>19</sup> Citywide residential segregation continued, and various scholarly studies indicated in the early 1980s that Chicago remained the most segregated U.S. big city. In 1982, one year before Washington’s mayoral victory, esteemed urbanologist Pierre de Vise concluded that residential segregation had actually accelerated in Chicago during the preceding decade; the percentage of African Americans who resided in neighborhoods that were more than 90 percent Black climbed from 78 percent in 1970 to 86 percent in 1980.<sup>20</sup>

In the early 1980s, the Southwest Side communities of Chicago Lawn—which included the three-hundred acre Marquette Park in its southern portion—Gage Park, and West Lawn were overwhelmingly White. Gage Park and Chicago Lawn were former Stock Yard District suburbs, and had been the loci for White ethnic and largely Catholic groups’ second settlement. Principally Irish, Polish, Slovak, and Lithuanian in background, many White residents in the three community areas dwelled in single or double family homes, modest but in good repair. Gage Park (93 percent White) and West Lawn (98 percent White) remained the least integrated. In contrast, the White population of Chicago Lawn had dropped from nearly 100 percent in 1970 to 83 percent in 1980. African Americans, who comprised 10 percent of Chicago Lawn, had chiefly settled on the eastern portion of the community area that abutted overwhelmingly Black West Englewood. The trend alarmed Whites sensitive to the recent demographic history of

<sup>19</sup> Rev. William E. Hogan, “Chicago’s Wall of Fear,” *New City*, 15 August 1965, 14.

<sup>20</sup> Dennis Byrne, “Chicago Ranked Most Segregated,” *CST*, 2 May 1982; Dr. Ronal Liebman, “Chicago Still Most Segregated U.S. City,” *CD*, 3 May 1982; Helyar and Johnson, “Brawling City: Chicago Political Rift Deepens, Worsening City’s Many Problems,” *WSJ*, 6 August 1984.

West Englewood, which had experienced the in-migration of African Americans, active panic peddling, comprehensive outmigration of Whites—many of whom resettled in Chicago Lawn and West Lawn—and the subsequent deterioration of residences and businesses. To a considerable number of White Chicago Lawn residents, West Englewood was unassailable evidence that integration kindled neighborhood decay and re-segregation.<sup>21</sup>

Residential integration had long been a flashpoint in Gage Park and Chicago Lawn. In the 1960s, residents fiercely attempted to preserve the predominantly White composition of their neighborhoods. Augustinian Father Francis X. Lawlor had infamously organized block clubs and spearheaded rallies to “hold the line” at Ashland Avenue, i.e., prevent the in-migration of African Americans from Englewood, the instinctive out-migration of White Catholics, and the unavoidable drop in parish rolls.<sup>22</sup> Efforts to preserve exclusively White neighborhoods west of Ashland failed. However, the acknowledged barrier separating White and Black neighborhoods simply migrated westward. By the late 1970s, Western Avenue had become the new barricade. Some Chicagoans derogatively alluded to the street as the Southwest Side’s “Berlin Wall,” recalling the divided East German city.<sup>23</sup> Although a measurable number of African

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<sup>21</sup> The Chicago Fact Book Consortium, ed., *Local Community Fact Book, Chicago Metropolitan Area, 1980* (Chicago: Chicago Review Press, 1984), 162, 166, 168; Dominic A. Pacyga and Ellen Skerrett, *Chicago: City of Neighborhoods* (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1986), 491; Eileen M. McMahon, “Chicago Lawn,” in *Chicago Neighborhoods and Suburbs: A Historical Guide*, ed. Ann Durkin Keating (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 126.

<sup>22</sup> McGreevy, 231-3.

<sup>23</sup> M.W. Newman and Lilian Williams, “A Calmer City Faces Political Issues of ’87,” *CST*, 11 February 1987.

Americans had settled west of Western in Chicago Lawn by 1980, the street remained a symbolic partition.<sup>24</sup>

Racially-fueled animosity and violence had punctuated the recent history of the Southwest Side, although the level of violence should not be over-exaggerated. Famously, Martin Luther King, Jr.-led open housing marchers in 1966 confronted angry counter protesters in Marquette and Gage Parks, some of whom hurled stones at civil rights demonstrators. The court ordered integration of Gage Park High School in 1972 summoned public White denunciations. Eager to aggravate local unease and court media attention, the American Nazi Party relocated its headquarters from Virginia to the Marquette Park area, settling on 71<sup>st</sup> Street near the Lithuanian business district. Likewise, the Ku Klux Klan was active in the area in the 1970s, although Chicago Lawn residents were generally unyielding to White supremacist appeals; a good number of locals had witnessed firsthand or knew relatives who experienced Nazi brutality during the Second World War.<sup>25</sup> Compounding strains, an African American-led group that billed itself the “Martin Luther King, Jr. Movement” coordinated open housing marches in the mid-1970s. Members’ determination, in combination with Nazi and KKK agitation, some resident’s visceral racism, and many others’ apprehension that the neighborhood would deteriorate, kindled periodic skirmishes and occasional summer melees at Marquette Park, most notoriously on June 6, 1976, when hundreds of White youths hurled rocks and bottles at Blacks and attacked some with baseball bats; July 17,

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<sup>24</sup> Politicians recognized the symbolic import of Western Avenue. Consider that during the 1983 Democratic mayoral primary, Richard M. Daley was accused of conducting a “Western Avenue” campaign. Some residents and journalists observed that his White precinct workers canvassed the west side of Western, while Black workers labored east of Western. That Daley “maintained separate offices on either side of the street” bolstered the accusation. See Ben Joravsky, “Western Avenue,” *Chicago Reporter*, March 1983.

<sup>25</sup> Pacyga and Skerrett, 504; Jim Keck, “The Southwest Federation: The First Ten Years Remembered, 1972-1982, <http://www.icefordemocracy.org/files/southwest.pdf>.

1976, when thirty three were injured after angry Whites confronted Black and White open housing protesters; and July 23, 1977, when roughly one thousand Whites hurled stones and bottles at Black motorists.<sup>26</sup>

Polarizing external forces that “claimed to speak for the community,” such as the American Nazi Party, panic peddling real estate agents unscrupulously earning profits at the expense of homeowners, neighborhood devitalization, and Southwest Siders’ perception that popular opinion had unfairly singled them out as racists led directly to the creation of the Southwest Parish and Neighborhood Federation (SPNF) in 1972. It became one of the largest and most active community organizations in the area, numbering roughly fifteen thousand members in the mid-1970s and touted itself as “the preeminent voice of the majority of Southwest Side residents.” SPNF’s mission was to furnish a forum for local residents to address and mitigate common grievances, and articulate community concerns to lawmakers with a united political will.<sup>27</sup>

The Catholic Church was integral to the establishment and maintenance of the SPNF, although “parish” in the federation’s title did not connote a specific church, but rather neighborhood areas demarcated by parish boundaries, which Catholic and non-Catholic residents generally recognized. Catholic Charities helped to activate the SPNF, and funded it for four years. Family and Community Services Director Father Roger Coughlin, responding to St. Gall and St. Nicholas of Tolentine parishioner requests,

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<sup>26</sup> Joseph Sjostrom and Bernardo Esqueda, “Marquette Park Melee,” *CT*, 7 June 1976; John O’Brien and Jon Van, “16 Police Among 33 Injured During Marquette Park March,” *CT*, 18 July 1976; William Currie and James Price, “26 Arrests Follow Halted Marquette March, melee,” *CT*, 24 July 1977.

<sup>27</sup> “Southwest Parish and Neighborhood Federation: A Brief History,” Southwest Parish and Neighborhood Federation Records, Box 1, Folder 1, CHM; Fred Orehek, “S.W. Side Group Asks Redlining Aid,” *CT*, 18 June 1976. It would be wise here to recollect Gerald D. Suttles’ observation in his classic book on communities and community groups that people who claim to represent or speak for “the community” are “often badly divided.” See Gerald D. Suttles, *The Social Construction of Communities* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972), 44.

placed full time staff member and professional community organizer James Keck in the area. Keck, who eventually became the federation's executive director, was one of a handful of organizers that Catholic Charities sponsored in Chicago communities that were "experiencing deterioration and the prospect of complete economic and racial change."<sup>28</sup> Six representatives each from St. Gall and St. Nicholas formed the St. Gall-St. Nicholas Committee in October 1972 to advise Keck, and interviews with residents were conducted to identify possible community leaders and pinpoint widespread concerns.<sup>29</sup> Ultimately, six other Catholic parish-based affiliates joined the St. Gall Area Neighborhood Council and the St. Nick's Neighbors in Action to form SPNF: St. Turibius Area Community Life Council; St. Rita Area Community Life Council (St. Rita of Cascia); Queen's Area Neighborhood Council (Queen of the Universe); St. Mary Area Community Life Council (St. Mary, Star of the Sea); Marquette Park Community Association (St. Adrian's Area); and Gage Park Neighbors in Action (St. Clare of Montefalco Area).<sup>30</sup> At its largest, the federation covered the Gage Park, Chicago Lawn, and West Lawn community areas. It was bounded by 47<sup>th</sup> Street on the north, Western Avenue on the east, 75<sup>th</sup> Street on the South, and Cicero Avenue on the West, an area roughly comprising 125,000 residents. An estimated 85 percent of them were Catholic,

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<sup>28</sup> "Southwest Parish and Neighborhood Federation: A Brief History," Southwest Parish and Neighborhood Federation Records, Box 1, Folder 1, CHM.

<sup>29</sup> Keck, "The Southwest Federation: The First Ten Years Remembered, 1972-1982," <http://www.icefordemocracy.org/files/southwest.pdf>; "1971: Community Organizes to Fight Block Busting," *Southwest Parish and Neighborhood Federation News*, November 1981, Southwest Parish and Neighborhood Federation Records, Box 2, Folder 9, CHM.

<sup>30</sup> Keck, "The Southwest Federation: The First Ten Years Remembered, 1972-1982; "Affiliate Organizations," Southwest Parish and Neighborhood Federation Records, Southwest Parish and Neighborhood Federation Records, Box 1, Folder 3, CHM.

although residence rather than religious affiliation defined membership.<sup>31</sup> Laypeople generally coordinated federation activities. In addition to Keck, notable members who held positions of authority included Jean Mayer, Philip Mix, John McGury, Kathy Augustine, Ed Vojak, Therese Szalko, Peter Jonkikaitis, Bill Bresnahan, and John Kincinas.

Affiliated Catholic parishes and local religious animated the SPNF and were crucial to its maintenance, although careful qualification needs to be made as the federation was a voluntary community organization rather than a strictly Catholic enterprise. Relative to St. Gall, St. Nicholas, St. Turibius, St. Rita, Queen of the Universe, St. Mary, Star of the Sea, St. Adrian, and St. Clare, the support of non-affiliated Southwest Side parishes for the SPNF was more tepid; clergymen at affiliated parishes may have questioned SPNF methods while agreeing with the objective; or, priests may zealously back one federation initiative and not another.<sup>32</sup> With that said, at least one pastor, Father Raymond Barlog of St. Turibius, served on the board of directors. Father Albin Ciciora of St. Gall's, as President of the Citizens Action Program, cooperated with federation anti-redlining initiatives in the 1970s. Augustinian Father Frances P. Fenton of St. Rita was a vocal SPNF advocate, as he held that it was the proper role of the laity rather than the clergy, to "take the lead and responsibility in

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<sup>31</sup> "Southwest Parish and Neighborhood Federation: A Brief History," Southwest Parish and Neighborhood Federation Records, Box 1, Folder 1, CHM; "What is the Southwest Federation," Southwest Parish and Neighborhood Federation Records, Box 1, Folder 3, CHM.

<sup>32</sup> The Lithuanian parish of Blessed Mary Nativity, for instance, "only passively" supported the federation. Juxtaposing comparatively tepid Lithuanian support with strong Polish support for the SPNF, one Marquette Park-area Lithuanian humorously remarked to an interviewer in the late 1970s that "The Lithuanians are the last to go along with something; they don't believe in signing up for anything. As a case in point, the Polish, who are the next door neighbors of the Lithuanians, have been Christians for over 1,000 years while it took the Lithuanians another 400 or 500 years to accept Christianity." For Blessed Mary Nativity, see Gustaitis, "The Battle of Marquette Park," 46. For the quote, see "People Power and Possible Issues in the Lithuanian Neighborhood of the Southwest Federation," Southwest Parish and Neighborhood Federation, Box 4, Folder 20, CHM.

community affairs.”<sup>33</sup> In a few instances, priests from federation affiliated parishes publicly vouched for SPNF initiatives and articulated them to lawmakers and law enforcement officials.<sup>34</sup> Congregations routinely donated sums to fund SPNF activities, and weekly Mass bulletins disseminated federation initiatives to Southwest Side Catholics—potentially, an immense boon as the affiliated parishes were generally quite large, relative to other Catholic congregations in the city.<sup>35</sup> That priests assented to the use of parish facilities was perhaps of unequal importance to the SPNF. Affiliates routinely met or hosted political and business representatives, law enforcement officials, and community leaders in church halls, schools, or gymnasiums.

In the 1970s and early 1980s, the SPNF adopted various objectives, generally directed towards the maintenance of property values and neighborhood safety. An anti-solicitation drive in 1972 that the Holy Name Societies of St. Gall, St. Nicholas, and St. Turibius spearheaded was the first major project. Thousands of local homeowners demanded an end to real estate agents’ illegal soliciting. Over eighty firms agreed to non-solicitation agreements. Deliberately practicing Alinsky-style principles of confrontation, the SPNF in the mid-1970s coordinated marches and threatened boycotts to thwart the alleged redlining tactics of banks, who accepted millions of residents’

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<sup>33</sup> Rev. Raymond M. Barlog to Southwest Parish and Neighborhood Federation, 17 December 1996, Southwest Parish and Neighborhood Federation Records, Box 1, Folder 15, CHM; William E. Farrell, “Small-Home Owners Press Chicago Banks,” *NYT*, 3 May 1975; “Very Reverend Frances P. Fenton, OSA,” *Southwest Parish and Neighborhood Federation News*, July 1983, Southwest Parish and Neighborhood Federation Records, Box 3, Folder 24, CHM. The Citizens Action Program was an umbrella organization of Chicago community organizations; the SPNF was a member.

<sup>34</sup> Rev. L. Dudley Day, OSA, St. Rita of Cascia, Rev. Peter Paurazas, St. Adrian, Rev. James Friedel, OSA, St. Clare of Montefalco, to Elizabeth Hershey, Director of Planning, Research and Development, Department of Human Services, 16 March 1985, Southwest Parish and Neighborhood Federation Records, Box 1, Folder 17, CHM.

<sup>35</sup> For instance, in the mid-1970s, St. Gall counted 2,200 families; St. Nicholas 3,200 families; Queens 2,000 families; St. Mary 3,200 families, and St. Adrian 1,500 families. See Rev. Msgr. Harry C. Koenig, S.T.D., ed., *A History of the Parishes of the Archdiocese of Chicago*, vols. 1 and 2 (Chicago: Archdiocese of Chicago, 1980), 309, 662.



dollars but refused to reinvest in the community. Other federation initiatives included a Senior Citizen Escort that furnished transportation to the local elderly so that they could safely visit grocery stores and banks; anti-crime programs such as Block Watches; beautifying efforts; and a Guaranteed Home Equity Program to ensure that home values did not dip below the market value at time of purchase, thereby guaranteeing that owners did not lose thousands of dollars in the event of rapid demographic turnover.<sup>36</sup> For SPNF efforts to “provide a reasoned voice in public affairs for the concerned and responsible views and principles of the vast majority of Southwest Side Chicago residents,” the Illinois House of Representatives in 1982 publicly acclaimed the organization.<sup>37</sup> SPNF efforts to maintain property values, however, also periodically elicited accusations of racism. For instance, critics charged that one federation-sponsored project to clear a handful of blocks that bordered West Englewood and construct a middle-class townhouse and condominiums was simply a bid to erect a racial buffer to repel Black entrance into Chicago Lawn.<sup>38</sup> In response, spokespeople repeatedly objected that neighborhood economic health and residents’ physical well-being, rather than racism, were overriding motivations. “Institutional forces” such as unscrupulous real estate firms and redlining banks that threatened to transform communities into “low income slums” were the

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<sup>36</sup> Ben Joravsky and Jorge Casuso, “City’s Ethnic Charge Neglect Despite Mayoral Charm,” *CR*, February 1984; “Southwest Parish and Neighborhood Federation: A Brief History,” Southwest Parish and Neighborhood Federation Records, Box 1, Folder 1, CHM; Keck, “The Southwest Federation: The First Ten Years Remembered, 1972-1982, <http://www.icefordemocracy.org/files/southwest.pdf>; “What is Guaranteed Home Equity?,” Southwest Parish and Neighborhood Federation, Box 17, Folder 6, CHM; “Senior Citizen Escort Service,” Southwest Parish and Neighborhood Federation Records, Box 17, Folder 7, CHM. For materials pertaining to the anti-solicitation drive, see Southwest Parish and Neighborhood Federation Records, Box 17, Folder 8, CHM.

<sup>37</sup> State of Illinois, Eighty-Second General Assembly, House of Representatives, House Resolution No. 540, Southwest Parish and Neighborhood Federation Records, 14 April 1982, Southwest Parish and Neighborhood Federation Records, Box 28, Folder 19, CHM.

<sup>38</sup> The blocks in question were Bell, Claremont, and Oakley Avenues from 62<sup>nd</sup> to 75<sup>th</sup> streets. Stanley Ziemba, “Marquette Plan is Racist: PUSH Aide,” *CT*, 22 June 1978.



SPNF's real enemies.<sup>39</sup> Jean Mayer, who became a chief federation spokesperson, confirmed, "Some people have moved two or three times, and they've lost thousands and thousands of dollars...But we know that it isn't the black people or minorities, whatever minority that has been used by the institutional forces. It's these forces that are behind neighborhood change, neighborhood re-segregation, that have to be dealt with."<sup>40</sup> That the SPNF also censored White politicians who were unfavorable to their requests, such as Jane Byrne, or allegedly stoked racial hatred for self-serving purposes, e.g., Edward Vrdolyak, suggests that racism was not always the federation's paramount motivation.<sup>41</sup>

### *Outside Forces*

On the eve of the 1983 mayoral election, the SPNF had three urgent demands. Federation leaders inferred that Southwest Side votes would be channeled to candidates who supported them. First, a new library in West Lawn had to be constructed. Second, the city should fund a comprehensive plan for proposed redevelopment at 63<sup>rd</sup> and Western Avenue, which was the area's chief commercial artery. The business strip had declined and triggered the deterioration of nearby residential areas.<sup>42</sup> Finally and most pressing, the Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) must annul its plan to construct two low rise public housing structures in Chicago Lawn. The CHA grounded its decision in

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<sup>39</sup> Ben Joravsky and Jorge Casuso, "City's Ethnics Charge Neglect Despite Mayoral Charm," *CR*, February 1984.

<sup>40</sup> Jean Mayer on "Newsmakers," WBBM-TV, 17 April 1983, Southwest Parish and Neighborhood Federation Records, Box 28, Folder 27, CHM.

<sup>41</sup> Byrne came under visceral SPNF criticism, as she had consented to the CHA's Chicago Lawn sites, promised and then reneged her support for the construction of the new West Lawn Branch library, and opposed the SPNF's Guaranteed Home Equity Plan. She was not invited to the SPNF-sponsored Candidates' Forum in 1983 for Democratic mayoral candidates. See "For Immediate Release," 17 March 1983, Southwest Parish and Neighborhood Federation Records, Box 28, Folder 2, CHM; "For Immediate Release," Southwest Parish and Neighborhood Federation Records, 2 April 1983, Box 28, Folder 2, CHM.

<sup>42</sup> The SPNF hoped to transform the area into an "ethnic village" with Old World-type shops and restaurants. See "Southwest Parish and Neighborhood Federation: A Brief History," Southwest Parish and Neighborhood Federation Records, Box 1, Folder 1, CHM

the seminal 1966 Gautreaux decision, which mandated that the number of low rise public housing units in Chicago should be equitably distributed between majority White and Black neighborhoods. The SPNF countered that the CHA's selection of Chicago Lawn's eastern portion, rather than the court's ruling, was tendentious and potentially destructive. The area was already experiencing racial change and public housing would animate panic peddling and racial turnover.<sup>43</sup> During a federation-sponsored "Candidates' Forum" in January 1983 at St. Gall Parish Hall, Richard M. Daley pledged "full and immediate action" on all three issues. Harold Washington, on the other hand, tentatively supported the library project, but refused the SPNF's two other demands.<sup>44</sup> The twelve hundred attendees were especially dismayed when Washington pronounced that he could not interfere with the judicial decision to place low rise public housing in majority White communities, nor would he interrupt CHA plans to locate the structures in Chicago Lawn. Mayer later compared Washington to "Pontius Pilate, washing his hands of the whole thing."<sup>45</sup>

SPNF members felt that the Candidates' Forum validated their vexation with Washington, which had been stewing for some time. Among some Southwest Side residents, it also intensified a siege mentality, or the sense that their neighborhood and

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<sup>43</sup> Dorothy Gautreaux was one of a handful of Black CHA tenant who successfully accused the city of implementing housing discrimination by grouping public housing in high rise buildings in majority African American neighborhoods. In response to the ruling, mayors Richard J. Daley and Michael Bilandic arrested new public housing projects. Mayor Jane Byrne, however, approved the so-called "scattered site" program in 1979, of which the Chicago Lawn projects were a part. See Ben Joravsky and Jorge Casuso, "City's Ethnics Charge Neglect Despite Mayoral Charm," *CR*, February 1984. For Gautreaux, see Elizabeth Warren, *The Legacy of Judicial Policy-Making: Gautreaux v. Chicago Housing Authority, The Decision and Its Impacts* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1988).

<sup>44</sup> Southwest Parish and Neighborhood Federation Community Action Committee, "For Immediate Release," 17 March 1983, Southwest Parish and Neighborhood Federation Records, Box 28, Folder 2, CHM; Southwest Parish and Neighborhood Federation, Community Education Committee, "For Immediate Release," 2 April 1983, Box 28, Folder 2, CHM.

<sup>45</sup> Ben Joravsky and Jorge Casuso, "City's Ethnics Charge Neglect Despite Mayoral Charm," *CR*, February 1984.

livelihoods were under threat from powerful outside forces. For years, the well-being of their neighborhoods and safeguarding of their personal financial investment in the community had occupied their concerns. Now, they concluded that an African American from Hyde Park with a personal vendetta against White ethnics would facilitate neighborhood change and politically immobilize them.

The specific SPNF grievances levied against the congressmen during the primary and general election varied. Washington was neither fond of nor understood White Southwest Siders, they insisted. He disparaged White ethnics, casting them as the natural political antagonists to Blacks, Latinos, and poor Whites to marshal the support of these groups. If elected, he would ignore or scorn the needs of White Southwest Siders, and deliberately exclude White middle- and working-class ward representatives from positions of political power.<sup>46</sup> Although it is impossible to uncover how SPNF members voted in the primary and general election—in 1983, Chicago Lawn, Gage Park, and West Lawn belonged to three different wards—the results indicate vigorous opposition to Washington in favor of either Daley or Byrne in the primary, and overwhelming support of Bernard Epton in the general election—unprecedented insofar as intensely Democratic middle- and working-class Whites on the Southwest Side voted for a Republican.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Kathleen Augustine, Southwest Parish and Neighborhood Federation Community Education Committee, to Harold Washington, 11 February 1983, Southwest Parish and Neighborhood Federation Records, Box 2, Folder 11, CHM; John Helyar and Robert Johnson, “Brawling City: Chicago’s Political Rift Deepens, Worsening City’s Many Problems,” *WSJ*, 6 August 1984.

<sup>47</sup> Kleppner, 166, 218. In 1983, much of Chicago Lawn, Gage Park, and West Lawn essentially fell into three wards, the 13<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>. The 13<sup>th</sup> spanned West Lawn and the western half of Chicago Lawn. Here, Daley edged out Byrne in the primary and Epton overwhelmingly carried it in the general election. The 14<sup>th</sup> covered much of Gage and Brighton Parks and the western portion of New City. Voters gave a slight edge to Byrne and a healthy majority to Epton. The 15<sup>th</sup> spanned eastern portions of Chicago Lawn and Gage Park as well as West Englewood. “Racially speaking,” David K. Fremon explains, it was “two wards in one.” Following a 1981 ward remap, African Americans alleged that the city had racially gerrymandered the 15<sup>th</sup> to attenuate their voting strength. The courts agreed and Blacks became a majority in the 15<sup>th</sup>. Here, Washington won the primary and general election by taking the Black precincts. See

SPNF's siege mentality became more palpable in the aftermath of Washington's victory, particularly after the new mayor neglected to attend a pre-inauguration "candle of understanding" ceremony outside Navy Pier, which the SPNF and other predominantly White Southwest and Northwest organizations hosted to foster "understanding and cooperation" between Washington and their communities.<sup>48</sup> Their forebodings had been realized, SPNF leadership concluded. Washington's "Rainbow Coalition" inadequately represented White middle- and working-class needs. The mayor seemed dismissive of ethnics' contribution to the city, and he used Southwest siders as a "punching bag" to solicit the support of minorities and White liberals. Moreover, Washington "insulted" Southwest Side Catholics' religious sensibilities when he attributed Illinois House Speaker Michael Madigan's opposition to a state public school revenue package—which had the mayor's support—to the fact that Madigan attended parochial schools.<sup>49</sup> The rhetoric of SPNF members could be aggressive. An editorial in the *Southtown Economist* that Keck and two former SPNF staffers helped to compose cautioned Washington. It darkly warned that policies averse to ethnic interests may potentially trigger "the most rapid and complete white flight that this city has ever experienced." Suggestions that middle income ethnics lacked the means to flee to suburbs were delusional; ethnics were not imprisoned in their communities, but had elected to remain in the city. They would,

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David K. Fremon, *Chicago Politics, Ward by Ward* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1988), 109, 97-8, 104; Ben Joravsky, "Whites Moved In, Blacks Moved Out in Ward Shift," *CR*, January 1982.

<sup>48</sup> Ben Joravsky and Jorge Casuso, "City's Ethnics Charge Neglect Despite Mayoral Charm," *CR*, February 1984.

<sup>49</sup> "The Emperor Has No Clothes," 19 April 1984, *Save Our Neighborhoods, Save Our City News*, Southwest Parish and Neighborhood Federation Records, Box 9, Folder 18, CHM. Specifically appalling to them was Washington's October statement before the Chicago Economic Development Corporation, a federally funded entity that promoted minority businesses, that "We are going to take care of white folks, too. Don't worry about a thing. You are going to get a fair share of the action. You are not going to have as much as you had. You were never entitled to that much. And if you don't have enough on the decision making policy level, we'll move you down into the bureaucracy where you haven't worked very long, where you're not used to it, and let you work yourselves back up."

however, leave Chicago “if they feel powerless and threatened about the future of their neighborhoods.”<sup>50</sup>

### *Mutual Misgivings*

SPNF opposition to Washington culminated in 1984 when the organization twinned with the Northwest Neighborhood Federation (NNF) to form the “Save Our Neighborhood/Save Our City” (SON/SOC) coalition. White ethnics in Belmont Cragin, Avondale, Hermosa, Portage Park, and Irving Park principally comprised the NNF. SON/SOC’s primary objective was to formulate, articulate, and defend the interests of Chicago’s White ethnics. However, some of SON/SOC’s methods and objectives provoked a determined rebuttal from Monsignor John Egan, acting in the capacity as head of the Office of Human Relations and Ecumenism. Reciprocity was at the heart of the matter. Egan charged SON/SOC with being divisive, incendiary, and effectively thwarting dialogue with Washington. The priest knew that SON/SOC in this instance was damaging ongoing Catholic efforts to placate racial animosity and political polarization in the wake of the election. Outraged, SPNF leaders countered that the archdiocese had effectively sided with the mayor and betrayed Southwest Side Catholics.

Mutual misgivings had periodically checkered relations between Southwest Side Catholics and the archdiocese since the 1960s. Race was usually but not always central. The case of Augustinian Father Francis X. Lawlor, a science teacher at St. Rita’s High School, is memorable. In the mid-1960s, the priest organized block clubs on approximately twenty Southwest Side blocks, urging all Whites to retain their homes thereby preventing Black in-migration west of Ashland Avenue. Lawlor powerfully

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<sup>50</sup> Jim Keck, Mike Smith, and Bob Gannett, “Advice for Washington,” *Southtown Economist*, 6 May 1983.

“articulated the fears and frustrations of his constituency,” contending that integration inevitably triggered White out-migration and re-segregation. Archbishop Cody, increasingly displeased with what he considered to be Lawlor’s divisive rhetoric and actions, and the Augustinian Order commanded Lawlor to leave the Chicago area, which infuriated the priest’s supporters. Lawlor nonetheless returned weeks later and resumed organizing block clubs, despite having no parish affiliation. Efforts to “hold the line” at Ashland failed; however, that Cody received a multitude of letters denouncing his decision to bar Lawlor and his alleged siding with African Americans and activists against White ethnics, and that Lawlor was subsequently elected to represent the fifteenth ward as alderman in 1971, strongly intimates the priest’s popularity with Southwest Siders.<sup>51</sup>

Vatican II-accelerated changes to the Catholic liturgy and spirituality also amplified some, but by no means all, White Southwest Siders’ dissatisfaction with the prerogatives of archdiocesan officials and some socially radical priests, nuns, and religious. Scalabrini Father Paul J. Ascioffa’s January 29, 1971, *New World* article illuminates ethnic discontent. Ascioffa, who primarily ministered among Chicagoland Italian Americans, warned that “the institutional Church is faced with rejection by some white ethnics,” who in response to rapid social change and ecclesiastical innovations may abandon the faith for “the forces of history and reactionary politics.” Socially, ethnics were ambivalent about the Vietnam conflict, averse to the anti-war movement, uneasy about the educational system’s failures, often considered racists, and “written off as an immovable mass of dummies.” Spiritually, “bizarre and meaningless” post-conciliar

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<sup>51</sup> Bob Seltner, “Block Clubs: What is Their Purpose?,” *Chicago Daily Calumet*, 28 March 1968; Bob Seltner, “Seek Return of Father Lawlor,” *Chicago Daily Calumet*, 17 February 1968; McGreevy, 231-234.

liturgies bewildered them. Elements of their pre-conciliar faith were derided by their Catholic school-educated children as irrelevant. Many religious, hitherto “stalwart generals in a time of confusion and insecurity,” according to Ascioffa, were suffering an “identity crisis” that exacerbated lay confusion. Some had “abandoned” their ecclesial leadership roles to a radical social fringe. White ethnics, he concluded, were “an apparently insecure and fearful people.”<sup>52</sup>

Mutual misgivings between Southwest Siders and the SPNF on the one hand, and archdiocesan officials on the other, intensified following the June 6, 1976, Marquette Park melee. Region IX urban vicar and St. Symphorosa pastor Donald Bartoszek greeted the violence between open housing marchers and Whites with a flurry of activity.<sup>53</sup> The forty-two year old Bartoszek, whom Cody had appointed vicar weeks earlier, immediately conferred privately with the Cardinal to apprise him of events.<sup>54</sup> He organized meetings with the board of directors and administrators of Holy Cross Hospital (2701 W. 68<sup>th</sup>), which treated many of those injured in Marquette Park violence, to prepare for future incidents. The vicar also tried to organize local priests to placate neighborhood tensions. Some met with predominantly African American community organizations such as the Urban League and The Woodlawn Organization to establish community networks and discuss how to peacefully integrate Chicago Lawn. Priests’ reaction culminated nearly ten days later, as Bartoszek and nineteen other Catholic

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<sup>52</sup> Paul J. Ascioffa, C.S., “Is Church Losing Middle America?,” *CNW*, 29 January 1971. Ascioffa’s article appeared in a special supplement to the newspaper, “Religious Education in the 70s: White Ethnics.”

<sup>53</sup> Region (or Vicariate) IX included Bridgeport, Back of the Yards, and Brighton Park in addition to Gage Park, Chicago Lawn, and West Lawn. Around the time of Bartoszek’s appointment, the Region was an estimated 85 percent Catholic—chiefly White middle and working class, and contained 53 churches. See Fr. Vincent J. Giese, “Vicariate 9: Aging, Ethnic Neighborhoods,” *CNW*, 3 June 1977.

<sup>54</sup> Bartoszek was the youngest archdiocesan priest to be appointed an urban vicar. Unexpectedly, he passed away in 1978 at the age of 42. See Koenig, ed., *A History of the Parishes of the Archdiocese of Chicago*, vol. II, 909.



clergymen along with eleven Protestant ministers from the Marquette Park/Southwest Englewood area publicly addressed racial unrest in the local *Southtown Herald*. Their message, which was included in the bulletins of area Catholic parishes, regretted that recent “incidents” had fostered tension, hatred, fear, and shame in the Southwest community. The American Nazi Party was principally blamed; it had manipulated and misled “our good people,” inciting hatred, fear, and violence. The clergymen recommended that the Nazis be ignored.<sup>55</sup>

Symbolic public unity between Bartoszek and priests belied the vicar’s private misgivings about some Southwest Side Catholics and the SPNF. In a letter to the vice president of Talman Federal Savings and Loan (5501 S. Kedzie Ave.) requesting a meeting to discuss financially stabilizing Chicago Lawn areas suffering material deterioration, Bartoszek implied frustration with the federation and entreated the vice president’s input regarding the SPNF and “their attitudes.” The vicar was sensitive that his position was unusually sticky: local Catholic churches were involved in the federation; the SPNF had for years taken Talman to task for allegedly redlining parts of Chicago Lawn; in a few days, roughly two thousand members planned to march on Talman for failing to support the SPNF’s plans to construct a townhouse and condominiums along sections of the Chicago Lawn-West Englewood border; and American Nazi Party and KKK members had publicly announced they would join the march.<sup>56</sup> In other ways, too, the SPNF and its Catholic supporters imperiled the

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<sup>55</sup> “Marquette Park,” Box: Vicariate IX (Historic), Folder: Marquette Park Racial Tension, 1976, AAC; “Here We Stand,” Box: Vicariate IX (Historic), Folder: Marquette Park Racial Tension, 1976, AAC; James Robison, “. . . as Marquette Pk. Clerics Rip Nazis, Urge Harmony,” *CT*, 16 June 1976.

<sup>56</sup> Very Rev. Donald S. Bartoszek, to Mr. Frank Cyzon, 10 June 1976, Box: Vicariate IX (Historic), Folder: Marquette Park Racial Tension, 1976, AAC; Lee Strobel, “Talman to Give Loan Data to Community,” *CT*, 20 September 1974; Stanley Ziemba, “Marquette Plan is Racist: PUSH Aide,” *CT*, 22 June 1976; Fr. Vincent J. Giese, “Vicariate 9: Aging, Ethnic Neighborhoods,” *CNW*, 3 June 1977.



resolution of racial tensions in Marquette Park, which suffered additional skirmishes in mid-July. Bartoszek was particularly distressed that African Americans and the media would deduce from parishes' support of SPNF initiatives, such as a late July bid to obtain an injunction against open housing marchers, that the Catholic Church formally espoused racism. To distance the archdiocese from the federation, Bartoszek along with Father Albin Ciciora visited and convinced Chicago Lawn pastors to eschew publicizing the injunction from the pulpit. The initiative ultimately failed. An early August meeting between Bartoszek and the ACP Board illuminated the depths of their frustration with the SPNF. Centering discussions on Marquette Park, clerics noted that the federation had mutated into "sort of a monster that has gotten out of hand." Priest leadership was "weak," lay leaders were "aggressive," and the "vocal ones are racist." The Lithuanian population and one or two priests were racist as well. However, most Catholic pastors in the Marquette Park area were not racists but simply "passive"; they opposed "outsider" clerics from attempting to pacify the area, but were themselves reluctant to enter the park. The ACP Board and Bartoszek were also distressed that the federation galvanized support for its initiatives after Catholic Masses by circulating petitions, which pastors were not prescreening.<sup>57</sup>

One other event in the mid-1970s strained SPNF-archdiocesan relations. A federation campaign to expose unscrupulous mortgage bankers on the Southwest Side incited a lawsuit. One ruffled banker sued the federation, a handful of members, St. Rita of Cascia Church, and Father Francis Fenton for libel. Unexpectedly, Cardinal Cody and the archdiocese were included in the suit, as St. Rita's was a parish of the archdiocese.

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<sup>57</sup> "Don Bartoszek Meeting with ACP Board," 3 August 1976, Association of Chicago Priests Records, Box 16, Folder 8, AUND.

The federation spent thousands of dollars to contest the charges, which were dropped against all defendants except the SPNF and two members. Be that as it may, an understandably disgruntled Cody and Vicar General Monsignor Francis Brackin bade that archdiocesan parishes discontinue donating funds to community organizations. The lawsuit against the remaining defendants was settled out of court. The SPNF agreed with the plaintiff, a University of Notre Dame alumnus, that remuneration could come in the form of a \$1,500 donation to the University. The SPNF specified that the money fund the efforts of Monsignor John Egan, then working as Assistant to the President at the University of Notre Dame; the federation admired Egan's interminable attempts to foster community organizations, and a few members were on amicable personal terms with the priest.<sup>58</sup>

### *Breaking Point*

The SPNF's fondness for Egan rendered the priest's eventual negative response to some SON/SOC methods and objectives all the more bitter. Keck, who referred to Egan as "Fr. Jack," considered the priest to be a formative influence on his career as a community organizer.<sup>59</sup> The SPNF representative, who exchanged a series of revealing letters and phone calls with Egan during and immediately after the general election, was delighted when new archbishop Joseph Bernardin recalled Egan from South Bend to serve as director of the Office of Human Relations and Ecumenism. "Your talents, experience, and judgment could not have been enlisted at a more critical time," Keck

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<sup>58</sup> "The Northwest Neighborhood Federation: The Beginning," Southwest Parish and Neighborhood Federation Records, Box 4, Folder 21, CHM; Ellen Ziff, Staff Director, SPNF, to Msgr. John Egan, 20 March 1980, Southwest Parish and Neighborhood Federation Records, Box 1, Folder 5, CHM; Ellen Ziff to John Egan, 26 August 1980, Southwest Parish and Neighborhood Federation Records, Box 1, Folder 5, CHM.

<sup>59</sup> Community Organizer Genealogy Project, "Jim Keck," <http://organizergenealogy.org/jim-keck-0>.

acknowledged to Egan in March 1983. The mayoral election was “tearing our city apart.” In Keck’s judgment, the intensity of racial antagonism and sense of foreboding matched that of 1960s King-led open housing marches and Black Panther murders. African Americans were jubilant about Washington’s auspicious campaign; middle-class White ethnics were “extremely frightened and despairing.” Keck explained that ethnics believed Washington lacked integrity, was “blind[ly] arrogant,” insensitive to White needs, and unfit to be mayor—although Keck regretted the “ugly” and panic-inducing rumors about Washington that were circulated by policemen and Democratic precinct workers turned Epton devotees on the Southwest and Northwest Sides. Ethnic Catholics were especially vexed with a Washington-funded television advertisement that featured a newspaper photograph of the congressman strolling alongside Cardinal Bernardin, which they charged inaccurately indicated that the prelate endorsed Washington. Keck counseled Egan that, after the election, Chicagoans would need to sense their self-worth, be empowered, and have strong leadership that genuinely addressed their concerns. Conversely, churchmen’s “moral platitudes” and “experientially bankrupt, kneejerk liberal and Movement answers” would be unhelpful and potentially destructive; helpless Chicagoans would be susceptible to the overtures of the KKK, Nazis, conniving lawmakers and ward bosses, or Black cultural nationalists. The archdiocese faced difficult challenges, Keck acknowledged, and he exhorted Egan to “do everything in your power to influence and teach our new cardinal and the priests of the archdiocese what is expected of them in the dark days ahead.” Potentially, Bernardin could help to alleviate racial animosities in the city. Keck suggested that the archbishop host a private meeting with Washington and Epton, and then publicly declare that the candidates’ pledged to

focus their campaigns on issues rather than race. Bernardin's leadership was also chided. The times demanded that Catholic leadership be tough, evenhanded, and practical; regrettably, Bernardin "often appeared too otherworldly" and aloof. "There is, after all," Keck remarked recalling St. Augustine, "a City of Man as well as a City of God, and the City of Man is strained to the breaking point."<sup>60</sup>

Irritation with archdiocesan officials was more apparent after Washington's victory. In an April 30 letter to Egan, Keck expressed annoyance that Washington did not attend the SPNF coordinated candle lighting ceremony on Navy Pier one day earlier. The new mayor was ignoring the SPNF as well as the NNF. More insidious to Keck, however, was Washington's effort to foment distrust between the federation and the archdiocese—a theme that became increasingly pronounced among federation leadership. The new mayor, apparently judging that the archdiocese had significant powers of persuasion among the ethnic organizations that partook in the candle lighting, had contacted the Chancery "to whine about the 'inappropriateness'" of the event. To Keck's chagrin, archdiocesan officials had "swallowed Washington's line." At the command of Chancery officials—Keck guessed Roach or Monsignor Brackin were culpable—the Northwest Side urban vicar contacted all Northwest Side priests and directed them to avoid the ceremony. "What happened to you in all this?," Keck questioned Egan. Perhaps Chancery officials had coerced the priest's public silence on the matter, although Egan was "clearly the best person to handle such matters." "I am sick and tired of politicians and savings and loan presidents getting in between the pastors and their

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<sup>60</sup> Jim Keck, Southwest Parish and Neighborhood Federation, to Msgr. John Egan, 26 March 1983, Southwest Parish and Neighborhood Federation Records, Box 2, Folder 11, CHM; Jim Keck to Msgr. John Egan, 28 March 1983, Southwest Parish and Neighborhood Federation Records, Box 2, Folder 11, CHM; Jim Keck to Msgr. John Egan, 11 April 1983, Southwest Parish and Neighborhood Federation Records, Box 2, Folder 11, CHM.

people,” Keck complained, “with Father Roach and Msgr. Brackin faithfully carrying out their dirty work.” Community organizing was a boon to city residents “long before there was a Cardinal Cody and will remain so long after there is a Cardinal Bernardin.” The letter’s candid conclusion suggested Southwest Side ethnics’ irritation with the archdiocese and some priests:

“I...wish the Chancery would stop siding with City Hall against the interests and just concerns of the people. If the Chancery and some of the local pastors continue to look upon the bulk of their parishioners in this city with indifference or scorn, they should stop eating the kielbasa and pasta that their parishioners lavish upon them and go to work in the inner city where their loyalties may be. Fat chance, most of these guys would rather be smug than mugged.”<sup>61</sup>

SON/SOC was a manifestation of the SPNF’s sense of embattlement and frustration with Washington. The coalition stemmed from meetings between the federation and the NNF in the months after Washington’s victory. In January 1984, Jean Mayer, who would become chairwoman of SON/SOC’s board, privately alerted the pastors of SPNF-affiliated Catholic parishes that White ethnics were forming a common agenda and preparing to powerfully articulate their concerns. Priests were invited to discuss the matter with federation co-directors Eric Wogstad and Richard Franz.<sup>62</sup> The official establishment of SON/SOC, its adoption of a “Declaration of Neighborhood Independence,” and plans for an April 29 inaugural convention were officially announced during a February meeting at St. Turibius.<sup>63</sup> In a mailing to approximately 37,000 Southwest Siders one month later, Mayer rationalized the coalition and solicited support.

<sup>61</sup> Jim Keck to Msgr. John Egan, 30 April 1983, Southwest Parish and Neighborhood Federation Records, Box 2, Folder 11, CHM.

<sup>62</sup> Jean Mayer to Pastors, 24 January 1984, Southwest Parish and Neighborhood Federation Records, Box 2, Folder 19, CHM.

<sup>63</sup> Bob Okon, “Neighbors Unite Against Mayor,” *Southtown Economist*, 5 February 1984.

Accusations against Washington were sharply repeated. He was “running City Hall with a vengeance,” had little regard for White ethnics, and had belittled their contributions to the city. Ethnics could either flee to the suburbs or “fight back.” The latter was more palatable, and SON/SOC was the instrument. The SPNF and NNF were “natural allies” with similar concerns, hopes, and values such as hard work and frugality. Ethnics should be unapologetic about their European heritage; no longer would “the press, educators, or churchmen” be allowed to ritually use “White ethnic” as a term of abuse. Cementing an ethnic agenda was the April convention’s chief task.<sup>64</sup> “The Blacks have their agenda. Latinos are talking about setting their agenda,” Mayer later remarked. “It’s time white ethnics did the same thing.”<sup>65</sup>

Archdiocesan officials had in the past privately exposed misgivings about the SPNF; SON/SOC and the Declaration of Neighborhood Independence in particular disclosed them to federation members. Rancor and SPNF allegations of betrayal were the result. SON/SOC had passed the Declaration in February, circulated it to members, but had not yet publicly released it. Essentially, it was a one-and-a-half page condemnation of Washington’s leadership and policies and a reaffirmation of the validity of ethnics’ concerns. It was argumentative and aggressive—“These are extraordinarily trying and dangerous times for Chicago,” the document began—yet indicated ethnics’ sense of embattlement. It augured a “bleak” future for the city if ethnics did not “change the course” of Washington’s administration. The mayor, the Declaration continued, was a polished but cynical opportunist willing to exploit racial fears to galvanize political

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<sup>64</sup> Jean Mayor, Chair of the Board, SPNF, to Friend and Neighbor, 5 March 1984, Southwest Parish and Neighborhood Federation, Box 8, Folder 13, CHM.

<sup>65</sup> Ben Joravsky and Jorge Casuso, “City’s Ethnics Charge Neglect Despite Mayoral Charm,” *CR*, February 1984.

support. That he harked back to King's 1966 Marquette Park open housing marches and the 1983 events at St. Pascal to dismiss the historical achievements and contemporary concerns of ethnics was intolerable. Their desires for personal safety in their neighborhoods and economic security were compelling. Ethnics had not socioeconomically advanced themselves at the expense of others, but rather through perseverance, sacrifice, and frugality.<sup>66</sup>

Several apprehensive Southwest Side priests apprised Egan of the Declaration. The monsignor studied it, queried the opinions of priests and knowledgeable laymen, and ultimately found it deplorable. The document was combative, incendiary, and contained inexcusable *ad hominum* attacks against the mayor. As "parish" was included in the SPNF's title, Egan feared the public would implicate the archdiocese as aggravating political division. He was compelled to express his reservations. On February 28, he conferred with Southwest cluster pastors and SPNF senior staff, who pledged to incorporate Egan's revisions in a new draft prior to publicly releasing the Declaration at a press conference. During a March 5 meeting between Keck and Egan, and again at a March 12 gathering of federation affiliated pastors and the Executive Committee, the SPNF reassured that the original Declaration would be altered. However, weeks later Egan had "heard nothing which would assure" him that the vituperative document had been amended. Planning for the April 29 SON/SOC convention was entering its final stages; Egan decided to act. On March 21, he issued a civil but unyielding memorandum to priests ministering in SPNF and NNF areas. Egan praised the contribution of European Americans to the city and the Church. Priests and people had overcome

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<sup>66</sup> "A Declaration of Neighborhood Independence," Southwest Parish and Neighborhood Federation Records, Box 1, Folder 7, CHM.

hardship. Clergy had remained close to their people and faithful to Church teachings. Continuing, Egan explained his qualifications to address SON/SOC. He had been involved with community organizing for thirty years because he believed they were vital to democracy. He was sensitive to SPNF and NNF anxieties, and acknowledged that the April convention potentially could enhance Southwest and Northwest Siders' quality of life.

An unsparing critique of the Declaration followed. Egan principally indicted the document for threatening to fan racial animosity, irresponsibly dividing Chicagoans, and impairing the common good. Accusations against Washington were unsubstantiated; none of the mayor's benign initiatives were mentioned. Its acrimony was irreconcilable with archdiocesan officials like Bernardin, who envisioned the task of Catholic laymen and priests to be "that of healer, of enabler, of supporter, of interpreter, of bridge builder"; its violent tone undermined the Church's "quest for unity and a peaceful community." No Catholic who had "feasted at the table of the Lord on the 'Body broken' and the 'Blood poured out' for the life of the world" could libel another human being. Egan marshaled Bernardin's recent condemnation of all forms of discrimination, and the archbishop's particular singling out of racism as a sin. Priests should not support the unrevised Declaration.<sup>67</sup>

Egan's letter made its way into SON/SOC hands. A rejoinder from Mayer and Crutchfield seethed with indignation and a growing sense that the archdiocese was betraying ethnic Catholics. Why had Egan not forewarned the coalition of his

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<sup>67</sup> Msgr. John J. Egan to The Clergy and Religious Leaders Within the Boundaries of the "Southwest Parish and Neighborhood Federation" and "Northwest Neighborhood Federation," 21 March 1984, Southwest Parish and Neighborhood Federation Records, Box 2, Folder 11, CHM.



memorandum to priests? In any case, it was needless; SON/SOC officials had not prevaricated when they agreed to revise the Declaration. In fact, the coalition had postponed a press conference to publicly unveil the document, a mass mailing to 62,000 people, and an announcement in SON/SOC's newspaper so that Egan's revisions could be incorporated into the initial draft. Now, the coalition was considering abandoning the document altogether—the mayor's putative anti-ethnic sentiment had done enough to motivate middle and working class Whites—which would render Egan's letter an embarrassment. Most rankling to the SPNF and NNF was their perception that Egan and the archdiocese had betrayed them in favor of the Washington administration. "We feel as if you have plunged a knife in our backs," the letter frankly admitted. As mentioned, the priest had many admirers in the community organizations, and both the SPNF and NNF had frequently communicated with Egan to apprise him of coalition activities. Members had erred in presuming that Egan would be fair minded, in spite of his "close identification and sympathy with the mayor and other 'liberal' causes." By vilifying the Declaration, and "trying to drive a wedge between our pastors and people," Egan was unwittingly collaborating with Washington. Since April 1983, ethnics had felt unwelcome in the city; Egan's letter made them feel as though they were unwelcome in, and indeed an embarrassment to, the Church. The letter concluded with a patently disingenuous insinuation about Egan, who had championed community organizations for three decades: "Remember, Monsignor, we don't just talk about justice, we make it happen."<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> Jean Mayer, Chairwoman, SPNF, and Joseph F. Crutchfield, Chairman, NNF, to Msgr. John Egan, Director, Archdiocesan Office of Human Relations and Ecumenism, 26 March 1984, Southwest Parish and Neighborhood Federation Records, Box 2, Folder 11, CHM. Mayer and Crutchfield waged that

*Bridging Great Divides*

SON/SOC's Declaration contrasted with archdiocesan officials like Egan and Archbishop Bernardin, and theologically motivated laypeople like John McDermott, who were attempting to foster reciprocity between races and politicians during and immediately after the mayoral election. Although SON/SOC's charge that Egan was aiding Washington to distance priests from their congregants was dubious, a number of high profile Catholics did actively support the congressman's campaign, insisting that Washington was the ideal candidate to foster racial reconciliation in the city. Few Chicagoans were as eloquent and tireless in urging reciprocity as John McDermott. The former Catholic Interracial Council director and founder and publisher of the *Chicago Reporter*, recollecting the inclusive message of Jesus Christ and the interracial Martin Luther King, Jr.-led Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s, repeatedly cautioned Whites and Blacks against ethnocentrism that prized group loyalties over all others and isolated Chicagoans from one another. Perceptively, McDermott also realized that Washington's election introduced an unprecedented situation in Chicago: the needs and fears of Whites now must be articulated to a non-Catholic African American in City Hall, rather than vice versa. This must be the Church's task, McDermott believed.

Kleppner explains that White Catholics were "more resistant to the idea of a black mayor and more likely to vote against Washington than other White Chicagoans"; however, as the Chicago archdiocese was large and demographically and socioeconomically diverse, it is unsurprising that influential Catholics supported

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Egan had received "more correspondence and personal briefings from our two organizations than any other clergyman in the city."

Washington during the primary and general election.<sup>69</sup> Among Black Catholics, few were more active in drumming up support for Washington than the esteemed Father George Clements of Holy Angeles, an African American parish of approximately four thousand congregants on the South Side.<sup>70</sup> Anticipating the 1983 mayoral election, Clements in Fall 1982 coordinated a voter registration drive for parishioners and encouraged all Black pastors to do likewise. He unilaterally ruled that parents who wished to enroll their children at Holy Angels School must be registered voters. Clements went so far as to declare during a Mass sermon that he did not want unregistered adult voters as members of the parish. Over fifteen hundred congregants registered in the first few months.<sup>71</sup> Clements' support for Washington stemmed from an earnest conviction that the congressman was the strongest political candidate; excluding Whites from positions of authority and discounting White needs to advance Black Power interests was unpalatable to the priest. Consider Clements' avowal after Washington's general election victory. "Black vote" and "white vote" should now be dropped from Chicagoans' lexicon, and voting along purely "racial" or "ethnic" lines must be made a relic of the past: "The only vote from now on should be a vote for the individual who is most qualified for the intended position."<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> Kleppner, 219.

<sup>70</sup> Interestingly, the principal of Holy Angeles School, Father Paul Smith, endorsed Byrne in the primary. Smith agreed that Washington was the Chicago Black community's "most outstanding, most articulate" politician; however, he did not in January 1983 believe that Washington could possibly win. "I don't think we should send our finest candidates down the drain," Smith remarked. See Chinta Strausberg, "Ministers in Support of Byrne," *CD*, 31 January 1983.

<sup>71</sup> "Holy Angels to Require Voters Cards of Parents," *CD*, 18 August 1982; "No Registration at Holy Name," *CD*, 24 August 1982; Chinta Strausberg, "Register 300 at Holy Angels Church," *CD*, 21 September 1982. To accusations that his actions were inappropriate, Clements declared that "There never has and there never will be separation of church and state in the black community." For Blacks, this was impossible as the church "has always been the one institution that prevented this nation from exterminating black people." See Chinta Strausberg, "Non-Voters Not Welcome at Holy Angeles Church," *CD*, 20 September 1982.

<sup>72</sup> "Don't See Too Much Too Soon," *CD*, 4 April 1983.

In respect to White Catholics, a handful had been appointed to, or were on affable terms with, Washington and his staff—in spite of the fact that Washington, at least at the beginning of his tenure according to Gary Rivlin, “was not unlike the white person who looks on certain blacks as exceptions rather than the rule.”<sup>73</sup> Polish-American attorney and former state representative Michael Holewinski was among the most important members of Washington’s staff. He was an Administrative Assistant who was ultimately appointed chair of the Human Services Subcabinet and then chair of the Mayor’s Task Force on Youth Crime Prevention.<sup>74</sup> During the election, Washington tabbed Holewinski and three other prominent Whites as Catholic “contacts” that could entice White ethnic voters: Edward Marciniak, the director of the Institute of Urban Life at Loyola University; John McDermott, who was then editing and publishing the highly esteemed *Chicago Reporter*, a monthly that featured investigative reporting on issues of race; and Dan Dailey, a former priest and spokesman for Chicago Call to Action. After St. Pascal’s, Washington’s Steering Committee decided against riskily cultivating new public venues for the congressmen where he would be exposed to White ethnics. Instead, it favored Washington appearances at forums where he had already been invited and could possibly sway undecided but potentially amenable ethnic voters, such as at Loyola University on the North Side as well as Irish and materially privileged Beverly on the far Southwest Side. It was the task of Holewinski, McDermott, Marciniak, and Dailey to

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<sup>73</sup> Rivlin, 241.

<sup>74</sup> “Michael Holewinski,” Mayoral Records, Central Files Series, 1981-1987, Routed Correspondence – 1985, Box 5, Folder 30, CPLHW.

“insure [sic] that there will be sufficient numbers of progressive Catholics in attendance and that there will not be a repeat of the St. Pascal’s incident.”<sup>75</sup>

Egan also admired Washington, although SPNF’s insinuation that the priest plotted with the mayor to distance pastors from their congregations is inaccurate. St. Pascal’s and angry appeals to group interests deeply distressed Egan, who feared that efforts to foster a racially amicable city had faltered. Had the Church since King’s death in 1968 “just taken it for granted that the educational and formational job were being done?” Upon returning to Chicago, Egan made it a point to orient himself to important city events and trends, dining and conversing with alderman, activists, and ecclesiastical figures. After the election, he befriended Washington: “I became friends with politicians not because I want anything from them,” Egan remarked to biographer Margery Frisbie, “I want to know movers and shakers to help solve the problems of the city.” Gratified, Egan was given the mayor’s home phone number, and boasted that he was the only Chicago Catholic priest “with a warm personal relationship” with Washington.<sup>76</sup> This cordiality was evinced in 1985, when Egan contacted a highly placed American brother priest in Rome to arrange for Washington to be included in a papal audience when the mayor visited the city in July. Egan’s letter gushed that Washington was a “splendid gentleman,” sensitive to the needs of the impoverished, hungry, and homeless, and a “devout” individual who read the speeches and talks of Pope John Paul II and Cardinal Bernardin.<sup>77</sup>

<sup>75</sup> Michael Evans to Al Raby, “White Catholic Ethnic Strategy – Recommendation from the Strategy Meeting,” 29 March 1983, Pre-Mayoral Records, Mayoral Campaign Records, 1980-1983, Central Office Personnel, Box 6, Folder 1, CPLHW.

<sup>76</sup> Margery Frisbie, *An Alley Life in Chicago: The Ministry of a City Priest* (Kansas City, MO: Sheed and Ward, 1991), 267, 269-270.

<sup>77</sup> Msgr. John Egan to Rev. Monsignor Rigali, 12 June 1985, Mayoral Records, Central Files Series, 1981-1987, Files of Delores Woods, Box 37, Folder 1, CPLHW.

The SON/SOC Declaration, in Egan's estimation, conflicted with archdiocesan and the new archbishop's efforts to foster mutual dialogue, foment trust, and peacefully resolve grievances between races and political opponents. Of Bernardin's reaction to the mayoral race and subsequent Council Wars, a few statements can be made. First, the Cardinal carefully avoided appearing partisan. The Chancery, in fact, requested that Washington discontinue the campaign commercial that depicted a photograph of Bernardin and the congressman.<sup>78</sup> Second, despite Keck's perception of a politically naïve prelate, Bernardin was actually unusually astute and painfully aware that racial polarization was rending the city. In September 1982, months after Bernardin arrived in Chicago, the *Chicago Defender* handsomely praised the archbishop for already having thrice denounced racism during public speeches. The new archbishop was clearly "not an ivory tower churchman who thinks the war was won with the Civil Rights Act and all that is required now is a mopping up operation."<sup>79</sup> Indeed, Bernardin tirelessly denounced racism and urged reconciliation and dialogue. Language that emphasized community, rather than group separateness, was urgent. St. Pascal's was profoundly troubling, and the Cardinal called protesters to task. That the incident occurred during a Palm Sunday liturgy that inaugurated the holiest season on the Church calendar made it doubly distressing.<sup>80</sup> During the general election, the archbishop instructed Catholics that issues, rather than race, must guide their votes. During the Council Wars, he worried that racially-charged rhetoric among politicians was fueling racial animosity and, potentially violence, among Chicagoans. It was also impeding the alleviation of the city's pressing

<sup>78</sup> "Cardinal Urges Chicagoans Not to Vote on Racial Basis Tuesday," *NYT*, 9 April 1983.

<sup>79</sup> "Bernardin Understands," *CD*, 23 September 1982.

<sup>80</sup> Henry Locke, "Bernardin Rips Jeering Whites," *CD*, 29 March 1983.

economic problems. The poor and vulnerable suffered most.<sup>81</sup> Bernardin actively tried to mitigate animosity and furnish a forum where politicians could address common grievances. His ideas were delineated in an October 1984 address to the Chicago City Club, when Bernardin proposed that an interfaith religious coalition should combine to provide “neutral space” where politicians at loggerheads could “freely discuss their differences.” To this end, Bernardin was among a cadre of Chicago religious leaders who met privately with Washington and Vrdolyak, and tried to coax lawmakers to mute the incendiary and divisive “rhetoric of racial superiority” and legislate for the common good.<sup>82</sup> The short-term efficacy of Bernardin’s attempts is debatable, and judgment must be reserved until his entire personal correspondence is made available to scholars.<sup>83</sup>

Few Catholics had such a firm grasp of the Church’s contribution to the city as John McDermott, or were as tireless in advocating reciprocity after the mayoral election. Few Chicagoans matched McDermott’s unimpeachable reputation for fairness, or his skill for trenchant analysis of urban trends; indeed, no one could credibly accuse the founder and editor of the *Chicago Reporter* of blithe optimism or unthinking liberalism.<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>81</sup> Joseph Cardinal Bernardin, Address, Chicago City Club, 23 October 1984, Joseph Cardinal Bernardin Addresses and Talks, Box 18, Folder 46, AAC; John Helyar and Robert Johnson, “Brawling City: Chicago’s Political Rift Deepens, Worsening City’s Many Problems,” *WSJ*, 6 August 1984.

<sup>82</sup> Joseph Cardinal Bernardin, Address, Chicago City Club, 23 October 1984, Joseph Cardinal Bernardin Addresses and Talks, Box 18, Folder 46, AAC; “Mayor, Vrdolyak to Meet with Clergy,” *CT*, 2 November 1984.

<sup>83</sup> Criticism of Bernardin’s bids to kindle political dialogue came from an unlikely quarter: Chicago Catholic Women. In an April 1983 newsletter to members, the organization addressed the Chancery’s call for racial reconciliation: “We are called now after this mayoral election to a ‘brotherly love,’ which translates for many women—‘love the brothers’—but hate yourselves.’ The city of Chicago is somehow supposed to love the men that now beg for unity. The Catholic Church begs its members not to be racist while at the same time the leadership remains sinfully silent on the rampant sexism which exists within it.” See *CCW Woman-Gram*, April 1983, Chicago Catholic Women Records, Box 4, Folder 2, WLALUC.

<sup>84</sup> Rivlin explains that “Charges laid out in the *Reporter* carried a certain weight because of its reputation as a publication that painstakingly sifted through evidence to document its points.” See Rivlin, 149-150. McDermott would resign as editor and publisher of the *Reporter* at the end of 1984 to become Director of Urban Affairs at Illinois Bell Telephone Company. *Chicago Sun Times* columnist and religion

His affection for Chicago and its people was immense. A Hyde Park resident like Washington, McDermott had supported the new mayor, in part, because he believed the congressman would be a racial “reconciler.” Washington embodied that being Black in Chicago was positive, akin to the role John F. Kennedy played for American Catholics.<sup>85</sup> During a series of lengthy addresses to Catholic leaders and priests, as well as Chicago politicians, in 1984 and 1985, McDermott unsparingly critiqued the parochial ethnocentrism that espoused group loyalty over all others, and isolated Chicagoans from one another. Harking back to the King-led Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s, McDermott instead urged multiracial bonds to alleviate profound Chicago ills. That theological beliefs buttressed McDermott’s vision for a racially just city is incontestable.<sup>86</sup>

Chicago’s “ugly racial struggle” horrified McDermott. It had spawned bitterness, hardened racial divisions, become a national spectacle, and had embarrassed Chicagoans, even if the intensity of racial rancor among politicians was not yet matched among the general population. Chicago was “the most American of cities in terms of its diversity, energy, and creation and celebration of specifically American ideas and traditions.” It was home to the “strongest black community in America,” counted Washington and presidential candidate Jesse Jackson, and headquarters of the nation’s African American businesses. More African Americans represented Chicago in Congress than any other

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editor Roy Larson replaced him. See John McDermott, “Editorial – It’s Been Grand,” *CR*, December 1984; “Washington Departs – Larson Brings ‘Integrity, Insight’ to the Reporter’s Top Job,” *CR*, June 1985.

<sup>85</sup> “Good Citizens Lead the Way,” *Hyde Park Herald*, 11 February 1987.

<sup>86</sup> John A. McDermott, “Racial Reconciliation in Chicago, an Address to the LINK Banquet,” 7 June 1984, John J. Egan Papers, Box 151, Folder 12, AUND; John A. McDermott, “The Church and Chicago’s New Race Relations Agenda, an Address to the Priest’s Senate,” 4 September 1984, John J. Egan Papers, Box 151, Folder 12, AUND; John A. McDermott, “Address to the Annual Luncheon of the Chicago Commission on Human Relations,” 6 December 1985, John J. Egan Papers, Box 151, Folder 12, AUND.



city. “The new mass movement of the black community into a political consciousness and action” started in Chicago; therefore, how the city negotiated racial grievances would reverberate throughout America. To emolliate inter-racial animosity, McDermott offered prescriptions. Chicagoans had to rediscover the ideals and spirit that animated Martin Luther King, Jr., and the interracial Civil Rights Movement. The movement had embedded racial justice within the nation’s conscience: working for equal opportunities for minorities was equated with being a good American. Its success derived in large part from King’s tapping of “a broadly shared set of fundamental values and beliefs about America.” King’s objective was that of an inclusive and racially integrated society, where racial, ethnic, or religious differences did not hinder individual fulfillment. King’s vision was essentially “moral and religious.” Eradicating racism and desegregating the nation were not the movement’s ends. Following the Gospel of Jesus Christ, King was ardent that triumphing over racism demanded “replacing it with a more powerful good, a new community that transcends race.” And indeed, the movement had met a degree of success; the nation was more hopeful and fairer. Single mindedly dwelling on the movement’s failures was harmful to interracial amity, McDermott held. Although it was fine to celebrate racial or ethnic heritages, one’s primary or exclusively loyalty should not be to one’s group, but rather to the city and nation. Ethnocentrism isolated Chicagoans from one another; operating alone, individual racial or ethnic groups were incapable of solving glaring urban ills, and particularly the brutal poverty of the city’s emerging underclass. Individuals that touted loyalty to racial or ethnic group over all others also “forfeit[ed] any special claim to the attention, conscience, or sympathy of the larger society.” In 1980s’ Chicago, the most effective alliance would be between African

Americans and Chicago Catholics, who compromised “the strongest Catholic community in America.” “In a very real way, blacks and Catholics hold the future of Chicago in their hands,” McDermott stated. The Church must remain a racially and politically inclusive society that retained and promoted the best interests of the city: “It is not the role of the Church...to take sides in the political struggle... We cannot be pro-Washington or pro-Vrdoylak. But we are pro-Chicago.”<sup>87</sup>

Theological convictions undergirded McDermott’s vision of a racially integrated and just city. Christian selfless love, the inclusive message of Jesus Christ, and the lay apostolate were three theological motifs that guided McDermott. As it was a source of selfless love, Christian faith would help to heal Chicago’s racial wounds. Justice may address injury, but only selfless love could animate genuine racial reconciliation. All things were possible through the Lord, and therefore espousing reconciliation was optimistic but not quixotic. “Dreams are the stuff of Christian life, not the dreams of sleep or of Sigmund Freud, but the dream as a vision of the good life, as a life of service and sanctity, and the dream of the good community, the city of justice and love.” Christ was an integrationist—a Jew who founded a Church opened to all peoples of the world. In parables and actions, He associated Himself with outsiders. All Chicagoans were brothers and sisters in Christ. This common unity trumped individual group affiliation. The institutional Church must recognize social ills and in particular the plight of the underclass, while also denouncing public indifference and exhorting Chicagoans to act.

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<sup>87</sup> John A. McDermott, “Racial Reconciliation in Chicago, an Address to the LINK Banquet,” 7 June 1984, John J. Egan Papers, Box 151, Folder 12, AUND; John A. McDermott, “The Church and Chicago’s New Race Relations Agenda, an Address to the Priest’s Senate,” 4 September 1984, John J. Egan Papers, Box 151, Folder 12, AUND; John A. McDermott, “Address to the Annual Luncheon of the Chicago Commission on Human Relations,” 6 December 1985, John J. Egan Papers, Box 151, Folder 12, AUND.

However, it was the proper work of laypeople rather than the institutional Church to offer solutions to social ills, thereby manifesting the Church in the “secular city.” The Catholic Church could not be “her full self,” McDermott emphasized, unless the gifted, well-educated, and prosperous “vast Catholic lay community” “see their primary vocation in their work in the secular arena.” To act competently, laypeople must inform themselves of public policies to “devise reforms which are both morally sound and politically feasible.” McDermott lamented that this theological imperative, hitherto dubbed the “lay apostolate,” “went out of fashion in the identity crisis we all had following Vatican II.”

For the collective good, African Americans as well as Whites must be receptive to reciprocity. McDermott raised the point that Washington’s election ushered in an unprecedented situation in Chicago politics. In the past, Civil Rights advocates found it necessary to explain Black needs and fears to White lawmakers, as African Americans had only a modicum of real political power. Now, Whites—and in particular White Catholics who comprised the majority of Chicago’s European Americans—had to be explained to Washington and the Black members of his cabinet. It was the Church’s task, McDermott believed, to orient the mayor toward “build[ing] bridges for racial peace” and guaranteeing that communication between Blacks and Whites “flows both ways.”<sup>88</sup>

McDermott had begun the task of explaining White Chicago Catholics to Washington and his staff prior to the general election. In March 1983, he submitted a lengthy and perceptive memorandum outlining a possible “Catholic Strategy” to Washington’s campaign manager Al Raby. The document essentially traced White

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<sup>88</sup> John A. McDermott, “Racial Reconciliation in Chicago, an Address to the LINK Banquet,” 7 June 1984, John J. Egan Papers, Box 151, Folder 12, AUND; John A. McDermott, “The Church and Chicago’s New Race Relations Agenda, an Address to the Priest’s Senate,” 4 September 1984, John J. Egan Papers, Box 151, Folder 12, AUND.

Catholic demographics in Chicago, ethnics' concerns, and advised Washington how to court them. McDermott confided to the congressman's staff that he believed that, to be a successful lawmaker, Washington had to transform his campaign from a "black protest movement, of by and for black people," to a multiracial campaign "of, by and for all the people of Chicago." Catholics comprised the majority of Chicago's White population—a fact that "liberals" overlooked. Of the 1,350,000 Whites residing in the city, one million (75 percent) were Catholic. Of this number, 400,000-500,000 were registered voters, McDermott estimated. He thought that Washington must broaden his predominantly Black base and capture 40-50 percent of the White Catholic vote to win the general election. This demanded recognizing their fears and concerns, and courting their "best instincts—their hopes, ideals, and sense of fairness." Whereas some White Catholics were bigots, the Washington camp would be mistaken to "buy the liberal cliché which regards the white, Catholic, working class, ethnic communities as synonymous with racism." White Catholics had demonstrated loyalty to Chicago: they had not fled to the same degree as had White Protestants and Jews; they had maintained a higher proportion of their houses of worship; they routinely subsidized inner city parishes and the instruction of approximately thirty thousand African American children—of whom half were non-Catholics—in parochial schools; and they funded the Campaign for Human Development, which supported projects in deprived, inner city neighborhoods. "No other group, no other church in the community comes even close to the Catholic community in the number of people deployed to serve the needy black families and children. This is not the work of racists," McDermott posited. Ethnics had little instinctive guilt about race relations; they recognized that White Anglo Saxon Protestants, rather than their own

ancestors, bore principal culpability for enslaving African Americans.<sup>89</sup> On the whole, European American Catholics desired fairness. African Americans should be equitably treated, but so should Whites. Fear rather than racism was the chief hurdle to winning ethnic votes: fear of unfairness, or that the Washington administration would be anti-White; fear of violent crime, which McDermott acknowledged had in the early 1980s acquired “a predominantly black character”—of the six White and one Black police officers killed in 1982, all were Catholic and six were killed by Black males; and fear of the decline in the quality of life throughout the city, or essentially that Chicago “as a whole will become a changing neighborhood.” Washington speeches that praised Catholics’ contribution to the city particularly in the realm of education, or touted that the congressman would be fair, inclusive, and tough on crime could lure Catholic voters, McDermott recommended.<sup>90</sup>

Despite McDermott’s attempts, a “serious communication gap” widened between Blacks and Whites after the election. Black elected officials had thus far been reluctant to acknowledge Catholic contributions to the city, particularly in the realm of education, where they had “opposed just about every measure to give the parents of children in private schools some relief from the crushing dual burden of tuition plus school taxes.” Parochial schools educated thousands of non-Catholic minorities, and therefore merited the support of Black officials. That some Blacks interpreted all criticism of Washington

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<sup>89</sup> McDermott was not the only Chicago Catholic intellectual to validate the concerns of Catholic ethnics. University of Chicago sociologist Father Andrew Greeley had since the 1970s published essays and articles that refuted the charge that European American Catholics were more prejudiced against Blacks than other Whites.

<sup>90</sup> John A. McDermott to Al Raby, “Winning More White Votes – A Catholic Strategy,” 28 March 1983, John J. Egan Papers, Box 151, Folder 12, AUND.

as racist attacks also widened the communication gap.<sup>91</sup> For his frank criticism of alleged Black racism, McDermott was admiringly described by one *Sun Times* reporter as having gone “beyond traditional liberalism.”<sup>92</sup> Despite the end of the Council Wars in 1986, an aggrieved McDermott later reflected that the 1980s witnessed an acceleration of racial separation in Chicago. In 1992, he observed that King’s vision of an inclusive society had “nearly withered away”—polemic prevailed that caricatured White Americans as essentially racist and minorities as principally victims.<sup>93</sup>

McDermott was not the only Catholic who, while hopeful that Washington’s tenure would kindle racial reconciliation, nonetheless chided the administration for aggravating group loyalties. In a public address, Marciniak observed that Hyde Park had replaced Bridgeport as the “locus of political power downtown” with Washington’s victory. It was apparent that Hyde Park, as a Lakefront community home to the University of Chicago, also “export[ed] a special brand of local politics and urban mentality that is one of a kind” and unlike most other Chicago neighborhoods. Hyde Parkers had a “charmingly superior attitude toward other Chicago residents” and held the “widely unchallenged opinion that working class white ethnics are racially more prejudiced than the college educated denizens of Hyde Park.”<sup>94</sup> For his part, Egan was disturbed by the media’s single minded focus on racism during the election. To McDermott, Egan complained that the “code word ‘ethnic’” implied “Catholic.” The

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<sup>91</sup> John A. McDermott, “Racial Reconciliation in Chicago, an Address to the LINK Banquet,” 7 June 1984, John J. Egan Papers, Box 151, Folder 12, AUND.

<sup>92</sup> Basil Talbott, Jr., “They Won’t Win Over the Ethnics This Way,” *CST*, 24 June 1984.

<sup>93</sup> Steve Neal, “McDermott Laments Racial Polarization,” *CST*, 5 August 1992.

<sup>94</sup> Edward Marciniak, “Address to American Historical Association,” 1986, Edward Marciniak Papers, Box 22, AAC.

long record of Catholic contributions to the city had to be “set straight.”<sup>95</sup> After the election, Egan grew frustrated with the narrow minded tendencies, and dismissive attitude toward Catholics, of Al Raby and other Washington staff members. The priest confided that he found Raby’s staff to be “very anti-Catholic, as though all of the Catholics were racists.”<sup>96</sup>

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Washington’s ascendancy aroused mixed feelings among Chicago Catholics. Apprehension was evident in White ethnic communities of Chicago Lawn, Gage Park, and West Lawn on the Southwest Side. However, the unhappy encounter between SPNF leaders who sought a White ethnic coalition on the one hand and Monsignor John Egan on the other signaled that religious reciprocity in the form of racial and political dialogue and a degree of receptivity to Washington were archdiocesan imperatives. The activities of Cardinal Bernardin confirm this. The religious reciprocity impulse was evident in the public speeches and actions of other Chicago Catholics, most notably John McDermott. The *Chicago Reporter* editor strongly urged racial reconciliation, and attempted to articulate White Catholic needs to the city’s Black political leadership.

The success of McDermott, Egan, and others who attempted to heal racial and political rifts is an open question. The SPNF’s aversion to Egan’s letter, as well as the alleged “anti-Catholic” demeanor of Raby’s staff, suggests that some Chicagoans rebuffed the attempts of archdiocesan officials and other Catholics to foster reciprocity among races and political parties. Ultimately, however, the thorniest test to religious

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<sup>95</sup> John Egan to John McDermott, 29 April 1983, John J. Egan Papers, Box 151, Folder 12, AUND.

<sup>96</sup> John Egan to Edward Marciniak, 9 September 1991, Edward Marciniak Papers, Box 22, AAC.

reciprocity between 1965 and 1996 did not stem from racial politics, but rather from the unprecedented politicization of gay liberation in the city.



## *Chapter 5* *Gay Liberation*

### *Verities?*

Edward Kantowicz has written that “The American Catholic Church had always been supremely confident ideologically; it knew it was right and everyone else was wrong.”<sup>1</sup> In Chicago, trust in theological verities, twinned with an earnest zeal to Christianize the city and alleviate the problems bred by industrialism and pluralism, motivated social activists in the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s to act with conviction and certainty. However, a host of ecclesial and secular events in the 1960s shook Catholics’ ideological self-confidence. At the Second Vatican Council, which assumed the ambitious task of updating the Church to make its attitudes, habits, and institutions more effective in the modern world, Council Fathers—the teachers of the world’s Catholics—displayed contrasting understandings of the substance of the faith. It was unsurprising, therefore, that during and after the Council American theologians began to intensely debate the “text” and “spirit” of conciliar documents and a host of ancillary issues such as papal infallibility and the role of laypeople in the Church. After Vatican II and in the optimistic milieu of the 1960s, some Catholic beliefs were swiftly deemphasized. The journalist Charles R. Morris has written that “notions of Hell, damnation, and mortal sin, almost overnight, virtually disappeared from the American Church—another example of the ‘spirit’ of the Council prevailing over the ‘texts.’”<sup>2</sup> A second event that fueled widespread questioning and mistrust in Magisterial statements was Pope Paul VI’s

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<sup>1</sup> Edward R. Kantowicz, *Corporation Sole: Cardinal Mundelein and Chicago Catholicism* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1983), 2-3.

<sup>2</sup> Charles R. Morris, *American Catholic: The Saints and Sinners Who Built America’s Most Powerful Church* (New York: Vintage books, 1997), 324, 356.

promulgation of *Humanae Vitae* in 1968, which most controversially mandated that “each and every marriage act must remain open to the transmission of life.” The encyclical provoked immediate protests from theologians across the United States, and the overwhelming majority of married Catholic couples simply ignored it.<sup>3</sup> In Chicago, Archbishop John Cody’s episcopal style, his penchant to centralize power and decision-making in his own hands, and the very public squabbles between Cody and local priests were other factors that encouraged Catholics to question the aptitude of Church leadership and the relevance of its traditions.

Powerful secular trends that challenged long held social assumptions and slackened the ties between churches and society, such as “second wave” feminism, liberalized abortion laws, and the “sexual revolution,” also challenged Catholics’ ideological confidence. And according to the historian Hugh McLeod, no thread of the sexual revolution “marked such a sharp break from the past as the gay liberation movement.”<sup>4</sup> In some large American cities such as Chicago during the 1960s and 1970s a growing number of people publicly acknowledged their homosexuality, and organized to “fight prejudice, discrimination, and persecution from the classification of homosexuality as a sin, crime, or illness.”<sup>5</sup> The iconic 1969 Stonewall Riots in which police raided a New York City gay bar and homosexual patrons physically retaliated, lent gay rights supporters a powerful impetus. Advocates were buoyed by, and sought to mirror, the African American Civil Rights Movement, which successfully secured

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<sup>3</sup> Leslie Woodcock Tentler, *Catholics and Contraception: An American History* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2004), 3.

<sup>4</sup> Hugh McLeod, *The Religious Crisis of the 1960s* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 161. This chapter uses “gay liberation movement,” which has alternatively been called “gay emancipation” or the “gay rights movement.”

<sup>5</sup> Vicki L. Eaklor, “Gay and Lesbian Movement,” in *Dictionary of American History*, ed. Stanley I. Kutler, vol. 3, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (New York: Scribner’s, 2003), 513.

legislation that targeted discrimination against Blacks and other ethnic minorities. An increasingly vocal segment of the gay liberation movement pleaded for social recognition, contended that homosexuals were a victimized minority group, and therefore demanded equal rights under the Constitution's Fourteenth Amendment—e.g., state recognition of domestic partnerships and same-sex marriage and the privileges afforded to heterosexual married couples such as health insurance through the employer of their partner—as well as the extension of laws to protect them from discrimination in jobs, housing, and public accommodation.<sup>6</sup>

The gay liberation movement had a complicated relationship with the global and national Catholic Church. The incompatibility between gay lifestyles that celebrated or promoted same-sex genital activity and Church teaching about human sexuality was publicized. Many homosexuals were suspicious of, or averse to, Christianity which had for centuries condemned homosexual acts as depraved and homosexual orientations as disordered. With mounting frequency in the late 1960s and 1970s, gay activists denounced the tradition of Catholic Church teaching, based on Sacred Scripture and natural law, which held that homosexual genital relations are objectively immoral, as they “lack an essential and indispensable finality, namely, the procreative function of sexuality, the openness to new life.”<sup>7</sup>

Yet gay liberation also provoked in the Catholic Church a newfound sensitivity to the social and spiritual challenges that Catholic and non-Catholic homosexuals confronted. Some theologians, notably Jesuit John J. McNeill who was among the

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<sup>6</sup> Patrick Allitt, *Religion in America Since 1945: A History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), 232.

<sup>7</sup> J. Keefe, “Homosexuality,” in *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, vol. 7, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Detroit: Gale, 2003), 67.

earliest Catholic theologians to publicly write about gay theology, pressed the Church to re-think its teachings; others publicly repudiated traditional doctrine.<sup>8</sup> A number of homo- and heterosexual revisionist writers examined Scripture and concluded that homosexual activity was morally acceptable for those with same-sex orientations and therefore the Church's contemporary condemnation was theologically tenuous.<sup>9</sup> Others attempted to organize ministries to gays and lesbians.<sup>10</sup> Magisterial teaching essentially went unchanged; however, gay liberation did compel the hierarchy to re-examine a host of issues, ranging from the moral legitimacy of same-sex attraction to how Catholic parents should relate to gay children.<sup>11</sup>

In the United States, the existence of gays in the Church was gradually acknowledged, which contributed to the flux in U.S. Catholic moral theology. Charles E. Curran has chronicled how in the wake of Vatican II theological "revisionists" challenged "monolithic" conceptions of morality that were steeped in the philosophical and

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<sup>8</sup> John J. McNeill, *The Church and the Homosexual* (Kansas City, Kansas: Sheed, Andrews, and McMeel, 1976).

<sup>9</sup> One of the most notable was John Boswell's highly controversial *Christianity, Social Tolerance, and Homosexuality: Gay People in Western Europe from the Beginning of the Christian Era to the Fourteenth Century* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980).

<sup>10</sup> Sister Jeannine Gramick and Father Robert Nugent, for example, established New Ways Ministry in 1977 to attend to the pastoral needs of homosexuals.

<sup>11</sup> Beginning in the mid-1970s, the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF), the official teaching branch of the Church, as well as the United States National Conference of Catholic Bishops (NCCB), addressed homosexuality in a handful of documents. Most notably, the CDF issued to the world's bishops the "Declaration on Certain Questions Concerning Sexual Ethics" (1975), and "Letter on the Pastoral Care of Homosexual Persons" (1986). According to one sympathetic Catholic theologian, both documents offered a "realistic and compassionate understanding of the homosexual orientation or condition"; emphasized "the avoidance of permissive approaches to the moral evaluation of homosexual genital activity"; and "positive initiatives to facilitate the harmonious integration of homosexual persons into the Christian community and wider society." The NCCB, for its part, addressed homosexuality in three documents between 1965 and the 1990s: "To Live in Jesus Christ" (1978), "Human Sexuality" (1991), and "Always Our Children" (rev. 1998). Each underscored that homosexual orientations are not in themselves sinful; that the condition is discovered, rather than selected by the individual; that homosexuals, as well as unmarried heterosexual individuals, are to be chaste; that prejudice and discrimination targeting homosexuals is a sin against Christian charity; and that homosexuals should be included in parish and church communities. See B. Williams, "Homosexuals, Pastoral Care of," in *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, vol. 7, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Detroit: Gale, 2003), 71; Keefe, "Homosexuality, 69-70.

theological aspects of natural law. Revisionists encouraged Catholic theology to consider historical consciousness, inductive reasoning, and experience rather than merely universal principles. They also asserted that morality should consider the primacy of the person or “total human aspect” rather than focusing exclusively on the “physical aspect of the human act.”<sup>12</sup> Beginning in the 1970s, there was a dawning public recognition of homosexual priests and the existence of a gay culture in many Catholic seminaries. Patrick Allitt explains that the Church’s “rule of clerical celibacy meant, in practice, that actively or latently gay men were often drawn to the all-male society of the priesthood.”<sup>13</sup> For their parts, many priests were increasingly sensitive that members of their flock could be privately or publicly gay. Jim Bowman, a former Chicago newspaper columnist, has shown that some pastorally-minded clerics thereby “bent” Church teaching on sexuality, that is, they deemphasized Magisterial statements to their flock so as not to appear uncompassionate.<sup>14</sup> Catholic heterosexual laypeople also came to the realization that there were homosexuals in the Church and perhaps in their parish. A wide spectrum of reactions followed, from an open embrace of gay liberation to the vilification of homosexuals and homosexuality. A good number of Catholics were simply confused by the seeming rapidity with which a once stigmatized minority publicly emerged and proliferated, won the attention of a progressively sympathetic media, was socially tolerated and then accepted, and secured legislative victories to safeguard their rights.

Finally, that the gay liberation movement opened windows of opportunity for gay Catholics and their sympathizers within the Church should not be overlooked. For

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<sup>12</sup> Charles E. Curran, *Catholic Moral Theology in the United States* (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2008), 83, 102-3.

<sup>13</sup> Allitt, 238.

<sup>14</sup> Jim Bowman, *Bending the Rules: What American Priests Tell American Catholics* (New York: Crossroad, 1994).

instance, emboldened by the idea that their sexual orientation should be celebrated rather than suppressed, some sought to carve out space in the Church in order to explicitly practice their faith *as gays*. Organizations formed to bond gay Catholics, and to articulate to Church officials the pastoral needs of the homosexual community. Dignity/USA was perhaps the most notable.<sup>15</sup> Sympathetic priests, nuns, and other religious began ministries for homosexuals, believing themselves to be following the example of Jesus Christ by tending to stigmatized outsiders in the Church. Some parishes, particularly in large cities, deliberately became “gay friendly”—e.g., by holding liturgies specifically designed by and for homosexuals—thereby attracting Catholic gays from outside the immediate area.

The specific influence of the gay liberation movement on the Chicago Catholic Church, and how Catholics negotiated the increasingly unmistakable public presence of homosexuals, have not been analyzed by historians. The lacuna needs to be filled for at least two reasons. First, relative to many other American cities, homosexuality in Chicago migrated with surprising speed from social non-recognition to widespread tolerance. In the span of about thirty years, writes one commentator of the city’s gay life, Chicago transformed from “one of the most oppressive cities in America for LGBT people” to “one of the most progressive.”<sup>16</sup> Subject to frequent police raids into the 1970s, the gay community would be publicly celebrated by the city in 1998, when Mayor Richard M. Daley designated the North Halstead Street commercial strip—for decades

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<sup>15</sup> I could locate no lengthy examination of Dignity/USA’s genesis and development. For an exploration of how the organization operates as a mediator between individual gay and lesbian Catholics and the rest of the Church, see Michael Albert Tew, “Organizational Mediation of Gay Catholic Identity and Social Schisms: An Ethnographic Analysis of Dignity/USA (Ph.D. diss, Wayne State University, 1996).

<sup>16</sup> John D. Polling, “Chicago,” in *Encyclopedia of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender History in America*, ed. Marc Stein, vol. 1 (Detroit: Scribner’s, 2004), 212.

home to an identifiable homosexual enclave—as a gay neighborhood. Towers ringed in rainbow colors dotted the area. The project was unprecedented and “a first in the country” according to a spokesman for the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, who crowed that “no other city had formally promoted a neighborhood for its homosexual culture.”<sup>17</sup> Second, although archdiocesan leaders had historically never been “liberal” in regard to sexual issues, probing gay liberation in Chicago offers an intriguing glimpse into how an otherwise socially and economically liberal Catholic people negotiated the city’s acceptance of sexual minorities.<sup>18</sup>

The gay liberation movement’s essence, mounting public presence, and social and legislative goals ensured that Chicago Church leaders would ultimately have to confront it. However, Cardinal Cody—embroiled in intra-church squabbles and focused on relieving archdiocesan debt as well as racial issues—was publicly reticent in regards to how local Catholics should negotiate the movement, and how the pastoral needs of openly gay co-religionists should be met. During Cody’s reign the official newspaper of the archdiocese offered scant space to gay issues.<sup>19</sup> Until the appointment of Joseph Bernardin, Catholics who looked to the Chancery Office and the archbishop for guidance, therefore, could be disappointed.

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<sup>17</sup> Dirk Johnson, “Chicago Hails District as Symbol of Gay Life,” *NYT*, 27 August 1997; Tracy Baim, “Halstead Gets Official,” in *Out and Proud in Chicago: An Overview of the City’s Gay Community*, ed. Tracy Baim (Chicago: Surrey Books, 2008), 201; Alexandra Zavis, “Renovations to Have Gay-Pride Theme,” *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, 7 September 1997.

<sup>18</sup> Support for gay issues became a yardstick to measure Americans’ social and political liberalism—a category that was radically redefined in the 1970s to encompass sexual minorities.

<sup>19</sup> American Catholic theologians, much more so than historians, have examined homosexuals and homosexuality. For published accounts that offer in-depth examinations of gays and the American Church from an historical perspective, see Kenneth A. Briggs, *Holy Siege: The Year that Shook Catholic America* (San Francisco: Harper, 1992); Richard L. Smith, *AIDS, Gays, and the American Catholic Church* (Cleveland: Pilgrim Press, 1994).

Perhaps paradoxically, the absence of central direction created opportunities for gays and their supporters. Empowered by the gay liberation movement, Catholic homosexuals grew increasingly confident that “gay” and “Catholic” could be mutually inclusive identifications. Gay Catholics and sympathetic clerical and lay supporters urged religious reciprocity. They spearheaded initiatives and mobilized resources—Dignity/Chicago was the most notable organization in the 1970s and early 1980s—to initiate dialogue between gays and the Catholic Church, and meet the group’s pastoral needs. Especially active in this regard were a handful of priests and nuns, an unmistakable number of whom belonged to religious orders, and parishes on the North Side where “out,” primarily White, and middle-class gays were concentrated. Reciprocity demanded that the Church remain open to secular enrichment. Some Chicago religious touted that the daily experiences of homosexuals could and should inform a living Catholic theology. Notably, clerics’ ideological certainty in the teachings of their faith did not by and large arouse them into action, as it had their priestly forebears in the 1930s, 40s, and 50s; rather, they found motivation in the belief that gay’s experience would help nuance and supplement Catholic teaching about homosexuality.

Personality and circumstance compelled Joseph Cardinal Bernardin to publicly address homosexuals and homosexuality more frequently than his predecessor. Bernardin was sensitive to the pastoral needs of homosexuals and abolished any question of whether gays were full members of the Church. Circumstances also compelled him to address gay issues. Bernardin was archbishop of Chicago when the CDF in 1986 issued the “Letter on the Pastoral Care of Homosexual Persons,” which some disappointed gays and heterosexual supporters publicly and immediately denounced; during the AIDS



epidemic; and when the “Gay Rights”/“Human Rights” Ordinance was introduced for a full vote into the City Council in 1986 and again in 1988.

Bernardin’s opposition to the ordinance, widely credited for sinking the measure in 1986, delineated the limits of archdiocesan liberalism. The archbishop couched his approach to the ordinance in the language of reciprocity. Human solidarity was the proper response to homosexuals on the margins of society, and a public dialogue on gay rights was necessary to defuse tensions in the city. However, Bernardin also explained that the archdiocese would resist any ordinance that threatened to restrict the Church’s right to operate its institutions and programs in accordance with Catholic moral teaching. Gay rights supporters alleged that these pleas actually indicated ongoing efforts to socially segregate homosexuals and deny them civil rights. Their accusations helped to persuade other vocal Catholics, who grounded their support of the bill in theological terms that were admittedly at odds with the archbishop. These Catholics were important to the ordinance’s successful passage in 1988.

### *Pride and Prejudice*

Throughout the 1950s and much of the 1960s, gay life in Chicago and elsewhere in the United States was publically unrecognized and legally suppressed. Culture, religion, science, and the state generally stigmatized homosexuality. Christianity, the professed faith of the vast majority of Chicagoans who adhered to “organized” religion, had long proscribed homosexual genital acts. Significant portions of the scientific community deemed homosexuality a mental illness or disorder. Same-sex genital acts and intimacy were criminal violations. A host of laws, such as those prohibiting

disorderly conduct, sodomy, and cross-dressing, curtailed gay community life.<sup>20</sup> In Chicago, police also utilized public health or liquor control laws to close establishments where gays sought sexual contact and community, such as bathhouses and gay bars. During the 1950s, criminalization and prosecution of homosexuals actually intensified. Paradoxically, this bolstered the public visibility of sexual minorities.<sup>21</sup>

Among Chicago's homosexual population, social exclusion bred a good deal of fear. Individuals with homosexual orientations commonly concealed their sexual identities. Having one's same-sex attraction publicized could translate into lost jobs, friends, or prestige. Consider the notorious April 1964 police raid on the Fun Lounge, a gay club just outside the city's incorporated area on the West Side. When the *Chicago Tribune* subsequently printed the names of teachers and city employers who were arrested, at least one person reportedly lost his job.<sup>22</sup> That public knowledge of an individual's homosexuality could ruin his or her reputation was not lost on the city's Democratic political machine, under the control of Richard J. Daley, which allegedly circulated rumors of political opponents' homosexuality to shred their political credibility and ensure a machine victory.<sup>23</sup> Individuals who voluntarily acknowledged their homosexuality practiced a good deal of discretion. Although homosexual activity in the city during these years has been described as "rampant," it is impossible to precisely

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<sup>20</sup> Circuit Court judge Jack Sperling in 1973 struck down the city ordinance that forbid cross-dressing, which he said violated equal protection of the law. See "Cross-Sex Dress Ban Overruled," *CT*, 21 September 1973. As is explicated below, the state of Illinois repealed its sodomy law in 1961.

<sup>21</sup> William N. Eskridge, Jr., "Crime and Criminalization," in *Encyclopedia of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender History in America*, ed. Marc Stein, vol. 1 (Detroit: Scribner's, 2004), 263-66; Marc Stein, "Police and Policing," in *Encyclopedia of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender History in America*, 389-393; "Gay Rights," *Issues and Controversies On File*. Facts on File News Service, 13 Oct 2000. Web. 11 Nov 2011. <<http://0-www.2facts.com.libus.csd.mu.edu/article/i0502260>>.

<sup>22</sup> Marie J. Kuda, "Chicago's Stonewall: The Trip Raid in 1968," in *Out and Proud in Chicago*, 81; Polling, "Chicago," 209-213.

<sup>23</sup> Dirk Johnson, "Chicago Hails District as Symbol of Gay Life," *NYT*, 27 Aug. 1997.

calculate the number of gays who had acknowledged their same-sex orientation. Many Chicagoans were unaware of the extent of gay life. The gay social scene was semi-secretive; operating or patronizing gay bars or bathhouses invited arrest, fines, or jail time.<sup>24</sup> Some therefore visited heterosexual bars, using signs or code words to attract potential sexual partners. Gay sex was, according to one Chicago homosexual who experienced the decades first-hand, “largely a matter of apartment living and apartment encounters.”<sup>25</sup> Owners commonly bribed police officials to prevent raids on their establishment. Notoriety, fines, or jail time were not the only potential penalties for “being out.” Physical violence also loomed. Some real or imagined homosexuals suffered at the hands of “fag bashers”—teen males who walked city streets with wrenches and bats “ready to beat the hell out of anyone who looked gay.”<sup>26</sup>

Suppression bonded gays. In Chicago, a few “homophile” organizations sprouted. Historian John D’Emilio explains that these were forerunners to the gay liberation movement and “constitute a phase...of a much longer historical process through which a group of men and women came into existence as a self-conscious, cohesive minority,” ultimately perceiving themselves as “an oppressed minority, sharing an identity that subjected them to systematic injustice.”<sup>27</sup> Predominantly White—racial identity was usually paramount for African Americans—homophile organizations such as the Mattachine Society (MS) and the Daughters of Bilitis principally served a social rather than a political function.<sup>28</sup> The former, an organization for homosexuals which

<sup>24</sup> Polling, “Chicago,” 212.

<sup>25</sup> Kissack, 480.

<sup>26</sup> Barbara Mahany, “Dollars, Votes Promote Gay Power,” *CT*, 4 March 1983.

<sup>27</sup> John D’Emilio, *Sexual Politics, Sexual Communities: The Making of a Homosexual Minority in the United States, 1940-1970* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983): 4-5.

<sup>28</sup> Timothy Stewart-Winter, “Raids, Rights and Rainbow Coalitions: Sexuality and Race in Chicago Politics, 1965-2000,” (Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 2009), 88.

Californian Harry Hay spearheaded in 1951 in Los Angeles and two years later formed a chapter in the Windy City, published a newsletter, organized discussion groups for gays and lesbians, and launched education efforts to integrate gays into mainstream society; the latter helped lesbians overcome feelings of social inferiority. In both cases, the initial membership was small and Chicago's MS had twice folded by the mid-1960s. Suppression once again revived the flagging movement, however. After the Fun House raid, and the subsequent *Tribune* publication, outraged gays—many of whom had been members of the Mattachine Society—founded Mattachine Midwest (MM). Compared to its antecedent, MM had more members, better coordination, and acted more assertively, particularly in fighting police harassment and alleged entrapment of gay men.<sup>29</sup>

In Chicago, three other events in the late 1960s fueled the gay liberation movement: a police raid on a Near North Side gay bar, the Democratic National Convention, and the New York City Stonewall Riots. The social confidence that had been growing in the gay community was on display following a police raid on The Trip, a gay nightclub on the Near North Side, in January 1968. After witnessing same-sex dancing, police entered The Trip, arrested numerous patrons for public indecency and solicitation, and suspended the establishment's liquor license, thereby forcing management to temporarily close the bar. Sure of the illegality of police actions, Trip ownership contested the suspension of the bar's license, initiated a lawsuit, and ultimately appealed to the Illinois Supreme Court, which ruled that the city could not suspend liquor licenses while bars legally contested charges.<sup>30</sup> The local public perception that police

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<sup>29</sup> John D. Polling, "Mattachine Midwest: Standing up for Gay Rights," in *Out and Proud in Chicago*, 65; Carl Nash, "Gay and Lesbian Rights Movement," *Encyclopedia of Chicago*, <http://encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/508.html>.

<sup>30</sup> Polling, "Chicago," 211; Kuda, "Chicago's Stonewall: The Trip Raid in 1983," 80-83.

acted improperly and even brutality in skirmishes with demonstrators during the 1968 Democratic National Convention also helped gay activists. According to Timothy Stewart-Winter, the Convention “shook the confidence of local elites” in the CPD. Gay leaders exploited public sentiment to highlight and curtail “police harassment of gay establishments.”<sup>31</sup> A final watershed event that ushered in the modern gay liberation across the country, and facilitated an already underway Chicago movement, occurred in the summer of 1969. Once again, police harassment of gays was vital. During a raid on the Stonewall Inn, a gay bar in New York City’s Greenwich Village, homosexual patrons physically retaliated. The “Stonewall Riots” quickly assumed iconic status among the nation’s gays. In city after city, rejuvenated gay activists organized and articulated increasingly militant demands for social recognition, equal rights under the law, and anti-discrimination measures. Although the impact of Stonewall was only gradually felt among Chicago’s homosexual community, it did eventually embolden gay activists, such as those who formed the militant Chicago Gay Liberation, and prompted the city’s first Gay Pride parade in June 1970.<sup>32</sup>

By the late 1960s and early 1970s, long term local and national forces were also encouraging newfound public sensitivity to, and toleration of, homosexuals. Stewart-Winter cites anthropologist Kath Weston, who writes that the height of a “Great Gay Migration” occurred during the 1970s; homosexuals from the hinterland flocked to America’s urban spaces, as middle- and upper-class Whites continued their exodus from city to suburb in the Northeast and Rustbelt. In Chicago, a distinct gay enclave, overwhelmingly White, surfaced in the community areas of the Near North Side and

<sup>31</sup> Stewart-Winter, 146.

<sup>32</sup> Nash, “Gay and Lesbian Rights Movement”; Chad Heap, “Gays and Lesbians in Chicago: An Overview,” in *Out and Proud in Chicago*, 9.

Lake View, as well as the Old Town and Hyde Park neighborhoods. On the North Side, affluent gays moved in to rehabilitated housing, helping to drive up real estate values and forcing minority families to leave. By 1983, one gay activist could write that, on the North Side, “Being gay is accepted as a way of life.”<sup>33</sup> A gay subculture was also evident in the Near South Side.<sup>34</sup>

That the scientific community, lawmakers, and some religious communities looked more sympathetically on homosexuality also encouraged social toleration. One early harbinger for the gay rights movement was the publication of Alfred Kinsey’s controversial but influential *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male* in 1948, which concluded that nearly 40 percent of adult males had at least one post-adolescent homosexual experience. That the American Psychiatric Association in 1973 removed homosexuality from its annual *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* was another scientific victory for gay rights advocates. Lawmakers’ recognition of homosexuals’ constitutional rights eventually fostered a warmer social climate as well. One of the most important decisions in this regard was the State of Illinois’ decriminalization of consensual sodomy in 1961. Illinois was the first state in the Union to do so; lawmakers realized the futility and taxpayer expense of criminalizing sodomy.<sup>35</sup> Although police continued to target homosexual night spots through the mid-1960s, relations between lawmakers and the police on the one hand, and gays on the other, did eventually thaw. By the 1970s, city pressure on the gay social scene had declined considerably. One gay male happily trumpeted in 1975 that, at least in North Side gay

<sup>33</sup> Barbara Mahany, “Dollars, Votes Promote Gay Power,” *CT*, 4 March 1983.

<sup>34</sup> Stewart-Winter, 4; Dominic A. Pacyga and Ellen Skerrett, *Chicago: City of Neighborhoods* (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1986), 100.

<sup>35</sup> Eskridge, 263-266.

bars, “if the cops come in the place now, we keep right on dancing. That would not have been the case just a few years ago.”<sup>36</sup> Beginning with Jane Byrne, mayors consistently denounced instances when police unjustly raided gay establishments. In 1980, CPD Superintendent Richard J. Bryzeczek issued a general order mandating officers to observe gay rights. Two years later, some police precincts in areas of the city with sizeable gay populations initiated a two-week long program that educated officers about gay rights, prompting a spokesman for the Illinois Gay and Lesbian Task Force to declare that homosexuals in Chicago “have a better relationship with our police than in most other big cities.”<sup>37</sup> Finally, religious congregations and organizations were compelled to react to gay demands for inclusion. There was a range of responses, from attempts to convert homosexuals to heterosexuality, to acceptance and support of gays. In Chicago, the North Side’s Good Shepherd Parish, a member church of the recently founded non-denominational Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches, strongly urged social acceptance for gays. In a handful of other Christian and Jewish congregations, gays spearheaded organizations to meet their needs. Dignity (Catholic) and Integrity (Episcopalian) are cases in point.<sup>38</sup>

Chicago business owners’ newfound appreciation for gay spending power in the 1970s and 1980s abetted the social recognition of gays. In a 1983 article that examined the local affluence of homosexuals, the *Chicago Tribune* observed that “Without wives or children to support, most [gays] have large disposable incomes to pour into their lifestyles.” Ads swelled the revenue of Chicago gay publications. Ads and products

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<sup>36</sup> Paul Galloway, “Gay Bars Here Multiply as Atmosphere Relaxes – Business Booming,” *CST*, 7 September 1975.

<sup>37</sup> Edward Epstein, “Deal Fairly with Gays, Cops Told,” *CST*, 16 June 1982.

<sup>38</sup> William Burks, “Meeting Religious and Spiritual Needs,” in *Out and Proud in Chicago*, 140-141; Rebecca T. Alpert, “Lesbian and Gay Rights Movement,” in *Contemporary American Religion*, ed. Wade Clark Roof, vol. 1 (New York: MacMillan Reference USA, 1999), 390.

were designed to appeal to gay consumers. Doing so without alienating heterosexual customers could be risky, as one New Town grocer acknowledged. To “pique the appetite” of gay clientele, he offered ads with “suggestive photos of fruits and vegetables that resemble the male anatomy.” “When the gays see those photos,” he boasted, “they know they’re welcome in our store,” and “no one else shopping is offended.”<sup>39</sup>

A degree of toleration encouraged a proliferating social scene and more varied cultural and leisure opportunities for gays. Between 1965 and 1975, the number of openly gay bars, overwhelmingly patronized by males, increased fivefold in the Chicago area, with one national directory of gay social establishments identifying fifty two bars. That number jumped to sixty-seven by 1983. Niche bars catered to specific ages, races, sexual tastes, and social classes. Although the atmosphere was more relaxed, most bars remained “seedy and small.” Many were windowless to hide patrons’ identities.<sup>40</sup> A few large and elegant nightclubs did primarily serve gays. Up-tempo disco music fueled business. Examining New York City, historian Peter Braunstein has pointed out that discotheques became “shrine[s] of an emergent, celebratory, hedonistic gay consciousness.” Homosexuals “converted disco into what amounted to gay urban property.”<sup>41</sup> In Chicago in 1983, a two-million dollar disco constructed on the corner of Broadway and Clark Streets, Paradise, enticed “streams of men, clad in Levi 501 button fly jeans and rainbow hued shirt collars, jutting out from black leather jackets.”<sup>42</sup> The number of bathhouses also multiplied in the 1970s and early 1980s—Chicago trailed only

<sup>39</sup> Barbara Mahany, “Dollars, Votes Promote Gay Power,” *CT*, 4 March 1983.

<sup>40</sup> Paul Galloway, “Gay Bars Here Multiply as Atmosphere Relaxes – Business Booming,” *CST*, 7 September 1975; Barbara Mahany, “Dollars, Votes Promote Gay Power,” *CT*, 4 March 1983.

<sup>41</sup> Peter Braunstein, “Adults Only: The Construction of an Erotic City in New York during the 1970s,” in *America in the Seventies*, eds. Beth Bailey and David Farber (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2004): 140-2.

<sup>42</sup> Barbara Mahany, “Dollars, Votes Promote Gay Power,” *CT*, 4 March 1983; Paul Galloway, “Gay Bars Here Multiply as Atmosphere Relaxes – Business Booming,” *CST*, 7 September 1975.



New York City—although the AIDS epidemic undercut bathhouse popularity. Bookstores, incipient political organizations, publications—the city’s first gay newspaper, the *Chicago Gay Crusader* was begun in 1973—athletic and religious groups, health clinics, a chambers of commerce, and even a homosexual chorus were founded in the 1970s and early 1980s.<sup>43</sup>

The annual June Chicago Gay Pride Parade that commemorates Stonewall and caps Gay and Lesbian Pride Week offers a microcosm of the development of Chicago’s gay liberation movement, and heterosexuals’ progressive toleration of open homosexuality. Initially, organizers’ goal was twofold: to make homosexuals visible to each other and encourage the reluctant to “come out”; and to notify the public that there was indeed a gay presence in the city. The inaugural parade in 1970 only attracted between one hundred and one hundred fifty people. Most of the city’s gays feared exposure. Attendees “had the least to lose by coming out of the closet.”<sup>44</sup> Marchers traveled from the Near North Side to the Civic Center Plaza (now Daley Center Plaza) to protest discrimination. During the next few years, the parade drew a wider spectrum of the gay community and configured a parade route. Marchers and, increasingly, floats, traveled from Halstead and Addison Streets to Clark Street and Fuller Avenue, and ended in Lincoln Park. Although the parade ballooned—roughly five thousand marchers participated in 1982—attracted tens of thousands of sympathetic onlookers, and took place in “gay friendly areas,” some street goers were offended by the “drag queens,” leather and chain-clad men, and sexually provocative floats. *Tribune* columnist Clarence Page reasoned that the parade could either be interpreted as “a shameless display of

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.; Tracy Baim, “The We Decade,” in *Out and Proud in Chicago*, 87-90.

<sup>44</sup> Clarence Page, “Dealing with Gay Parades,” *CT*, 7 July 1985.

vulgarity” and “the final frontier of our society’s tolerance for diversity” or a “powerful statement of independence by an interesting and diverse community.”<sup>45</sup> In the 1980s, the parade and Pride Week was patently commercialized and politicized, mirroring developments in the gay community at large. Corporations, and in particular liquor and beer distributors such as Anheuser-Busch, sponsored floats as a marketing ploy. A growing number of aldermen participated, and Jane Byrne became the first mayoral figure to participate.<sup>46</sup> Signaling the importance of Pride Week to Chicago politicians, Mayor Harold Washington during a rally in June 1985 pledged that he would take the unprecedented action of assembling an advisory committee on gay affairs.<sup>47</sup>

Neither acceptance of homosexuality nor toleration of homosexuals was the rule everywhere and at all times in the city between the 1970s and 1990s. Among those who disapproved, there was a wide spectrum of opinion. For example, some were sympathetic to the discrimination and social challenges that gays daily faced, but simply could not condone homosexual acts or overtly gay lifestyles. A good number grounded their objections to homosexuality, or their outright animosity toward homosexuals, in religion or culture. Resentment existed among lower- and middle-class families who were unable to pay property taxes on their North Side homes, driven out by real estate developers who embarked on renovation schemes to entice affluent singles. And finally, a minority publicly targeted gays with slurs or, on occasion, threatened physical violence. Members of the American Nazi Party and the Ku Klux Klan regularly appeared at Gay

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.; Barbara Shulgasser, “Thousands March for Gay Pride,” *CST*, 28 June 1982.

<sup>46</sup> Richard Pfeifer, “Pride Parade Grows to 400,000+,” in *Out and Proud in Chicago*, 106-7; Jess Brevin, “Chicago Parade Gay Pride Klan Demonstrations Ends Before Marches Begin,” *CT*, 30 June 1986; Chris Sheridan, “Gays Parade with Pride for 19<sup>th</sup> Year,” *CT*, 27 June 1988; Timothy Stewart-Winter, “Pride Marches and Parades,” in *Encyclopedia of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender History in America*, ed. Marc Stein, vol. 2 (Detroit: Scribner’s, 2004), 416-420.

<sup>47</sup> Tracy Baim, “Mayor’s Committee Named,” *Windy City Times*, 26 September 1985.

Pride parades, denouncing gays, blacks, Catholics, and Jews, and verbally sparred with gay advocates and counter-demonstrators. In at least one instance in 1986, a gay man was apparently murdered by a Nazi sympathizer for his sexual orientation.<sup>48</sup>

Two unanticipated cultural tremors between the 1970s and the 1990s fueled suspicion, and a degree of public panic, over homosexuals and gay men in particular. First was a shocking discovery in the mid-1970s of child “sex rings” and the furious bids to safeguard children from molesters and pornographers; and second was the AIDS epidemic. Here, it is sufficient to mention that Chicago was the epicenter of what was called at the time a “nationwide homosexual ring” that trafficked in the sexual exploitation of young boys.<sup>49</sup> Depravity seemed to have reached unprecedented depths when the CPD discovered that John Wayne Gacy had murdered thirty three boys and young men.

### *Reticence of a Cardinal*

The striking public emergence in the late 1960s of a gay liberation movement that demanded recognition, the proliferation of homosexual social establishments, and advocates’ demands for equal rights under the law and anti-discrimination legislation challenged long standing heterosexual assumptions about homosexuality and homosexuals. The drive to enshrine “sexual orientation” as a protected legal category in particular virtually ensured a degree of apprehension between gay activists and the Chicago Catholic Church. In Chicago, however, Archbishop John Cody was not publicly

<sup>48</sup> Tom McNamee, “13 Foes of Nazis Arrested During Lincoln Pk. Rally,” *CST*, 28 June 1982; *CT*, 30 June, 1986; Jean Griffin, “Reports of Gay Harassment Soaring,” *CT*, 11 May 1987; Andy Knott and Barbara Mahany, “Jury Indicts Cabdriver in 2 Fatal Shootings,” *CT*, 15 April 1986.

<sup>49</sup> Michael Sneed and George Bliss, “Chicago is Center of National Child Porn Ring,” *CT*, 16 May 1977.

forthcoming on the issues of how heterosexual Catholics should understand and respond to gay liberation and how the pastoral needs of openly gay co-religionists should be met. Gay Catholic activists and their lay and clerical supporters, a noticeable number of whom were members of religious orders, grew increasingly confident that “gay” and “Catholic” were compatible, and thereby exploited Cody’s relative silence. They initiated ministries such as Dignity/Chicago and carved out physical space for gays in North Side parishes. Significantly, the perceived inadequacy of Catholic teaching about homosexuality would fuel many clerics who ministered to Chicago’s gay population.

Cardinal Cody’s demeanor toward gay liberation and the position of gay Catholics in the Church was ambiguous. Publicly, he said little—uncharacteristic of Cody when one considers, as the *Tribune* did in 1982, that the archbishop had during his tenure in Chicago “spoke on virtually every major issue of the day,” such as divorce, gun control, television violence, women’s rights, capital punishment, and even the Watergate scandal.<sup>50</sup> Occasional headlines were made when Cody denied archdiocesan facilities to organizations that had no formal connection with the Church. In 1980, Cody refused to allow the Association of Chicago Priests the use of Niles College for an award and fundraising event wherein the ACP planned to recognize and commend the local leadership of Call to Action (CTA) and Dignity/Chicago (D/C). The archbishop’s enigmatic explanation that he “objected to some ACP awards” mystified the ACP as well as D/C.<sup>51</sup> One year later, Cody denied the use of St. Clement Parish on the North Side (642 W. Deming Pl) to Salvatorian Father Robert Nugent and School Sister of Notre Dame Jeannine Gramick, co-founders of a pastoral and educational ministry to gay Catholics

<sup>50</sup> Joseph A. Reaves, “I am Obligated to Speak Out...,” *CT*, 2 May 1982.

<sup>51</sup> Jack Houston, “Cardinal Denies Priests Facility for Fund Raiser,” *CT*, 23 January 1980; *Dignity/Chicago Newsletter*, February 1980, AULNU.

called New Ways Ministry, who intended to use the parish's facilities for a workshop on "Homosexuality and the Hurting Parent." Once again, Cody's immediate justification was puzzling: the workshop "was not thought to be helpful to [Chicago Catholics] at this time."<sup>52</sup> Did Cody block these events solely because he was hostile to homosexuals, or because he deemed them "not worthy of ministry," as one gay activist accused?<sup>53</sup> It is more plausible that the archbishop's actions were motivated by a few factors. First, relations between Cody and the ACP had soured by 1980. One year earlier, in fact, an ACP representative had hand-delivered a letter to the pope charging that Cody lacked necessary leadership qualities. The Cardinal's demeanor toward CTA was similarly cool; in 1979, the organization had accused the archdiocese of falsifying its financial report. Second, Cody exhibited a pattern of prohibiting groups not formally recognized by the archdiocese, and therefore not under the archbishop's immediate control, from using its facilities. Neither the ACP, D/C, nor CTA for that matter, had formal recognition. The comments of archdiocesan spokesman Peter Foote, who later clarified Cody's 1981 decision to bar Nugent and Gramick, suggest that this was indeed a motivating factor in the archbishop's decision. Foote explained to the *Chicago Tribune* that Nugent, a priest of the Society of the Divine Savior, "does not enjoy priestly faculties to preach or celebrate Mass in the archdiocese of Washington, of which he is resident."<sup>54</sup>

Cody's private dealings also suggest that he was not inveterately hostile to the religious aspirations of gay Catholics. Most revealing in this regard, the archbishop in 1971 allowed a Mass conducted specifically for the Chicago Catholic gay community, to be held on Sunday evenings at St. Sebastian Church (615 W. Wellington Ave.). The idea

<sup>52</sup> Bruce Buursma, "Cody Bans Gay Seminar from Parish on North Side," *CT*, 1 May 1981.

<sup>53</sup> Al Wardell, "Cardinal Cody's Ban on a Gay Workshop," *CT*, 30 May 1981.

<sup>54</sup> Bruce Buursma, "Priest Planning Gay Workshop is Thwarted Again," *CT*, 2 May 1981.

of a Mass for Chicago's gay Catholics was first proposed by laywoman Mary Houlihan, a member of the Legion of Mary who had hitherto used her home for Liturgies.<sup>55</sup>

Dignity/USA touted Cody's action. Paul Diedrich, the organization's executive director, thanked the cardinal "for following the Spirit's guidance toward an open church, a church which is truly all things to all men."<sup>56</sup> For its part, D/C—which unofficially assumed sponsorship of the Mass—hailed it as "a milestone in relations between the Church and the homophile community." The Liturgy was "the only 'approved' Mass for gays in the United States."<sup>57</sup> The archbishop had been "very kind to us," and the Mass was "a great gift."<sup>58</sup> Cody's behavior toward gay Catholics was not overtly warm, however.

According to one gay Catholic spokesperson, the archbishop "[kept] a safe distance" from the Mass, reasoning that "Cody can't openly condone this (although they say, he privately does) while the Church teaches that homosexuality is morally wrong." D/C was sensitive to its precarious position and therefore according to one chaplain of the organization, maintained a low profile and avoided publicity "for fear of rocking the boat and losing the consent of the cardinal."<sup>59</sup>

What can be said of the disjuncture between Cody's public statements and private actions, and what does it reveal about the archbishop's persona and leadership style?

First, his reluctance to take a clear position was perplexing to heterosexuals, who comprised the overwhelming majority of Chicago Catholics and who looked to the Chancery Office for guidance. Gays also professed confusion to Cody's unhelpful public

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<sup>55</sup> Dignity/Chicago, "About Us," <http://www.dignity-chicago.org/content/about-us>; *Dignity/Chicago Newsletter*, September 1977, AULNU.

<sup>56</sup> *Dignity Newsletter*, December 1973, "Early Dignity/USA Newsletters," Dignity/USA, <http://www.dignityusa.org/newzletters>.

<sup>57</sup> James Robison, "Fourth Anniversary Mass for Gays," *CT*, 19 October 1974.

<sup>58</sup> *Dignity/Chicago Newsletter*, October 1974, AULNU.

<sup>59</sup> James Robison, "Fourth Anniversary Mass for Gays," *CT*, 19 October 1974; "Ministry to Homosexuals Brings Action, Little Talk," *CST*, 7 April 1973; *Dignity Newsletter*, May 1973.

statements.<sup>60</sup> Second, that Cody permitted a Mass for homosexual Catholics in an archdiocesan parish enhances his reputation as a cautious social liberal, which had been forged by his implementation of many Vatican II reforms as well as his “leadership role in race relations.”<sup>61</sup> Finally, Cody’s behavior corroborates the insights of one religious scholar who anonymously told the *Tribune* in 1982 that, although not devoid of personal convictions, the archbishop was “a careerist” and “an astute church politician.” During the 1960s and following Vatican II, considerable experimentation was introduced into U.S. Catholic moral theology. Cody was aware of the confusion, and as one who “never deviated from the majority opinion of the Church hierarchy,” was unwilling to personally articulate how heterosexual Catholics should deal with gay co-religionists.<sup>62</sup>

### *Dignity*

Cody neither publicly exhorted nor unequivocally condemned the participation of gay Catholics in the Church. The lack of central direction generated opportunities for gay Catholics, their supporters, and sympathetic clergy; whereas the archbishop reacted, these individuals initiated. The gay liberation movement empowered Catholic homosexuals—who grew progressively certain that they could practice their faith *as homosexuals*—and sensitized lay and religious heterosexual supporters to gay pastoral needs. In Chicago, a few ministries addressed the lacuna. In the 1970s and first half of the 1980s, Dignity was the most active. The organization was officially founded in Los Angeles in 1969 by Augustinian priest and psychologist Patrick X. Nidorf, who

<sup>60</sup> Al Wardell, “Cardinal Cody’s Ban on a Gay Workshop,” *CT*, 30 May 1981.

<sup>61</sup> Ellen Skerrett, Edward R. Kantowicz, and Steven M. Avella, “What Has Made Chicago Catholicism Distinctive,” in *Catholicism, Chicago Style*, eds. Skerrett, Kantowicz, and Avella (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1993), xx.

<sup>62</sup> Joseph A. Reaves, “I am Obligated to Speak Out...,” *CT*, 2 May 1982.

concluded that the Church was not meeting the pastoral needs of gay people. Nidorf wanted to “bring dignity into the spiritual and social lives of gay and lesbian Catholics.”<sup>63</sup> Soon, individual chapters, essentially support groups of homosexuals that sponsored educational programs to inform heterosexual Catholics about gays in the Church, were established in other cities. The lengthy “Statement of Position and Purpose” of Dignity/USA, as the national body was ultimately named, affirmed that gay Catholics were members of Christ’s Mystical Body. They had the right, privilege, and duty “to live the sacramental life of the Church.” Members had a responsibility to the Church, to society—“to work for justice and social acceptance through educational and legal reforms”—and to other gays. Dignity/USA’s understanding of same-sex activity could be positively or negatively construed as harmonizing with Church teaching, as critics pointed out. The statement read: “We believe that gays can express their sexuality in a manner that is consonant with Christ’s teaching. We believe that all sexuality should be exercised in an ethically responsible and unselfish way.”<sup>64</sup> In spite of this ambiguity, Dignity/USA was an official participant in the 1976 Call to Action U.S. Bishop’s Conference in Detroit.<sup>65</sup>

Gay Chicago Catholics were in the Midwest’s vanguard. D/C was the fourth official chapter to be recognized in the United States (1972), and was administered by, and intended for, homosexuals. The organization assumed unofficial sponsorship of the weekly Sunday evening Mass at St. Sebastian’s, although other worshipers who were not

<sup>63</sup> Online Archives of California, “Dignity/USA Records,” <http://www.oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/kt638nd4bn>.

<sup>64</sup> *Dignity/Chicago Newsletter*, 29 February 1976, AULNU.

<sup>65</sup> Dignity/Chicago, “About Us,” <http://www.dignity-chicago.org/content/about-us>.



members of D/C attended as well.<sup>66</sup> Members also held Masses in their homes. As neither the archdiocese nor St. Sebastian's was directly involved in the ministry, D/C compensated its chaplains, rented the space from St. Sebastian's, and funded social programs and its newsletter from funds raised in the Sunday evening Mass collection.<sup>67</sup> On the first Sunday of each month, sessions were held at St. Sebastian's that counseled newcomers about how to see that being "gay" and "Catholic" could be compatible.<sup>68</sup> Highlights of D/C's first ten years included its hosting in October 1973 of Jesuit theologian Father John McNeill, then an associate professor of philosophy at Woodstock College; and the national Dignity convention in 1977. By the mid-1980s, the organization counted nearly two hundred members and developed a handful of committees to meet liturgical, educational, and social goals.<sup>69</sup>

D/C was not oriented exclusively toward religious ends; the organization was active in the local gay liberation movement as well. This in fact provoked apprehension among some gay Catholics who feared that D/C's social activism was increasingly obscuring and even undermining its spiritual purpose. In 1978, D/C co-sponsored a benefit to raise funds that would be funneled to gay rights activists around the country. In 1975, the organization first participated in the Gay Pride Parade and joined The Alliance to End Repression. Comprised of around fifty community and religious groups, The Alliance actively worked for the passage of a gay rights ordinance.<sup>70</sup> Some D/C

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<sup>66</sup> Chicago Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame, "Dignity/Chicago," [http://www.glhalloffame.org/index.pl?todo=view\\_item&item=99](http://www.glhalloffame.org/index.pl?todo=view_item&item=99).

<sup>67</sup> Jessica Seigel, "Archdiocese Will Run Gay Services," *CT*, 16 May 1988.

<sup>68</sup> *Dignity/Chicago Newsletter*, May 1974, AULNU.

<sup>69</sup> *Dignity/Chicago Newsletter*, October 1973, AULNU. A few years later, McNeill was dismissed from the Jesuit order after breaking a CDF-imposed public silence on issues of homosexuality and sexual ethics. See Smith, *AIDS, Gays, and the American Catholic Church*, 50.

<sup>70</sup> *Dignity/Chicago Newsletter*, December 1975, AULNU. The Alliance also worked to "safeguard the legal rights of the poor, minorities, and other oppressed groups in the area of criminal

members became leading Chicago gay rights activists. Consider James Bussen, a former seminarian who served as regional director and then president of Dignity/USA. Locally, Bussen acted as a member of the Gay and Lesbian Coalition of Metro Chicago, the Gay and Lesbian Pride Committee, the Gay Rights Task Force, and The Alliance to End Repression. He was an ardent and publicized supporter of city and state gay rights legislation.<sup>71</sup>

Members used D/C as a vehicle to critically appraise and reorient the tactics and goals of gay liberation and gay life, and inject them with Christian precepts. Repeatedly in the D/C newsletter, members expressed misgivings about gay customs. One individual questioned the intentions of individuals who frequented gay bars. Did patrons spend countless hours here to “get a trick,” or to locate long-lasting and sincere friendships?<sup>72</sup> Another called for gays to practice a “code of morals,” bluntly stating that “it seems to be more frequent to be able to walk into local bars and find sex acts being performed right out in public view”—behavior that, if conducted in heterosexual establishments, would be unpardonable. He asked: “what gives us the right to exempt ourselves from society’s code of ethics simply because we are gay?”<sup>73</sup> A few D/C members targeted Gay Pride Week. After taking an “objective view” of the annual parade, one D/C member feared that such events impeded gay integration into the heterosexual mainstream. Gay goals, he thought, would be better served with “I Am Not Ashamed of Being Gay” week, which would convey that “Yes, we are gay, but day in and day out we live and work beside you, for our good and equally for yours” and that gays “are not here to create havoc and

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justice.” See “General Purpose and Objectives,” Alliance to End Repression Records, Box 3, Folder 17, CHM.

<sup>71</sup> *Dignity/Chicago Newsletter*, December 1977, AULNU; Chicago Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame, “James A. Bussen,” [http://www.glhalloffame.org/index.pl?todo=view\\_item&item=53](http://www.glhalloffame.org/index.pl?todo=view_item&item=53).

<sup>72</sup> *Dignity/Chicago Newsletter*, June 1974, AULNU.

<sup>73</sup> *Dignity/Chicago Newsletter*, July 1979, AULNU.

disruption, but rather to help” society. Sexual expression was “a beautiful thing” and by and large “a private and small portion of our daily lives,” and should not be flaunted.<sup>74</sup>

### *Pastors and Prophets*

Although Mass for gay Catholics was held in a diocesan Church, many of the first men and women religious who ministered to D/C belonged to orders, and in particular Franciscans, Dominicans, and Jesuits, who were sensitive to the archdiocese’s reluctance to meet gay pastoral needs. D/C initially had four chaplains. Franciscan priest Robert Behnen, affectionately known to D/C members as “Father Max,” played a pivotal role in securing St. Sebastian’s for gay Catholics. He also celebrated the first Sunday evening Mass there. Other initial chaplains were Dominican Richard Woods, Jesuit David McCarthy, and Franciscan Mario DiCicco.<sup>75</sup> DiCicco became head chaplain in summer 1974, when Behnen assumed pastoral duties at a northern Michigan parish. Other priests and nuns of religious orders later served as D/C chaplains, including Carmelite Father James Becker, Franciscan Father James Maurer, and Divine Word Missionary Father Melvin James. Nuns who worked with D/C included Dominican Sister Lois McGovern, a member of the Chicago Catholic Women and part-time D/C chaplain, Sister Barbara Ferraro, and Good Shepherd Sister Gabriel Herbers, who also served as the executive coordinator of The Alliance to End Repression.<sup>76</sup>

<sup>74</sup> *Dignity/Chicago Newsletter*, March 1975, AULNU.

<sup>75</sup> Woods earned a Ph.D. in philosophy in the mid-1970s and published a monograph, *Another Kind of Love: Homosexuality and Spirituality*. See “Dignity International Convention,” 1977, The Alliance to End Repression Records, Box 15, Folder 16, CHM.

<sup>76</sup> *Dignity Newsletter*, May 1973; “Ministry to Homosexuals Brings Action, Little Talk,” *CST*, 7 April 1973; *Dignity/Chicago Newsletter*, July 1974, AULNU; *Dignity/Chicago Newsletter*, May, June, July 1975, AULNU; *Dignity/Chicago Newsletter*, January 1979, AULNU; *Dignity/Chicago Newsletter*, September 1978, AULNU; Lois McGovern, “Ministry with Gay Catholics,” *CCW Update*, January 1980, Chicago Catholic Women Records, Box 2, Folder 4, WLALUC. John Hill, a former priest who had helped spearhead the Association of Chicago Priests, served as executive coordinator of The Alliance to End

A handful of diocesan priests were also active in gay ministry in the mid-1970s. Their numbers increased in the 1980s, particularly among clergy on the North Side. Father Michael Jacobson was one of the most active diocesan priests. Ordained in 1973, Jacobson immediately began an outreach to gay Catholics, becoming D/C's head chaplain in 1977. Jacobson believed that ministering to homosexuals was in some respects akin to ministering to African Americans and other historically oppressed communities; it demanded "the active search for legal, social, and ecclesiastical justice."<sup>77</sup> Jacobson was therefore a vocal supporter of gay rights at the state and local level. In 1977 and again in 1979, Jacobson as a representative of D/C traveled to Springfield to testify before House members and urge state lawmakers to adopt gay rights legislation. He acknowledged that the Holy Father and bishops, who were the authentic teachers of the Faith, "have as yet to condone homosexual genital activity." In both instances, however, he marshaled the NCCB's 1976 letter "To Live in Christ Jesus," as well as the resolutions passed at the Call to Action Conference, arguing that the Church insisted that society not discriminate against gays and that Catholics had the responsibility to root out prejudice against homosexuals in social structures and attitudes.<sup>78</sup>

Notwithstanding Jacobson's interpretation of, and appeals to, Church teaching, many of the priests and nuns who ministered to the gay community expressed doubt about, and dissatisfaction with, traditional Catholic teaching on homosexuality. Their testimony suggests that, unlike clerical social activists in the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s,

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Repression since its establishment in 1970. See "John Hill," The Alliance to End Repression Records, Box 15, Folder 21, CHM.

<sup>77</sup> Michael Jacobson, "Ministry to Gay Catholics," *Upturn*, Feb 1980, Box January 1967-December 1982, CHM.

<sup>78</sup> *Dignity/Chicago Newsletter*, July 1977, AULNU; *Dignity/Chicago Newsletter*, May 1979, AULNU.

certainty of Catholic verities did not principally motivate Chicago clergy working with homosexuals in the 1970s and 1980s; rather, they acted from a sense that their experiences, and those of gay Catholics, may potentially enrich Catholic teaching on sexual ethics. Indeed, Jacobson's remark that the pope and bishops "have as yet to condone" homosexual acts is highly suggestive. Consider Father Woods, who decried that homosexuality was too often "rejected as unnatural, a sickness, a sin" and consequently, gays were excluded from parish life. Catholic theology was in fact deficient in regard to its "discrediting" of homosexuality, and was therefore "held to be pretty much inadequate."<sup>79</sup> Behnen agreed. He remarked, "What many are coming to now is a conviction that homosexual activity can be good or evil, depending upon many things, including the quality of interpersonal relationships."<sup>80</sup> This attitude persisted among the clergy. Following the CDF's 1986 letter, Father Daniel Montalbano of St. Sebastian parish reflected on his own experiences ministering to gays. He maintained that ideological certainty eluded religious and laypeople who worked with the gay Catholic community. These individuals did not have "the black and white clarity nor the smugness of those firmly on the left or right."<sup>81</sup>

The clergy who ministered to gays were emphatic that their work was not a bid to "redeem" gays from the "sickness" of homosexual sin. Rather, homosexuals themselves exercise religious reciprocity by playing a crucial "prophetic" role in teaching the whole Church and guiding the development of its sexual ethics. Woods bemoaned that there was simply no satisfactory Church guidelines advising gays how to live. Any future theology on the matter, he thought, would derive from the "experiences of the people,"

<sup>79</sup> James Robison, "Fourth Anniversary Mass for Gays," *CT*, 19 October 1974.

<sup>80</sup> "Ministry to Homosexuals Brings Action, Little Talk," *CST*, 7 April 1973.

<sup>81</sup> Dan Montalbano, "AGLO/Chicago," *Upturn*, November-December 1988, CHM.

rather than “some abstract notion of reality.” He hoped that gays would realize their “prophetic task” of teaching the church.<sup>82</sup> DiCicco described his role as two-fold: to integrate gays into the Church, but also to educate heterosexuals and dispel stereotypes of gays as “limp wristed fags” and “screaming queens.”<sup>83</sup> For their parts, D/C members embraced the prophetic mantle. Dignity/USA’s Statement of Position and Purpose, in fact, posited that “work[ing] for the development of [the Church’s] sexual theology” was one responsibility of gays to the Church.<sup>84</sup> This comprehension of their role in the Church meant that D/C members and chaplains chafed when the CDF or NCCB promulgated documents confirming that homosexual orientations were disordered, and homosexual acts were immoral.<sup>85</sup>

Pastors and lay gay Catholics recognized the importance of the Sunday evening Mass and D/C. The Mass was a symbol of reconciliation between the Church and the gay community. Some homosexuals who had long ceased attending services embraced the Liturgy as a point of return to the Church. As McCarthy explained, “Many homosexuals don’t feel at ease in the Church.” A primary fear was that heterosexual Catholics would, upon realizing their homosexual orientation, expel them from the parish. Worshipping with other gays at the Sunday evening Mass, on the other hand, brought peace of mind.<sup>86</sup> D/C and the Sunday evening Mass were havens for gays ostracized by family members, saddled by clergymen with the impossible burden of “divest[ing] themselves of their sexuality,” and in desperate need of compassion,

<sup>82</sup> *CT*, 19 October 1974; *Dignity/Chicago Newsletter*, 29 February 1976, AULNU.

<sup>83</sup> James Robison, “Fourth Anniversary Mass for Gays,” *CT*, 19 October 1974.

<sup>84</sup> *Dignity/Chicago Newsletter*, 29 February 1976, AULNU.

<sup>85</sup> *Dignity/Chicago Newsletter*, April 1974, AULNU; *Dignity/Chicago Newsletter*, 29 February 1976, AULNU.

<sup>86</sup> “Ministry to Homosexuals Brings Action, Little Talk,” *CST*, 7 April 1973

acceptance, and love.<sup>87</sup> The Mass at St. Sebastian's, the educational sessions that priests hosted there that examined the Church and homosexuality, and its reputation as "gay friendly" enticed homo- and heterosexual Catholics from outside the immediate area, bolstering an ethnically diverse parish that counted some six hundred families.

Montalbano explained in the mid-1980s that "There is a strong sense of belonging at our parish; members identify with the parish and have an intense allegiance to it... There is a ready acceptance of diverse people who make up our parish." St. Sebastian's furnished "an informality not available at larger churches."<sup>88</sup> Notably, not all were pleased with D/C or the Mass for homosexuals at St. Sebastian's. A scant few threatened violence. In December 1974, one anonymous caller threatened to detonate a bomb at the church during the Sunday evening Mass. During the D/C-hosted third annual convention of Dignity International in October 1977, arsonists used altar candles to burn the altar, floor, drapes, and convention banners at the Bismarck hotel, where the event was held. One day later, a bomb threat was made over the phone.<sup>89</sup>

The Sunday evening Mass and D/C met physical as well as spiritual needs. Both were "important alternative[s] to the (gay) bar and bath scene," DiCicco explained.<sup>90</sup> Jacobson agreed. Although it was painful for him to admit, he acknowledged that the gay community possessed "self-destructive tendencies": as subjects of oppression, homosexuals "could feel tremendous anger." Those ministering to them must deal with this anger, or it could potentially become internalized and result in suicide—which he

<sup>87</sup> *Dignity/Chicago Newsletter*, May 1974, AULNU.

<sup>88</sup> "Reflections on the Parish Meeting of 8/15/89," Box: Administrative Records, Minutes, Archdiocesan Parishes, Folder: St. Sebastian Planning Committee/Pastoral Council Minutes, 1988-1990, AAC; Daniel J. Lehmann and Suzy Schultz, "Catholics to Open AIDS Residence," *CST*, 3 September 1987.

<sup>89</sup> *Dignity/Chicago Newsletter*, January 1975, AULNU; *Dignity/Chicago Newsletter*, October 1977, AULNU.

<sup>90</sup> James Robison, "Fourth Anniversary Mass for Gays," *CT*, 19 October 1974.

believed in 1980 to be “the greatest epidemic disease form in the gay community”—or misdirected toward others.<sup>91</sup> For his part, Woods explained that D/C and its chaplains were vigorously trying to dismantle one heritage of the sexual revolution, “this whole notion of free sex.” He explained, “What is wrong for a Christian heterosexual is wrong for a Christian homosexual as well.”<sup>92</sup>

### *Liberalism’s Limits*

Personality and circumstance compelled Joseph Bernardin to address homosexuals and homosexuality. Widely celebrated for his pastoral instincts, Bernardin’s public sensitivity to gays and the issues they faced exceeded Cody’s. Detractors insisted that he “soft-pedaled” Catholic teaching.<sup>93</sup> Circumstance also compelled Bernardin to address the issue. Three relevant events occurred during Bernardin’s reign: the AIDS epidemic; the Vatican Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith’s 1986 letter to the world’s bishops, “The Pastoral Care of Homosexual Persons”; and the intensification of activists’ efforts to prod lawmakers to pass a “gay rights” or “human rights” ordinance that would add “sexual orientation” to the city’s civil rights laws. Addressing hetero- and homosexual Catholics, Bernardin assured that “gay” and Catholic” were indeed compatible, condemned harassment and discrimination on account of sexual orientation, and vocalized Church teaching that same-sex orientations were not in themselves sinful. This willingness to grapple with homosexual issues, ironically, could also strain relations between the archdiocese and gay Catholics, as the Cardinal was duty-bound to reiterate the other half of Catholic teaching: that same-sex genital acts

<sup>91</sup> Michael Jacobson, “Ministry to Gay Catholics,” *Upturn*, February 1980, CHM.

<sup>92</sup> James Robison, “Fourth Anniversary Mass for Gays,” *CT*, 19 October 1974.

<sup>93</sup> Jessica Seigel, “Archdiocese Will Run Gay Services,” *CT*, 16 May 1988.



were contrary to the moral law. Tensions between the archdiocese and gay Catholics came to a head in 1988, when Bernardin—responding to the CDF’s 1986 letter, as well as Dignity/USA’s amending of its Statement of Position and Purpose—divested D/C of its unofficial sponsorship of the St. Sebastian Mass, placing the Liturgy under archdiocesan control.

Bernardin confronted gay liberation outside of the ecclesial sphere as well. His opposition to the gay rights/human rights ordinance, finally introduced into City Council for a full vote in 1986, was crucial to the bill’s defeat. Archdiocesan opposition generated breaches between the archdiocese and gays, and between the archdiocese and city hall. Just as importantly, archdiocesan opposition signaled the limits of its historical liberalism, which as a social and political category had been redefined to encompass sexual minorities. In spite of Bernardin’s opposition other Catholics vigorously supported the bill, and were in fact important to the successful passage of the ordinance in 1988. That they harnessed an understanding of theology that was admittedly at odds with the archbishop’s indicates Catholics’ diminished ideological confidence in the official verities of the Church, as delineated by Bernardin.

Three principal events encouraged Bernardin to address the issue of homosexuality: AIDS, the CDF’s 1986 Letter, and the politicization of gay liberation, especially the push to codify anti-discrimination. The dissertation addresses the gay rights/human rights ordinance below, and AIDS in the following chapter. The 1986 Letter from the CDF to the world’s bishops, “The Pastoral Care of Homosexual Persons,” also compelled Bernardin to address homosexuality. The letter confirmed in somewhat stronger terms the 1975 “Declaration on Certain Questions Concerning Sexual Ethics,”

restating traditional teaching that homosexual acts were sinful; that sexual activity could only be morally good in the confines of marriage; and that same-sex orientation, while not in itself sinful, was an “objective disorder” as it constituted a “more or less strong tendency ordered toward an intrinsic moral evil.” Therefore, homosexuals needed special pastoral attention. The letter condemned speech or acts of “violent malice” directed toward homosexuals, while nonetheless requesting that bishops withdraw support from organizations that strove to undermine church teaching, “are ambiguous about it, or wish to neglect it entirely.” The letter concluded by stating that “special attention should be given to the practice of scheduling religious services and to the use of Church buildings by these groups, including the facilities of Catholic schools and colleges.”<sup>94</sup>

The letter immediately made headlines in Chicago and around the nation. Some gay Catholic groups denounced it. Dignity/USA believed that it was the principal target of the letter. Under the leadership of Chicagoan James Bussen, the organization paid for a full page advertisement in an April 1987 edition of *Newsweek*, accusing the CDF of “forbidding us to worship on church property” and preventing clergy from ministering to homosexuals. Underscoring that gays were in need of pastoral care, it beseeched the United States NCCB to appeal to the Vatican on Dignity’s behalf. A minority of the nation’s bishops, including New York, Atlanta, and Cincinnati, concluded that Dignity chapters in their archdiocese transgressed CDF guidelines and curtailed the organization’s activities in archdiocesan facilities. For his part, however, Bernardin decided to allow D/C to continue using St. Sebastian’s for Mass and meetings. The

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<sup>94</sup> Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, “Letter to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Pastoral Care of Homosexual Persons,” [http://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc\\_con\\_cfaith\\_doc\\_19861001\\_homosexual-persons\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_19861001_homosexual-persons_en.html).

archbishop's attendance at the parish's seventy-fifth anniversary celebration Mass in 1987 was interpreted by some as tacit support for the organization. While some deplored the archbishop's decision, the ACP supported it. In April 1987, then-president Father Charles Kyle dismissed that D/C was in danger of having its privileges revoked, frankly stating that "The cardinal is confident the group is not in violation of any Vatican norms and I think he's right."<sup>95</sup>

Dignity/USA upset the arrangement. Still smarting from the CDF's letter, national leadership in July 1987 elected to amend the organization's Statement of Position and Purpose. Hitherto, the Statement had cautiously and ambiguously broached the topic of the morality of same-sex genital acts. The new resolution demanded an "openness to discussion on the morality of homosexual acts," calling into question Church teaching. In Chicago, archdiocesan spokeswomen Sister Joy Clough characterized the new statement as "inflammatory," and tensions between D/C and the archdiocese intensified.<sup>96</sup> D/C leadership requested a series of meetings with the archbishop to discuss the immediate and future position of the organization. Bernardin accepted, and offered to meet with all of his flock—D/C members, laity, and religious involved in gay ministry or presiding over substantial numbers of gay parishioners—in order to develop a ministry "in collaboration with the archdiocese."<sup>97</sup> Seven meetings were held during the next few months. D/C sought assurances that it could continue to sponsor the St. Sebastian Mass. Bernardin and his theological advisors requested that the

<sup>95</sup> Jim Quinlan, "Catholic Church Here Not Closing Facilities to Gays," *CST*, 21 April 1987.

<sup>96</sup> Jessica Seigel, "Archdiocese Will Run Gay Services," *CT*, 16 May 1988.

<sup>97</sup> Cardinal Joseph Bernardin, "Statement on the Evening Mass at St. Sebastian and Ministry to Homosexuals," *Origins* 18, no. 4 (9 June 1988). The letter was also printed in the archdiocesan newspaper. See "Archdiocese Sets Principles for Mass, Ministry to Gays," *CC*, 20 May 1988.

organization withdraw its support for Dignity/USA's Statement. Although members were divided, D/C refused.<sup>98</sup>

Bernardin publicly addressed D/C's unofficial sponsorship of the St. Sebastian Mass on May 15, 1988, during an emotional two-hour meeting at the parish. Although unable to attend—the archbishop had intended to, but an airplane delay postponed him—his letter was instead presented by Bishop Timothy Lyne and Father Michael Place, Bernardin's theological consultant. The letter strove for doctrinal clarity and pastoral sensitivity. First, Bernardin recognized the importance of the Mass, which “met a pastoral need.” Gay Catholics from the North Side and around the city flocked to it, as did supportive heterosexuals. For some, it had “become a point of return to the life of the Church.” Be that as it may, the archdiocese had never “formally recognized” D/C's sponsorship because of the “ambiguity in the position taken by Dignity with regard to Church teaching on human sexuality.” While the organization's initial Statement “could be read either as being in conformity with church teaching or at variance with it,” its amended statement indicated intent to alter fundamental Church teachings on human sexuality. As it was Bernardin's duty to clearly present Church teaching, the archdiocese could not endorse organizations that advocated positions that were in direct conflict with Church teaching, nor could it allow them to assume leadership positions in parishes. D/C, therefore, could no longer sponsor the St. Sebastian Mass. As the service had clearly met a pastoral need, however, it would be a mistake to abolish it. Instead, Bernardin proposed that the archdiocese, and more specifically a handful of North Side priests with extensive experience ministering to gays under the direction of Father John

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<sup>98</sup> Archdiocesan Gay and Lesbian Outreach, “Our History,” <http://www.aglochicago.org/history.html>; CST, 16 May 1988; Montalbano, “AGLO/Chicago.”

Flavin of St. Sebastian's and dean of the area, assume sponsorship of the Mass. In this way, an official ministry to gay Catholics replaced a hitherto independent ministry. It would be the priests' responsibility to make sure that the Mass and events before or after it harmonized with Church teaching. Naturally, D/C members were welcome to help plan and attend the Liturgy.<sup>99</sup> A few days after the letter was read, it was announced that five other priests would join Flavin from the North Side churches of St. Sebastian, St. Clement, Holy Name Cathedral, Immaculate Conception, Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, and St. Teresa of Avila: Father John Fahey, Auxiliary Bishop Timothy Lyne, Father Thomas Healy, Father Patrick Lee, Father James Noone, and Father Daniel Montalbano.<sup>100</sup>

Reaction to the announcement was mixed. Flavin and other North Side priests were supportive: "Let's be honest," the pastor pointed out, "Dignity keeps taking a stronger and stronger position, saying there is no way the organization will accept the church's teaching on sexuality. It's obvious the cardinal had to do something."<sup>101</sup> Rick Garcia, a former member of New Ways Ministry and founder of the city's Catholic Advocates for Lesbian and Gay Rights, crowed that "overnight, gay Catholics have gone from being a dirty little secret to full members with pastoral care."<sup>102</sup> D/C membership was divided. Some reasoned that that an official ministry to gays and lesbians would more comfortably integrate them into the Church. Others were upset. One D/C member charged that Bernardin's announcement was a "subtle way of expelling" D/C. Another guessed that the archbishop was simply "caving in to pressure from conservative Catholic

<sup>99</sup> Bernardin, "Statement on the Evening Mass at St. Sebastian and Ministry to Homosexuals."

<sup>100</sup> "Archdiocese Opens Door to Gay Group," *CT*, 25 May 1989; Montalbano, "AGLO/Chicago"; Jessica Seigel, "Archdiocese Will Run Gay Services," *CT*, 16 May 1988.

<sup>101</sup> Jessica Seigel, "Archdiocese Will Run Gay Services," *CT*, 16 May 1988.

<sup>102</sup> Tom Brune, "Gay Catholic Group to Boycott New Mass," *CST*, 30 May 1988.

groups.”<sup>103</sup> Bernardin’s decision triggered an acrimonious schism among D/C members, who conferred in May 1988 in the St. Sebastian school cafeteria to decide whether or not to accept the archdiocesan proposal, or relocate the D/C Mass to a non-Catholic church. Members overwhelmingly rejected the plan, feeling that it would comprise Dignity/USA’s Statement.<sup>104</sup> The D/C Mass was temporarily moved to Resurrection Lutheran Church at 3301 N. Seminary Ave., and then in 1992 to Broadway United Methodist church, despite Bernardin’s prohibition that “he would not approve of any priest that continues to say Mass for Dignity.”<sup>105</sup>

Six D/C board members including former president Paul Govea as well as about one-third of its membership, however, resigned their position with the organization to collaborate with the new archdiocesan ministry, which ultimately assumed the name Gay and Lesbian Outreach Chicago (AGLOChicago).<sup>106</sup> AGLO resumed Mass at St. Sebastian’s, and was officially recognized by the archdiocese, although members funded and structured the organization.<sup>107</sup> While individual parishes were chiefly responsible for ministering to homosexual members, AGLO supplemented and extended the archdiocese’s outreach to gays.<sup>108</sup> When fire destroyed St. Sebastian’s church in 1991, AGLOChicago moved the Liturgy to Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church (708 W. Belmont Avenue).<sup>109</sup>

<sup>103</sup> Jessica Seigel, “Archdiocese Will Run Gay Services,” *CT*, 16 May 1988.

<sup>104</sup> Tom Brune, “Gay Catholic Group to Boycott New Mass,” *CST*, 30 May 1988; Michael J. Behr, “Gays Loyal to Church Teaching Split with Dignity,” *CC*, 10 June 1988.

<sup>105</sup> “Archdiocese Opens Door to Gay Group,” *CT*, 25 May 1989; Dignity/Chicago, “About Us,” <http://www.dignity-chicago.org/content/about-us>; Tom Brune, “Gay Catholic Group to Boycott New Mass,” *CST*, 30 May 1988; Terry Wilson, “Gay Catholics Keep the Faith,” *CT*, 11 October 1996.

<sup>106</sup> The name was borrowed from AGLO/Baltimore.

<sup>107</sup> Archdiocesan Gay and Lesbian Outreach, “Our History,” <http://www.aglochicago.org/history.html>; “Gay Group Recognized by Archdiocese,” *CST*, 27 May 1989; “Archdiocese Opens Door to Gay Group,” *CT*, 25 May 1989.

<sup>108</sup> “Church Recognizes Organization to Serve Gays, Lesbian Catholics,” *CNW*, 12 May 1989.

<sup>109</sup> William Burks, “Meeting Religious and Spiritual Needs,” 140.

*“From Streets to Lobbying”*

The politicization of gay liberation, and in particular activists’ determination to secure a gay rights/human rights ordinance that outlawed the discrimination of sexual preference in housing, employment, and public accommodation, compelled Bernardin to confront gay liberation outside the ecclesial sphere. In the late 1970s, Chicago gay rights leaders could point to a string of successes. Homosexuals, through their organizations, establishments, and events such as Gay Pride Week, had procured unprecedented social recognition and media attention. Police harassment had abated. Businesses and advertisers were gradually acknowledging gay spending power. Be that as it may, a consensus was forming among gay activists that political lobbying could be “more effective than marching” in securing their desired legal rights and anti-discrimination legislation. The editor of the bi-weekly *Chicago Gay Life*, Grant Ford, expressed the sentiment in 1977, when he explained that “Such projects as Gay Pride Week were valuable in the early 1970s for encouraging gay people to come out of the closet.” “But,” he continued, “now there is a need to deal with the fundamental issues of gay rights—housing and employment. Our first priority must be legislation.”<sup>110</sup>

Gay rights advocates were optimistic for a number of reasons: their political consolidation and savvy; the receptivity of a small but growing body of lawmakers; new bills that were formulated to ensure equal rights; mayoral sympathy; and the success of gay rights legislation elsewhere. Identifying and organizing supporters was pivotal for political clout. Stewart-Winter has observed that activists particularly on the North Side Lakefront neighborhoods successfully adopted the tactics of “ethnic coalitions,” which

<sup>110</sup> Clarence Page, “Gay Libbers Go from Streets to Lobbying,” *CT*, 23 June 1977.

had been a staple of Chicago's political culture. Primarily White, middle-class homosexuals established a host of institutions such as newspapers, professional and church groups, and political organizations such as the Greater Chicago Gay and Lesbian Democrats that helped them to identify their common political goals, and thereby develop into a cohesive "interest group." The North Side became their "political territory."<sup>111</sup> The machine, activists realized, could be manipulated. The president-elect of the National Association of Business Councils, a chamber of commerce for gay and lesbian businesses and professionals, cannily observed that "Here in Chicago, it's 'Hey, you got votes; what do you want?'" Another leader opined that "Politicians have no choice but to turn an ear toward the outcries of some 200,000 potential voters."<sup>112</sup> In the late 1970s, confidence translated into a small number of openly gay candidates who ran for political positions, albeit unsuccessfully at first.<sup>113</sup>

A small but growing number of heterosexual politicians, particularly but not solely in independent North Side lakefront wards, were receptive to gay lobbying and goals. In this regard, African American Clifford P. Kelley was probably the most active alderman in the 1970s. Although he represented a ward (20<sup>th</sup>) with few openly gay residents, Kelley espoused gay rights after he witnessed the rejection of homosexuals at a Young Democrats of Illinois meeting in the early 1970s.<sup>114</sup> Reasoning that gay rights were akin to Black civil rights, Kelley proposed a gay rights ordinance in July 1973, which would bar discrimination of sexual orientation in housing, employment, and public

<sup>111</sup> Stewart-Winter, 202-4.

<sup>112</sup> Barbara Mahany, "Dollars, Votes Promote Gay Power," *CT*, 4 March 1983. Stewart-Winter writes that five thousand gays protested when entertainer Anita Bryant, fresh from her successful efforts in Miami to repeal Dade County's gay rights law, performed at a Flag Day concern in Chicago in 1977. The event was "by far the largest gay event ever held in Chicago" and a "critical turning point in the development of gay politics in Chicago." See Stewart-Winter, 230-1.

<sup>113</sup> Barbara Mahany, "Dollars, Votes Promote Gay Power," *CT*, 4 March 1983.

<sup>114</sup> "Kelley Vows Push for Gay Rights," *CT*, 25 December 1977.



accommodation.<sup>115</sup> Most aldermen opposed it through the 1970s, and the bill provoked fierce public support and resistance. The bill languished in the Committee on Human Rights and Consumer Protection, as it was apparent that it did not have the necessary twenty six votes to pass the full council. Gay rights activists remained optimistic. “Overall,” one gay man acknowledged in 1983, “we’ve come a tremendous distance in a relatively short time in terms of dollars and votes”<sup>116</sup>

Mayoral sympathy and support encouraged them. By most accounts, Richard J. Daley’s years in office were difficult for homosexuals. Police pressured gay bars, which were subject to frequent raids, and suppressed overt displays of homosexuality. Beginning with Jane Byrne, mayors and mayoral prospects publicly recognized the importance of securing gay votes. Byrne participated in the Gay Pride parade, signed an executive order that prohibited discrimination for municipal employees and city services based on sexual orientation, and nominated the first openly gay individual to public office (Ron Ehemann, Chicago Commission on Human Relations). Byrne also initially endorsed the gay rights ordinance.<sup>117</sup> Harold Washington went even further in bids to secure the gay vote. Couching his support for gay rights as “civil rights,” Washington once in office appointed a Committee on Gay and Lesbian Issues—staffing it with homosexuals—to “help set police priorities during his transition to office.”<sup>118</sup>

<sup>115</sup> Stewart-Winter, 219.

<sup>116</sup> Barbara Mahany, “Dollars, Votes Promote Gay Power,” *CT*, 4 March 1983; “Kelley Vows Push for Gay Rights,” *CT*, 25 December 1977; Clarence Page, “Gay Libbers Go from Streets to Lobbying,” *CT*, 23 June 1977; Robert Davis, “Council Postpones ‘Gay Rights’ Action,” *CT*, 27 September 1979; Marcy Darin, “Council Again Delays Gay Rights Measure,” *Chicago Daily Calumet*, 27 September 1979. Barbara Page Fiske explains that “Much of [the City Council’s] work is done through committees which recommend legislation to the full council.” See Barbara Page Fiske, ed., *Key to Government in Chicago and Suburban Cook County* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), 73.

<sup>117</sup> Barbara Mahany, “Dollars, Votes Promote Gay Power,” *CT*, 4 March 1983.

<sup>118</sup> Stewart-Winter, 282.

Finally, the political optimism of gay rights activists swelled in the early 1980s because gay rights legislation was meeting a degree of success in other parts of the country. By the time Kelley's ordinance was introduced for a general vote in 1986, about fifty cities, a dozen counties, and one state (Wisconsin) had adopted similar bills. Perhaps the most publicized political effort came in New York City, where a gay rights bill endorsed and vigorously advocated by Mayor Edward Koch was passed despite vocal opposition from John Cardinal O'Connor, who principally feared state intrusion into Church jurisdiction.<sup>119</sup>

*"Sexual Orientation" and Catholic Clout (I)*

Evidence suggests that Catholic leadership was divided about the gay rights ordinance when it was first introduced in the 1970s. Unsurprisingly, Cody in public was discreet about the proposed bill. Some have suggested that he and Mayor Richard J. Daley labored to suppress the bill's successful passage—a claim that may not receive verification until the mayor's papers are opened to scholars.<sup>120</sup> The *Chicago Gay Crusader* alleged that Alderman Edward Burke had in 1974 sent a letter to the archbishop, asking him to oppose gay rights laws. Some gay Catholics, recalling Cody's allowance of a Mass for homosexuals, reasoned that he would probably ignore the issue entirely.<sup>121</sup> Guessing the degree of support for the ordinance in the 1970s among local priests and nuns is hazardous. One of the most vocal Catholic supporters was a diocesan

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<sup>119</sup> "Gays Win City Law in New York," *CT*, 21 March 1986; James Strong and Manuel Galvan, "Bernardin's Stand Stalls Vote on Gays," *CT*, 10 July 1986; Jack Houston, "Gays Laud Impact of Rights Bill," *CT*, 14 July 1986. For the respective positions—on the many issues involved in gay rights legislation—of the archbishop and mayor of New York, see the illuminating John Cardinal O'Connor and Mayor Edward I. Koch, *His Eminence and Hizzoner: A Candid Exchange* (New York: William Morrow and Company, 1989).

<sup>120</sup> "How Backers Finally Won Human Rights Law," *Crain's Chicago Business*, 2 January 1989.

<sup>121</sup> Stewart-Winter, 197.

priest, Father Francis J. McGrath, a member of The Alliance to End Repression and the Association of Chicago Priests. In August 1974, McGrath appeared before the Chicago City Council to espouse the ordinance. As a consequence of their sexual orientation, homosexuals were “suffering the loss of their rights in such areas as employment, housing, and equal treatment before the law.” Although he qualified that he was “not officially representing any group,” he emphasized that he did “express the sentiments and concern of many priests.” To add power to his statement, McGrath quoted, with permission, a statement from longtime civil rights activist Monsignor Daniel Cantwell. Cantwell favored the legislation to remove “discrimination on homosexuals,” while qualifying that “I am not advocating—nor do the ordinances advocate—homosexual behavior.”<sup>122</sup> McGrath later recollected that he had sent approximately seven hundred letters to Chicago priests in the 1970s, which explained to them the details of the bill and asked the priests “to let me know by return postcard whether they approved of disapproved the addition of ‘sexual orientation’ to the ordinance. Of the three hundred replies, all but five approved.”<sup>123</sup>

The gay rights ordinance was finally introduced for a full vote in the City Council in the summer of 1986. Alderman Kelley announced that he would schedule the vote for Wednesday, July 9. The measure seemed to cut across the notoriously entrenched factional lines of pro- and anti-Washington forces in City Council, which had been in gridlock (“Council Wars”) since Washington’s election in 1983.<sup>124</sup> In addition to

<sup>122</sup> “Testimony of Rev. Frank McGrath to Sub-Committee of Judiciary Committee of Chicago City Council,” 6 August 1974. The Alliance to End Repression Records, Box 8, Folder 19, CHM.

<sup>123</sup> Frank McGrath, “Frightened,” *CT*, 23 July 1986.

<sup>124</sup> Mark Brown, “Gay Rights Vote Put Off,” *CST*, 10 July 1986. In a blunt editorial, the *Tribune* reported that since his nomination in 1983, Washington had been the subject of accusations that he was a closet homosexual and had even seduced young boys. His opponents in City Council had “gone out of

swelling gay political clout, the AIDS epidemic and the looming mayoral and aldermanic elections in 1987 facilitated the bill's introduction. Gay rights activists contended that AIDS lent immediacy to the measure, as gay men now more than ever needed legal protection against the potential discrimination of a panicked public. Mayor Harold Washington, while earnest in his support of the gay rights ordinance, was also painfully aware that former mayor Jane Byrne, who while in office had sought the gay vote, had already announced her intention to run for mayor in 1987.<sup>125</sup>

That some gay rights advocates assumed that the Catholic archdiocese tacitly supported the bill—and therefore, anticipated less vigorous opposition from Catholic aldermen and women—was also a factor. They were acutely sensitive of the archbishop's political clout. Anticipating that a gay rights bill would be introduced in the near future, the Illinois Gay and Lesbian Task Force (IGLTF) began to actively solicit Bernardin's support as early as 1984, when James Bussen and Al Wardell, acting in their capacity as leaders of IGLTF, sent a letter to the archbishop along with a statistical report—composed by the National Gay Task Force—detailing the violence against gays and lesbians. The letter implored Bernardin to “play a leadership role in attempting to stop chronic violence against gays and lesbians by endorsing specific civil rights legislation,” which the IGLTF thought would help protect homosexuals. The archbishop responded on January 2, 1985, in a letter that the IGLTF publicized. Bernardin's reply is

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their way, in private and public, to leave the impression that they questioned the mayor's sexual orientation.” See “The Tawdry Politics of Innuendo,” *CT*, 13 July 1986.

<sup>125</sup> Byrne's odds at securing the gay vote were hampered when she “cited Bernardin's opposition to the measure” and remained silent on the gay rights ordinance. One gay activist announced that she “stabbed us in the back. She can't wave her pink hat at us [during the Pride parade] on Clark Street anymore.” A spokesperson for her campaign protested that the ordinance was introduced when Byrne was neither mayor nor an alderperson. See David K. Fremon, *Chicago Politics Ward by Ward* (Bloomington, IN: Indian University Press, 1988), 11; Jean Latz Griffin, “Mayoral Hopefuls Court Gay Voters,” *CT*, 5 February 1987.

important because it offered an initial blueprint of the archdiocese's position on gay rights. The letter was essentially a sensitive restatement of Catholic doctrine on homosexuality and a meditation on rights in conflict. Bernardin began by discerning that the IGLTF had actually raised two distinct issues: the archbishop's defense of civil rights and his endorsement of specific legislation. Stating that he was unafraid to adopt an unpopular position in defense of civil rights, Bernardin nonetheless affirmed that his leadership on any issue must be "exercised within the parameters" of Catholic teaching. He explained that the issue was inextricably linked to the Church's mission to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ, which ensured the dignity of all people. Four principles shaped Catholic teaching on gay rights. First, same-sex orientation is not an individual's fault, nor is it sinful. Second, the Church deplored prejudice, discrimination, and violence against people of all sexual orientations, and everyone has the right to decent housing and employment. Third, homosexual genital acts are wrong. While there was a "wide spectrum" of gay lifestyles, the Church could not approve of those that encouraged immoral or morally objectionable behavior, nor behavior that encouraged or advocated gay sexual acts. Finally, although the Church does not assume that homosexuality increased one's proclivity to abuse minors, parents do have the right to shield their children from people or influences that encourage gay practices or condone gay activity. Bernardin reassured the IGLTF that the archdiocese, as an employer, had not recommended the termination of employees with same-sex orientations, nor did it inquire into sexual orientation in hiring. Continuing, the archbishop expressed concern for the implications of gay rights legislation, stating that his support was dependent on the precise wording of the bill. Legislation that accepted or approved of gay activity, or gay

lifestyles that encouraged said activity, would be opposed. However, if a gay rights bill “merely provides needed legal protection for people with a homosexual orientation and *explicitly* does not approve homosexual activity or endorse the kind of lifestyle which would promote it, we support it.” When the archdiocese opposed the July 1986 ordinance, gay rights activists accused Bernardin of shifting his position, marshaling the archbishop’s concluding statement in his letter to the IGLTF; Bernardin firmly maintained that the archdiocese’s position on gay rights had always been consistent.<sup>126</sup>

Although Church officials had been tracking the ordinance for a few days, they expressed mild surprise when it was introduced into City Council. Bernardin, whose scheduled vacation was to begin on July 7, immediately asked advisors to release a press statement opposing the measure. It was issued on the following afternoon. The concise statement affirmed Church opposition to the pending ordinance, articulating two chief objections. First, the bill’s language was vague. “Sexual orientation” was not defined, and could therefore be interpreted to “imply acceptance or approval of homosexual activity or advocacy of a homosexual lifestyle.” Second, the letter expressed fears of state intrusion into Church affairs. The measure could infringe on the right of the Church to teach and practice Catholic doctrine. The document then restated the four principals that shape Church teaching on homosexuality, as initially delineated in Bernardin's January 1985 reply to the IGLTF.<sup>127</sup> The archbishop had other concerns, which he explained a few days later. The bill, he observed, “was suddenly being moved from committee dormancy to full council vote without much public attention or opportunity for

<sup>126</sup> “Cardinal Defends Civil Rights of Gays/Lesbians,” *CD*, 27 April 1985; “Gay Rights Legislation: A Chronology of Archdiocesan Statements,” *CC*, 18 July 1986.

<sup>127</sup> *CC*, 18 July 1986; Mark Brown, “Archdiocese Assails City’s Gay Rights Bid,” *CST*, 9 July 1986. Reporter Harry Golden, Jr., alleged that Alderman Edward Burke solicited, and then circulated on City Council Finance Committee letterhead, Bernardin’s statement. See Stewart-Winter, 27.

dialogue.” Citizens had a right to know the implications of the gay rights bill, and should have the opportunity to express their views before civil rights laws were amended.<sup>128</sup>

Also, the archdiocese could not abide any legislation that “does not protect the rights of a religious group to carry out its activities in accordance with its religious beliefs and norms,” e.g., Catholic schools could not be coerced into hiring practicing homosexuals as teachers. The legitimate rights of parents must be respected as well.<sup>129</sup>

The archdiocese was not the bill’s only opponent. Some aldermen promised to vote “no,” regardless of the Catholic Church’s stance. Roman Pucinski, a Catholic and seasoned politician of the heavily Polish 41<sup>st</sup> ward, diagnosed that the proposal “puts a ban on employers and renters,” divesting them of the “right to deny hiring or leasing to gays and therefore establishes rights for one group at the abrogation of others.”<sup>130</sup>

Conservatives Jews, evangelicals—including the Moody Bible Institute—and a number of African American pastors opposed it as well.<sup>131</sup> Hiram Crawford, a black pastor Israel Methodist Community Church and head of the Coalition to Reinforce Our Social Standards, was a particularly ferocious opponent. He threatened to lead ten thousand opponents to demonstrate at the steps of city hall when the bill was introduced. Harold Washington called him the Moral Majority’s “spear bearer.”<sup>132</sup> *Chicago Tribune* columnist Raymond Coffey, denying that he was advocating prejudice or discrimination of gays, also questioned the ordinance. Noting that “this is the sort of thing that can get you lynched these days,” Coffey characterized the Cardinal’s concerns as “entirely legitimate and pretty much on target.” He asked: “Doesn’t anyone—anyone—have the

<sup>128</sup> Joseph Cardinal Bernardin, “The Many Dimensions of Gay/Lesbian Rights,” *CC*, 18 July 1986.

<sup>129</sup> Daniel J. Lehmann, “Bernardin Again Objects to Gay Rights Proposal,” *CST*, 18 June 1987.

<sup>130</sup> Manuel Galvan and Cheryl Devall, “Archdiocese, Gays Meet,” *CT*, 18 July 1986.

<sup>131</sup> Jack Houston, “Clerics’ Coalition Hits Gay Rights,” *CT*, 25 July 1986.

<sup>132</sup> Chinta Strausberg, “Gay Bill Ignites Discord,” *CD*, 17 July 1986.

right to be offended by the homosexual lifestyle or, more particularly, its advocacy? Doesn't anyone else's rights count?" It seemed to him that gay rights activists were "trying to turn private, personal sexual behavior into a public matter, and moreover, a public matter in which, implicitly, government is being asked to endorse a particular lifestyle," which was quite different than "prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race or religion or gender."<sup>133</sup>

Voting on the bill was shelved, as Kelley decided that the measure lacked the necessary votes. Despite resistance from other quarters, gay rights supporters, aldermen, and the media cited Bernardin's opposition as the overriding cause of the measure's postponement.<sup>134</sup> Clarence Page, a local African American columnist, suggested that Mayor Washington and other lakefront liberals simply overlooked Catholic political clout, which resided in "the parishes that comprise the majority of the city."<sup>135</sup> Washington frankly stated that Bernardin's opposition "cost the support of six or eight aldermen."<sup>136</sup> One gay activist went further. The measure had twenty seven aldermanic votes until "the church knocked off twelve."<sup>137</sup>

Although it was more unmistakable in 1988, explicitly Catholic support for gay rights legislation in 1986 certainly existed. Some of these people professed shock at the Cardinal's letter and were saddened and unhappy. Dignity President James Bussen revealed that Bernardin had assured him during a February meeting that the archdiocese would not oppose "legitimate civil rights for all Chicagoans." He bemoaned the "broken

<sup>133</sup> Raymond Coffee, "Cardinal Bernardin is Absolutely Right on Gay Rights," *CT*, 20 July 1986.

<sup>134</sup> Jack Houston and Manuel Galvan, "Gay Rights Law Appears Doomed," *CT*, 24 July 1986.

<sup>135</sup> Stewart-Winter, 27.

<sup>136</sup> James Strong, "Church Holds Cards on Gay-Rights Plan," *CT*, 16 July 1986.

<sup>137</sup> James Strong and Manuel Galvan, "Bernardin's Stand Stalls Vote on Gays," *CT*, 10 July 1986.



promises and sudden change of archdiocesan attitude.”<sup>138</sup> Dominican Sister Lois McGovern privately confided that “Bernardin speaks and people act as though it makes great sense—although he always speaks from a political rather than pastoral perspective.”<sup>139</sup> In a letter to the Cardinal, she confessed “deep disappointment and anger.” The archdiocese’s last minute opposition was a “tragedy,” which helped to perpetuate the stereotype that “homosexuals use all their forums to advocate homosexual behavior” and reinforced the “misguided belief that homosexuals are child molesters and/or homosexuality can be taught.”<sup>140</sup> Sinsinawa Dominican Sister Donna Quinn, spokesperson for the Chicago Catholic Women (CCW) and the National Coalition of American Nuns—two organizations that regularly criticized the archdiocese for its discrimination of women—felt “scandalized” and opined that “the institutional church condones discrimination against women so it is not surprising that it would want to be above the law in supporting civil rights” for gays.<sup>141</sup> ACP, Chicago AIDS Pastoral Network, and Archdiocesan AIDS Task Force members Augustinian Father James Corrigan, and Claretian seminarian Steven Martz, forecast that the impact of Bernardin’s opposition on archdiocesan efforts to minister to gay/bisexual male AIDS patients would be “devastating.” The Task Force had specifically informed the Cardinal of the “negative impact church opposition to civil rights for gays had in other jurisdictions.” They were vexed by the Chancery’s alleged lack of consultation, and insisted that its resistance to the measure damaged the local Church’s ability to “be a credible player in the efforts

<sup>138</sup> Mark Brown, “Archdiocese Assails City’s Gay Rights Bid,” *CST*, 9 July 1986.

<sup>139</sup> Lois McGovern to Donna Quinn, 20 July 1986, Chicago Catholic Women Records, Box 7, Folder 11, WLALUC.

<sup>140</sup> Lois McGovern to Joseph Cardinal Bernardin, 20 July 1986, Chicago Catholic Women Records, Box 7, Folder 11, WLALUC.

<sup>141</sup> Daniel J. Lehmann, “Cardinal Calls Gay Law OK – With Limits,” *CST*, 17 July 1986.

against AIDS.”<sup>142</sup> Non-Catholic gays were also upset. Vincent Samar, an attorney representing Chicago gay interests, insisted that the ordinance was a “human rights issue” and therefore a “theological point of view” was “unfortunate.”<sup>143</sup> The IGLTF’s Wardell, grousing that the archdiocese “didn’t give us any kind of warning or indication that they would come down so hard against the proposal,” believed negotiations with the Cardinal and his advisors had been “squandered.”<sup>144</sup>

Bernardin responded in the July 18 edition of the *Chicago Catholic*. He maintained that the archdiocese’s position on gay rights had been consistent and unambiguous. It was elucidated in the January 1985 letter to the IGLTF, and confirmed in July 1985 when Bernardin, as chairman of the Catholic Conference of Illinois, and the other bishops of the state issued a statement to the Illinois State Legislature, which at the time was debating gay rights legislation that ultimately failed. In the newspaper, the Cardinal expressed astonishment that much of the emotion surrounding the bill “surfaced only after the archdiocese issued a statement of opposition.” He strove to assuage gay rights advocates’ animosity toward the archdiocese and was sympathetic to homosexuals who felt they had to live on the “margins of society” and faced “arbitrary restriction” in housing, employment and public accommodation.” The Church’s ministry to homosexuals “must reflect that of Jesus,” who never “waffled on what was right or wrong, but at the same time had compassion for everyone...” Bernardin suggested ways to make the bill more palatable for the archdiocese and other Chicagoans. First, he urged a public dialogue: “the community needs to talk about these feelings before there will be

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<sup>142</sup> Jim Corrigan, O.S.A., and Steve Martz, C.M.F., “The Cardinal’s Message to Persons with AIDS,” *Upturn*, August-September 1986, CHM.

<sup>143</sup> Jack Houston and Manuel Galvan, “Bernardin Puts Council on the Spot,” *CT*, 23 July 1986.

<sup>144</sup> Tom Gibbons, “Church Stand Seen as Key to Gay Rights Ordinance,” *CST*, 13 July 1986; Michael J. Behr, “Confusion Reigning on Gay Rights Stand,” *CC*, 11 July 1986.

adequate support for the rights of all our citizens.” Before legislation is codified, Chicagoans have a right to know its legal implications and to share their views with the Mayor and City Council. Second, acknowledging the reality that rights could be in tension, he urged legislators to “ensure that everyone’s rights are respected”—those of homosexuals as well as those of parents and their children who were offended by gay advocacy and lifestyles. Religious institutions must have the freedom to “run their programs in accord with their beliefs.”<sup>145</sup>

Initially, the archdiocese did not rule out supporting legislation that protected the rights of all Chicagoans, including homosexuals. It was willing to dialogue with gay rights activists, who despite the July 9 shelving, were determined to introduce the measure. Dignity/USA’s Bussen and its legal council Karl Rubesh conferred with Vicar General Father James Roache and Father Place; Bernardin was on vacation until the end of the month, although he returned in Chicago on Monday July 14. Archdiocesan officials held formal and informal meetings with other gay rights organizations and city officials, including Mayor Washington’s liaison to the gay and lesbian community, Kit Duffy. Gay rights advocates offered two amendments to the bill: one would exempt religious institutions from the ordinance; the other would incorporate a “disclaimer” stating that the measure should not be interpreted as approving homosexual activity.<sup>146</sup> Bernardin also met with Washington at the Mayor’s request. The former denied that the archdiocese’s position pitted the Chancery Office against City Hall. Washington replied

<sup>145</sup> CC, “Many Dimensions,” 18 July 1986; CC, “Chronology,” 18 July 1986.

<sup>146</sup> Daniel J. Lehmann, “Gay Catholics and Archdiocesan Officials Hold ‘Cordial’ Meeting,” *CST*, 12 July 1986; James Strong and Manuel Galvan, “Bernardin’s Stand Stalls Vote on Gays,” *CT*, 10 July 1986; Tom Gibbons, “Church Stand Seen as Key to Gay Rights Ordinance,” *CST*, 13 July 1986.

that “if the cardinal’s suggestions are incorporated and clarified, I would recommend they be accepted and chances (for passage) will be better.”<sup>147</sup>

Talks between the archdiocese and gay rights activists collapsed, however, leading several pro-gay rights aldermen to cancel a scheduled appointment with Church officials.<sup>148</sup> An agreement on the precise wording of the bill could not be reached. The amendments were unacceptable to the archdiocese. During a July 22 news conference, Bernardin explained that any disclaimer “would be more like an exhortation,” and would lack any real legal impact.<sup>149</sup> Moreover, the proposed amendments unsatisfactorily protected the rights of the Church to operate its institutions and programs in accordance with Catholic moral teaching. Nor did they allow parents to shield their children from objectionable lifestyles. The Cardinal concluded that it was the responsibility of lawmakers, not the archdiocese, to draft legislation that addressed the Church’s concerns—although church officials had a right to enter the debate.<sup>150</sup>

Indicative of the rancor of the meetings between church officials and gay rights activists was Vicar General James Roache’s letter to Washington—which to Roache’s dismay was publicized—that entreated the Mayor to compel Kit Duffy to apologize for calling the priest a “liar” in the presence of others, thereby compromising his integrity. Roache, who had been a pivotal archdiocesan spokesperson, complained that Duffy had falsely accused him of meeting with Aldermen Edward Burke and Joseph Kotlarz (35<sup>th</sup>) in a bid to influence the ordinance debate. Roache firmly maintained that he never discussed the ordinance with either man, or with any other City Council members. Roach

<sup>147</sup> James Strong, “Church Holds Cards on Gay-Rights Plan,” *CT*, 16 July 1986.

<sup>148</sup> “Cancel Gay Rights Meeting,” *CD*, 21 July 1986.

<sup>149</sup> Jack Houston and Manuel Galvan, “Bernardin Puts Council on the Spot,” *CT*, 23 July 1986.

<sup>150</sup> Gromers Jeffers, Jr., “No Gay Concessions,” *CD*, 23 July 1986; Michael J. Behr, “Gay Issue Remains in City Council,” *CC*, 25 July 1986; Jack Houston and Manuel Galvan, “Gay Rights Law Appears Doomed,” *CT*, 24 July 1986.

said he was “not looking for something that will embarrass Kit Duffy”; however, the Mayor refused to comply with the request.<sup>151</sup>

Following the unsuccessful talks, gay rights activists demanded a full vote on the original bill on July 29—no amendments would be attached. This would accomplish two purposes, they hoped. First, the city’s homosexuals would unify to overcome opposition. Second, aldermanic supporters and opponents could be identified. With elections the following year, gay activists could then work to unseat those who voted against the measure.<sup>152</sup> One member of the Mayor’s Committee on Gay and Lesbian Rights not so subtly reminded aldermen that homosexuals constituted between ten and twenty percent of the electorate, and resided in every ward.<sup>153</sup> On the evening of July 28, approximately one thousand supporters attended a rally in Daley Center that Dignity and other gay rights organizations hosted. About fifteen speakers, one of whom was Sister Donna Quinn, spoke in favor of the measure.<sup>154</sup> The following morning, gay rights supporters filled City Hall, and confronted aldermen in between committee meetings.<sup>155</sup> Nonetheless, the Council voted 30-18 against the ordinance. Distraught but resolved, activists pledged to target aldermen with sizeable gay constituencies who voted against the measure.<sup>156</sup>

Bernardin was also the subject of supporters’ anger. One gay activist judged that “We have an enemy now not only in some of these aldermen, but I think the cardinal who

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<sup>151</sup> Bruce Buursma, “GayRights Fallout Ignites a Squabble,” *CT*, 15 August 1986.

<sup>152</sup> Jack Houston and James Strong, “Bernardin Reiterates Opposition to Gay Rights Law,” *CT*, 17 July 1986.

<sup>153</sup> James Strong and Manuel Galvan, “Bernardin’s Stand Stalls Vote on Gays,” *CT*, 10 July 1986.

<sup>154</sup> Valerie Phillips, “3,000 Candles For Gay Rights Law,” *CT*, 28 July 1986; Jim Bussen to Sr. Donna Quinn, 9 August 1986, Chicago Catholic Women Records, Box 7, Folder 11, WLALUC.

<sup>155</sup> Gromer Jeffers Jr., “Gays Lobby to Find Support,” *CD*, 29 July 1986.

<sup>156</sup> In this regard, one gay activist specifically named the following aldermen: Patrick O’Connor (40<sup>th</sup>), Terry Gabinski (32<sup>nd</sup>), Richard Mell (33<sup>rd</sup>), Roman Pucinski (41<sup>st</sup>), Fred Roti (1<sup>st</sup>), Eugene Schulter (47<sup>th</sup>), Joseph Kotlarz (35<sup>th</sup>), and Miguel Santiago (31<sup>st</sup>). Of these, Santiago was the only individual to lose in the 1987 aldermanic elections. See James Strong and Manuel Galvan, “Gay Rights Ordinance Fails,” *CT*, 30 July 1986.

came out so hard against us.” Alderman Burton Natarus (42), a vocal proponent, framed the debate as “religion’s” unwarranted intrusion into “politics”: “We can’t let that happen in Chicago.”<sup>157</sup>

*“Sexual Orientation” and Catholic Clout (II)*

A “human rights ordinance,” essentially a somewhat broadened and repackaged gay rights bill, was resubmitted for a full council vote two years later. It was defeated twice in the autumn of 1988, before passage in December. Eugene Sawyer, who succeeded as interim mayor the recently deceased Harold Washington in 1987, strongly supported it. The timing of the ordinance’s passage was principally the result of the upcoming mayoral primaries and general election. Democratic candidates roundly supported the measure. Catholic backing was also pivotal. To defend the bill and coax others to support it, a handful of individuals and organizations harnessed an understanding of theology that admittedly contrasted with the archbishop’s. They expressed little fear of state intrusion into Church jurisdiction. The votes of Catholic aldermen, who had hitherto opposed it, were also crucial.

The defeat of the 1986 measure galvanized the gay community. In the autumn of 1987, Alderman Bernard J. Hansen (44<sup>th</sup>) vowed to reintroduce the ordinance; Alderman Kelley had since been convicted of corruption and no longer served in City Council.<sup>158</sup> Supporters brought pressure to bear on Mayor Washington and aldermen. Al Wardell, representing the IGLTF, issued a letter to the Mayor professing astonishment that “It is now 1987” yet “Chicago and the State of Illinois do not provide civil rights protections to

<sup>157</sup> James Strong and Manuel Galvan, “Gay Rights Ordinance Fails,” *CT*, 30 July 1986.

<sup>158</sup> Jack Houston, “Hansen Vows New Bill for Gay Rights,” *CT*, 12 April 1987; James Strong, “Council Passes Gay Rights Ordinance,” *CT*, 22 December 1988.

its gay and lesbian citizens.” They implored Washington to officially endorse a proposal that would support equality for gays in employment, housing and public accommodation. The Mayor’s administration, which estimated that 50,000 of the 150,000-300,000 people who swamped the polls would be gay, was warmly receptive.<sup>159</sup> When Washington passed away in December 1987, gay rights activists immediately requested Eugene Sawyer’s collaboration, doubtlessly aware that he had voted against the 1986 bill as an alderman (6<sup>th</sup>). For its part, the archdiocese anticipated that gay rights legislation would be revived. In June 1987, Bernardin reiterated its objections to any measure that “implies approval of homosexual acts.” The Chancery Office would no longer negotiate the language of bills, as this was lawmakers’ responsibility. However, the Church would “offer guidance on issues affecting social order and public morality.”<sup>160</sup>

During 1987 and the first months of 1988, drafters broadened and reworded the bill. In June 1988, Sawyer announced his intention to resubmit it, while at the same time pledging to talk with Bernardin to solicit archdiocesan approval. A number of people, most notably Alderman Patrick O’Connor (40<sup>th</sup>), played a pivotal role in amending the measure to exempt religious institutions and strove to ensure that the bill did not condone or promote “gay lifestyles.”<sup>161</sup> The new bill prohibited discrimination in housing and credit transactions, public accommodation, and employment of “sexual orientation,” age, disability, parental status, military discharge status, and source of income, as well as the preexisting protected classes of race, color, sex, marital status, religion and national

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<sup>159</sup> Al Wardell to Harold Washington, 6 May 1987, Mayoral Records, Central Files Series, 1981 to 1987, Routed Correspondence, Box 28, Folder 35, CPLHW; Peggy Backer to Al Wardell and Kit McPheeters, 14 July 1987, Mayoral Records, Central Files Series, 1981 to 1987, Routed Correspondence, Box 28, Folder 35, CPLHW; Jean Latz Griffin, “Mayoral Hopefuls Court Gay Voters,” *CT*, 5 February 1987.

<sup>160</sup> Daniel J. Lehmann and Tom Brune, “Bernardin Again Objects to Gay Rights Proposal,” *CST*, 18 June 1987.

<sup>161</sup> James Strong, “Council Passes Gay Rights Ordinance,” *CT*, 22 December 1988.

origin. Violators would be penalized between one and five hundred dollars. The bill exempted religious groups from its hiring provisions. When proposed in June, it again met opposition. The *Tribune* took Sawyer and the ordinance to task, accusing the Mayor of “tak[ing] the focus off homosexuality” by “dress[ing] it up a bit by adding several protected groups.” It flatly opined that the measure “has everything to do with its unwarranted intrusion of state power into personal matters of conduct.” It was impossibly ambitious and unenforceable. Expanding legal protections to “matters of choice,” rather than simply “accidents of birth,” was a radical departure from American legal history.<sup>162</sup> The archdiocese also rejected it as “unacceptable,” citing the familiar refrain: the ordinance indirectly endorsed homosexuality, was vaguely worded, and potentially the state could use it to impede the archdiocese’s presentation of, and conformity to, Catholic teaching.<sup>163</sup>

Other Catholics, however, vigorously supported the bill, and marshaled theological understandings that diverged from the archbishop’s. Unsurprisingly, Dignity was at the forefront of efforts. The ACP supported the measure as well, going on record in its bi-monthly publication, *Upturn*: “The ACP sees [the bill] as necessary to protect the rights of all people and urges the city council to set such protections of all the citizens of the city as its primary focus.” It implored city council members to “disregard the emotionalism and strained rhetoric that has blurred the central issue.”<sup>164</sup> More unusually, the North Side parishes of St. Clement’s and Our Lady of Mt. Carmel explicitly endorsed the measure.<sup>165</sup>

<sup>162</sup> “New Gay Rights Proposal Over-Reaches,” *CT*, 18 June 1988; Simpson, 239-40.

<sup>163</sup> Michael J. Behr, “Archdiocese Faults Gay Ordinance,” *CC*, 10 June 1988.

<sup>164</sup> “Board Resolution on Gay/Lesbian Rights,” October-November 1988, *Upturn*, CHM.

<sup>165</sup> “How Backers Finally Won Human Rights Law,” *Crain’s Chicago Business*, 2 January 1989.



The CCW encouraged its approximately thirteen hundred members to contact their aldermen, and made the ordinance's passage one of its "major goals" of 1988.<sup>166</sup> Sister Donna Quinn was arguably the most vocal and influential CCW member advocating the bill. In fact, Wardell in the 1987 IGLTF letter to Washington cited Quinn's endorsement of gay legislation to help secure the Mayor's support. After Sawyer announced his intention to resubmit the bill in June, Quinn issued a release that testified in favor of the measure. Recalling the Gospel, she decried that the Church "has for too long interfered with the passage of an ordinance...which would give basic human rights" to citizens. In her mind, the bill was concerned with sexual orientation rather than sexual activity, which the "institutional church" nevertheless feared. Nor would the ordinance adversely affect how the Church presented Catholic teaching. It did not threaten family values. In its opposition, the archdiocese tacitly supported the "bashing and violence" of gays. Quinn alleged that "the logical conclusion of institutional church thinking would be that if a person does not adhere to Roman Catholic teachings in his/her everyday life, that person should be discriminated against." She concluded her release exhorting that "it is time to stop worrying about those who love each other and worry about those who hate." The Good News should be preached: "the right of every individual to have safe housing and employment and be able to walk the streets of our city free from violence."<sup>167</sup>

Catholic Advocates for Gay and Lesbian Rights (CAGLR), formed in 1986, was a final important organization. Its leader was Rick Garcia, a former Catholic brother who

<sup>166</sup> "Chicago Ordinance for Human Rights," *CCW Woman-Gram*, Chicago Catholic Women Records, January 1988, Box 2, Folder 5, WLALUC.

<sup>167</sup> Donna Quinn, O.P., "Testimony on in Favor of the Chicago Human Rights Ordinance," Chicago Catholic Women Records, Box 5, Folder 6, WLALUC.

had previously worked for Maryland's New Ways Ministry. Garcia later relocated to St. Louis and took charge of the Coordinating Coalition for Gay Rights, comprised of priests and nuns who supported gay rights legislation. He settled in Chicago in 1986, and in August, co-chaired the Gay and Lesbian Town Meeting, a coalition of people and organizations that labored for the human rights ordinance's passage. Garcia and the three other leaders of the Town Meeting were dubbed the "Gang of Four" for their activism in promoting the human rights ordinance.<sup>168</sup> Garcia also spearheaded CAGLR. Its intention was to secure grassroots support for gay rights legislation among Chicago Catholics; it circumvented the archdiocese to court priests, nuns, and Catholic aldermen who had "constantly opposed the bill."<sup>169</sup> Illustrative of the ties that the measure forged among some Chicago Catholics, CAGLR worked closely with CCW to harness Catholic support. The two organizations, in fact, began sharing headquarters in 1988 at 5249 N. Kenmore.<sup>170</sup>

The upcoming special mayoral election, a consequence of Washington's unexpected death, was crucial to the success of the bill, which passed 28-17 in December. Although it had been defeated in September and then again in November, mayoral candidate Richard M. Daley's recently-pledged support proved auspicious. Likely aware that some in the gay community had not forgotten the raids his father allowed on gay bars, Daley publicly stated that he was "100 percent behind" the measure. Daley's support meant that all Democratic primary candidates, including Sawyer, Alderman Timothy Evans (4<sup>th</sup>) and Alderman Edward Burke backed the 1988 bill. Notably,

<sup>168</sup> The others were Jon-Henri Damski, Art Johnston, and Laurie Dittman.

<sup>169</sup> Chris Bull, "Chicago Pols Finally Discover Les/Gay Rights," *Gay Community News*, January 8-14, 1989.

<sup>170</sup> "Open House," Chicago Catholic Women Records, Box 5, Folder 6, WLALUC.

Burke—who dropped out of the race before December—had hitherto opposed gay rights legislation, but calculated that homosexuals were an increasingly strong voting bloc. Candidates were also aware that lakefront liberals were largely behind the measure.<sup>171</sup>

The approval of Catholic aldermen was pivotal to the bill's success, as a provocative article in *Crain's Chicago Business* explained. It recorded that, of the Council's twenty two Catholic members in 1986, only one (Marion Volini, 46<sup>th</sup>) voted for the gay rights bill. In 1988, however, an intense effort on the part of gay rights activists, including Garcia and Catholic alderwomen Kathy Osterman (46<sup>th</sup>) who had since replaced Volini, to persuade other Catholic lawmakers paid dividends. Activist John-Henri Damski's presentation to Burke, in which the former recalled the seventy thousand gay voters in Chicago, helped to sway the alderman, who admitted that "There are tens of thousands of lakefront and gay voters who will use your position on gay rights as a litmus test." After the measure passed, an exuberant Burke chimed, "I am indeed delighted in this holiday season to see the spirit of the Holy Ghost descend on this body and enlighten so many of us. I guess I did prove that an Irish Catholic from the Southwest Side can vote in favor of this...and nothing too bad happens." As mentioned, Patrick O'Connor (40<sup>th</sup>) pledged support after securing an amendment that exempted religious institutions and stated that "nothing in this ordinance shall be construed as supporting or advocating any particular lifestyle or religious view." Others have speculated that the Irish Catholic Daley convinced a few other machine aldermen, Patrick Huels (11<sup>th</sup>) of Daley's home

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<sup>171</sup> James Strong, "Sawyer Budget on Track, but Gay Rights May Not Be," *CT*, 7 December 1988; Jean Latz Griffin, "Gays' Role in Election Linked to Rights Bill," *CT*, 21 December 1988.

ward and Mark Fary (12<sup>th</sup>), to support the measure where in 1986 they had opposed it.<sup>172</sup> Huels gainsaid that Daley pressured him to vote for it.<sup>173</sup> CWW members Quinn and McGovern also targeted aldermen. *Crain's* recorded that during a council meeting in August 1988, Osterman “asked each Catholic alderman to step outside with her for a moment,” where Sisters Quinn and McGovern were waiting. The nuns proceeded to implore lawmakers to switch their votes in favor of the ordinance. “We... appeal[ed] to their sense of justice as Catholics,” Quinn explained. Analyzing the event, Garcia recollected that “these aldermen were men who by and large had attended Catholic grade schools as kids, where deference to the wisdom of ‘Sister’ was a way of life.”<sup>174</sup> Although it is difficult to precisely measure the impact Quinn and McGovern’s requests had on the aldermen, it is suggestive that Mayor Sawyer in February 1989 dispatched a letter to Quinn, extending “gratitude and heartfelt thanks” on behalf of the citizens of Chicago to her for the “crucial part” she played in marshaling support for the bill. “You were among those that made it happen.”<sup>175</sup>

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Gay liberation, which explicitly challenged social mores and political convention, also contested Catholic theological verities about the immorality of homosexual acts. Be that as it may, gay Catholics and sympathetic clerical and lay supporters marshaled religious reciprocity to initiate dialogue between gays and the Catholic Church. They

<sup>172</sup> “How Backers Finally Won Human Rights Law,” *Crain's Chicago Business*, 2 January 1989; Dick Simpson, *Rogues, Rebels, and Rubber Stamps: The Politics of the Chicago City Council from 1863 to the Present* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2001), 239-40.

<sup>173</sup> Ray Hanania, “Gay Rights Bill OKd After 15 Year Battle,” *CST*, 22 December 1988.

<sup>174</sup> “How Backers Finally Won Human Rights Law,” *Crain's Chicago Business*, 2 January 1989.

<sup>175</sup> Eugene Sawyer to Sister Donna Quinn, Chicago Catholic Women Records, Box 7, Folder 12, WLALUC.

urged the Church to acknowledge homosexual Catholics, and argued that gays' daily experiences could enrich Catholic moral theology.

The politicization of gay liberation, which culminated in the gay rights ordinances of 1986 and 1988, posed intractable problems to archdiocesan leaders. Cardinal Bernardin nonetheless couched his response in the language of reciprocity: Catholics should act in solidarity with homosexuals on the margins of society, and a citywide dialogue on gay rights was vital to defusing tensions in the city. That Bernardin did not support the ordinances invited allegations from gay rights supporters that the Church was actually attempting to socially segregate homosexuals and deny them civil rights. The gay rights bill passed in 1988 whereas it had failed in 1986. This can be ascribed to gay rights supporters' increasing political acumen. It also illustrates that the issue of gay civil rights divided Catholics, and suggests that the faithful in Chicago were less receptive to the direction of archdiocesan leaders.

Although archdiocesan leaders did oppose the gay rights ordinance, charges that the Church and Cardinal Bernardin in particular were "against" gays is imprecise and simplistic. The response of the archdiocese, religious orders, and individual Catholics to the AIDS epidemic makes this plain. As we shall see, the faithful expended a good deal of human and financial resources in confronting the scourge that devastated Chicago's gay community, and frightened many more Windy City residents.

## *Chapter 6* *AIDS*

### *Epidemic of Fear*

The first cases of what would become known as AIDS (acquired immune deficiency syndrome) reported in the United States occurred in June 1981 among gay men in San Francisco and New York City.<sup>1</sup> As the number of diagnoses and deaths mounted, medical professionals and eventually the media began classifying AIDS as an “epidemic.”<sup>2</sup> Despite a swelling army of researchers, state and federal assistance, and rapid scientific advances that identified the infection and the virus that caused it (eventually known as human immunodeficiency virus, or HIV), tracked its modes of transmission, and developed an antibody test to inspect the blood supply and a drug to fight AIDS (azidothymidine, or AZT), over five hundred thousand AIDS cases were reported by 1996. Of this number, more than three hundred thousand perished. Victims of the syndrome in early years had been overwhelmingly gay and bisexual White men, as well as male drug users who shared infected needles. In the late 1980s, there was a noticeable increase in the number of reported AIDS cases among minorities, women, and

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<sup>1</sup> The academic literature on AIDS is enormous. For a dated but still valuable introduction, see Elizabeth Fee and Daniel M. Fox, “Introduction: The Contemporary Historiography of AIDS,” in *AIDS: The Making of a Chronic Disease*, eds. Elizabeth Fee and Daniel M. Fox (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), 1-19. An extensive history of American Catholics and AIDS has not been written. For a sociologically-oriented examination of the American Catholic Church’s “construction” of AIDS, see Richard L. Smith, *AIDS, Gays, and the American Catholic Church* (Cleveland: Pilgrim Press, 1994). For a critical interpretation that centers on the response to AIDS of the Catholic bishops of California and the archdiocese of Los Angeles, see Mark R. Kowalewski, *All Things to All People: The Catholic Church Confronts the AIDS Crisis* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1994). Alice Horrigan also focuses on California and Los Angeles in “AIDS and the Catholic Church,” in *The Social Impact of AIDS in the U.S.*, ed. Richard A. Berk (Cambridge, MA: Abt Books), 83-111. For a helpful introduction to the knotty theological questions that AIDS prevention raises, see James F. Keenan, S.J., ed., *Catholic Ethicists on HIV/AIDS Prevention* (New York: Continuum, 2000).

<sup>2</sup> In the United States, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is responsible for the case definition of AIDS and recording the number of AIDS diagnoses.

infants. By the 1990s, Americans soberly realized that AIDS in the United States could be “managed” but not cured. As a former director of the Division of HIV/AIDS for the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, James W. Curran, has remarked, “many Americans began to accept and expect AIDS as part of life.”<sup>3</sup>

As historians of AIDS have pointed out, the syndrome was not simply a pathological event. In the city of Chicago and elsewhere, AIDS also had incalculable social consequences on stricken individuals, social relationships, institutions, and human emotions. Among the diagnosed, public acknowledgment often translated into exile from families and communities. Many faced abbreviated lives of physical, mental, and spiritual anguish, relying upon others for care. AIDS reordered social relations. Many gay men, for instance, exercised more restraint in selecting sexual partners. The historian Philip Jenkins argues that AIDS confirmed and enhanced the apprehensions that a good number of Americans already had about the excesses of the sexual revolution, which came to a hasty end.<sup>4</sup> Institutions were altered as well. Richard A. Berk has outlined the kaleidoscope of social entities that the syndrome has impacted, such as hospitals, prisons, employers, the courts, local, state, and federal governments, insurance companies, the military, school systems, and churches.<sup>5</sup>

HIV/AIDS aggravated uncertainty, unease, and sometimes paranoia, and spawned an “epidemic of fear”—an expression that saturated the discourse of AIDS during the 1980s. Journalist Elinor Burkett recalls that the syndrome humbled Americans, who had

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<sup>3</sup> James W. Curran, “The Eras of AIDS,” in *Encyclopedia of AIDS: A Social, Political, Cultural, and Scientific Record of the HIV Epidemic*, ed. Raymond A. Smith (Chicago: Fitzroy Dearborn Publishers, 1998), vii-ix.

<sup>4</sup> Philip Jenkins, *Decade of Nightmares: The End of the Sixties and the Making of Eighties America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 205.

<sup>5</sup> Richard A. Berk, “Introduction,” in *The Social Impact of AIDS in the U.S.*, ed. Richard A. Berk (Cambridge, MA: Abt Books, 1988), 2.

hitherto “blithely assumed that epidemics were historical footnotes or third world nightmares, not something that could happen in postmodern America.”<sup>6</sup> The origins and epidemiology of the infection mystified and terrified some in the early 1980s. The difficulty of determining who HIV precisely afflicted—carriers may not show obvious physical ailments until years after contraction—as well as AIDS’s linkage to behavior many found morally objectionable, i.e., male homosexual acts and intravenous drug use, were also sources of apprehension. The devastating lethality of AIDS was most frightening. With distressing frequency, contraction spelled death, particularly before the availability of antiretroviral therapy. Fatality rates remained high into the early 1990s. Although at first most acute among homosexual males, fear gradually gripped others as well—especially after the diagnosis and death of noted actor Rock Hudson in October 1985, and Surgeon General C. Everett Koop’s report that cautioned that AIDS potentially threatened many heterosexuals.<sup>7</sup> In his classic depiction of the epidemic’s origins in the U.S., Randy Shilts insists that Hudson’s diagnosis transformed mainstream America’s attitude toward AIDS. The infection was no longer simply a “misfortune” that struck “people who fit into rather distinct classes of outcasts and social pariahs,” but a palpable threat that “loomed everywhere.”<sup>8</sup>

The first official response to AIDS from the leaders of the American Catholic Church came in November 1987, when the fifty-bishop Administrative Board of the NCCB released “The Many Faces of AIDS: A Gospel Response.” The document examined AIDS prevention and the pastoral care of the afflicted. It argued that

<sup>6</sup> Elinor Burkett, *The Gravest Show on Earth: America in the Age of AIDS* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1995), 17.

<sup>7</sup> Rosita M. Thomas, “Congressional Research Service Report for Congress: American Public Opinion on AIDS,” February 15, 1989.

<sup>8</sup> Randy Shilts, *And the Band Played On: Politics, People, and the AIDS Epidemic* (New York: Penguin, 1988), 1.



compassion towards, and solidarity with, victims of the disease was the appropriate response. Discrimination and violence against people with HIV/AIDS was immoral. Social realities such as economic distress and psychological factors like loneliness could encourage behavior that exposed individuals to HIV. The Church should therefore labor to eradicate poverty and despair. The Administrative Board emphasized Catholic tradition: as a gift from God, human sexuality was to be expressed in monogamous, heterosexual marriage. “Many Faces” denied that condoms were a morally permissible means to stanch the spread of AIDS. However, it acknowledged that, since “we live in a pluralistic society,” “some will not agree with our understanding of human sexuality.” Public educational efforts to prevent the spread of AIDS could therefore “include accurate information about prophylactic devices.” The bishops emphasized that they were “not promoting the use of prophylactics, but merely providing information that is part of the factual picture.” The Board noted that the document was “not intended to be the last word on AIDS but rather our contribution to the current dialogue.”<sup>9</sup>

“Many Faces” sparked controversy. In May 1988, CDF prefect Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger sent a letter to apostolic pronuncio of the U.S. Pio Laghi, subsequently circulated to the NCCB. Addressing the Administrative Board’s treatment of prophylactics, the letter stated that “when the issue has to do with educational programs promoted by the civil government, one would not be dealing simply with a form of passive toleration but rather with a kind of behavior which would result in at least the facilitation of evil.”<sup>10</sup> In a June 1988 meeting of American bishops, some prelates, such

<sup>9</sup> U.S. Catholic Conference Administrative Board, “The Many Faces of AIDS: A Gospel Response,” *Origins* 17, no. 28 (December 24, 1987).

<sup>10</sup> Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, “Letter of Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger Regarding U.S. Bishops’ AIDS Document,” *Origins* 18, no. 8 (July 7, 1988).

as New York, Boston, and Detroit, retorted that “Many Faces” handling of condoms implied a degree of permissiveness toward artificial contraception and extra-marital sexual relations. It was agreed that a second document would be drafted.<sup>11</sup> Approved by the entire body of bishops and released in November 1989, “Called to Compassion and Responsibility: A Response to the HIV/AIDS Crisis” was also formulated because “the AIDS crisis had worsened” and “the need for compassion has grown more urgent.” “Many Faces” was not officially withdrawn. The most controversial discrepancy between “Many Faces” and “Called” was the latter’s handling of prophylactics. “Called” took to task “safe/safer sex” campaigns, which rested on “false assumptions about sexuality and intercourse,” “do nothing to correct the mistaken notion that non-marital sexual intercourse has the same value and validity as sexual intercourse within marriage,” and had a “powerful relationship” with the personal profit motive of some advocates. Therefore, recommending condoms to reduce the danger of contraction “is poor and inadequate advice, given the failure rate of prophylactics and the high risk that an infected person who relies on them will eventually transmit the infection in this way.” To curtail the epidemic, teaching “appropriate attitudes and corresponding behavior regarding human sexuality, integrity, and dignity” was essential.<sup>12</sup>

As prelates’ disagreements suggest, preventing HIV/AIDS and treating “People With AIDS,” or PWAs, exacerbated dissension and posed an array of thorny dilemmas for Catholic beliefs, leaders, and institutions. A few examples will illustrate the point. In response to “Called,” critics charged that the bishops’ disavowal of condoms needlessly

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<sup>11</sup> Daniel J. Lehmann, “Bishops to Recast AIDS Statement,” *CST*, 28 June 1988; Cardinal Joseph Bernardin, “Remarks and Proposal Approved by Bishops on AIDS Document,” *Origins* 18, no. 8 (July 7, 1988).

<sup>12</sup> United States Bishops, “Called to Compassion and Responsibility: A Response to the HIV/AIDS Crisis,” *Origins* 19, no. 26 (November 30, 1989).

jeopardized lives. Some Catholic theologians recommended that the Church tolerate prophylactic use as the lesser evil to the possible deaths of sexual partners and potentially conceived children. For their part, clergymen were unsure if and how to address the syndrome from the pulpit. Mentioning AIDS or urging solidarity with PWAs may provoke parishioners' charges that the priest approved of homosexual acts—or that he himself was gay. AIDS confronted Catholic schools and health care providers with many vexing questions: how should the prevention of AIDS be discussed in the classroom? Could health care providers muster the financial and human resources to meet the epidemic? Should Catholic hospitals distribute condoms? Be that as it may, there was a proliferation of Catholic AIDS educational and service programs for PWAs, their loved ones, students, parishioners, and many others that the syndrome threatened. In contrast to the seemingly unprecedented challenges of gay liberation, the Catholic Church had long been accustomed to confronting sickness and death.<sup>13</sup>

AIDS was another alarming social challenge that unsettled many, threatening to isolate sufferers and groups perceived to be at high-risk. In the Chicago archdiocese, the sense that the syndrome was a pressing imperative that demanded a response from the local Catholic Church migrated from the “bottom-up,” and in particular from individuals affiliated with religious orders, hospital chaplains, and lay Catholic healthcare workers. Two of the earliest and most innovative and sweeping initiatives, the AIDS Pastoral Care Network (APCN) and the Alexian Brothers' Bonaventure House, met genuine needs in the community and illustrated Chicago Catholic reciprocity. Theological tradition and

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<sup>13</sup> Vincent F.A. Golphin, “AIDS Scare Prompts Concern About Communion,” *NCR*, 1 November 1985; Bill Kenkelen, “Church Begins AIDS Campaign, but Gay Stigma Hampers Effort in Big Dioceses,” *NCR*, 27 December 1985; Robert Nugent, “Catholic Church,” in *Encyclopedia of AIDS: A Social, Political, Cultural, and Scientific Record of the HIV Epidemic*, ed. Raymond A. Smith (Chicago: Fitzroy Dearborn Publishers, 1998), 125-7.

religious order “charisms,” or spiritual gifts bestowed by God to build up the body of Christ, sharpened their understanding that AIDS was not simply a uni-dimensional medical “problem,” but an often demoralizing spiritual, psychological, and social malady. These conceptualizations naturally influenced how the APCN and the Alexians met the needs of PWAs, their loved ones, and the community at large. Fear of the disease threatened to sequester the afflicted and perceived high-risk populations. APCN and the Bonaventure House consciously attempted to connect them to their communities. Once again, urban trauma generated opportunities for spiritual sanctification. In ministering to stigmatized social outcasts, as Jesus had done, a holier and more authentically Christ-like existence could be lived.<sup>14</sup>

Archbishop Joseph Bernardin—who once aspired to be a physician and throughout his episcopal career routinely addressed the issues, dilemmas, and failings of American health care—was, among brother bishops, unusually sensitive to, and knowledgeable of, the ordeals that the sickness presented to PWAs, their loved ones, Catholic entities such as schools and hospitals, and the community.<sup>15</sup> His leadership in crafting “Many Faces,” inaugurating an archdiocesan AIDS Task Force in 1985, and issuing a pastoral statement on AIDS attested to his solicitude, even if gay rights activists disappointed by the archdiocese’s opposition to the 1986 gay rights ordinance accused

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<sup>14</sup> I center on the APCN and Bonaventure House because they were two of the earliest and most innovative attempts to assist PWAs. In Chicago, Catholic Charities as well as St. Catherine of Genoa Catholic Worker House in Woodlawn also aided HIV/AIDS patients and their families. In 1990, the archdiocese demarcated the second Sunday in October as AIDS Remembrance Sunday. In the late 1980s and 1990s, a swelling number of parishes hosted AIDS memorial services, prayer services, and/or education programs. The National Catholic AIDS Network (NCAN), a national organization that served as a clearing house for American Catholic AIDS ministries, annually held its ministry conference at Loyola University Chicago.

<sup>15</sup> In an April 1987 address to the American Medical Association in Chicago, Bernardin confessed that he intended to be a physician until his first year of college, after which he decided on the priesthood. See Joseph Cardinal Bernardin, “AIDS and Public Policy: A Church Response,” in *Celebrating the Ministry of Healing: Joseph Cardinal Bernardin’s Reflections on Healthcare* (St. Louis: Catholic Health Association of the United States), 53.

the Cardinal of acting belatedly. Like the APCN and the Alexian Brothers, Bernardin comprehended AIDS as a physical, spiritual, psychological, and social affliction. Ameliorating fear and PWAs' social and spiritual isolation; "de-mythologizing" the syndrome; and rousing apathetic Catholics became paramount goals for Bernardin and the archdiocese. That the local Church did ultimately devoted a good deal of human and financial resources to preventing and treating AIDS illustrates that it did not "abandon" the city.

### *Mystery Disease*

The majority of contemporary medical experts have concluded that HIV/AIDS is spread through the direct contact of an individual's blood with infected blood or bodily fluids with high levels of white blood cells.<sup>16</sup> Transmission occurs in a variety of ways, most commonly through "unprotected" sexual activity. Anal sex is riskiest, although vaginal and oral sex can communicate the disease. People who share infected drug paraphernalia, and needles in particular (intravenous drug use, or IDU) expose themselves to HIV. In the past, blood transfusions and sharing tainted surgical instruments have transmitted the disease. A child can contract AIDS from an HIV-infected mother during the gestation period, birth, or through breast milk. Saliva or tears seldom communicate it. There is no evidence that the virus is transmitted through casual contact, the air, or insect bites. Once contracted, HIV rapidly spreads throughout the body, but especially collects in the lymph tissue. The virus replicates, usually over the course of two to ten years, destroying immune cells. The infected individual may then be

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<sup>16</sup> Some people, including a few reputable researchers and AIDS organizations, disagree with "officially sanctioned" understandings of HIV/AIDS. The most radical "AIDS Dissidents" refute that HIV causes AIDS. See Ian Young, "Challenging the Mainstream Consensus: AIDS Dissidents," in *Encyclopedia of AIDS: A Social, Political, Cultural, and Scientific Record of the HIV Epidemic*, 4-5.

diagnosed with AIDS Related Complex (ARC) or full blown AIDS, which occurs when immune cells plummet to such low levels that the body is unable to combat common infections. Naturally, mere membership in a “high-risk group” does not spontaneously translate into AIDS; rather, high-risk behaviors such as unprotected sexual contact and IDU increase the likelihood of infection.<sup>17</sup>

Present-day certainty obviously eluded 1980s America, when AIDS’s origins and communication methods baffled the public. For these reasons, the media commonly described AIDS as a “mystery disease.” The syndrome’s name signaled doubt about who it afflicted; in the early 1980s, AIDS was dubbed “gay cancer” and gay-related deficiency syndrome (GRID).<sup>18</sup> The bleak speculations of government officials, medical experts, and media outlets, which described the potential catastrophic human and social costs of a modern day Black Plague, were perhaps more unnerving than the objective toll of AIDS. *Newsweek*’s November 1986 cover story is illustrative. Examining AIDS and “future shock,” it professed, “The trouble is that no one knows the true extent of the epidemic with any precision.” A presumably worst case scenario was drawn: retaliating to AIDS’s devastation of the social order and health care, an unnamed future U.S. president in the early 1990s orders compulsory blood testing for anyone believed to be afflicted with the disease. Although the fiat would grievously violate constitutional limits on unreasonable search, *Newsweek* determined that such a scenario was “not hard to imagine.”<sup>19</sup> Uncertainty remained palpable throughout the decade, if not for most medical experts, then at least among a considerable cross-section of the public. A February 1989 Report

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<sup>17</sup> John Fordham, Bradley C. Donohue, and Daniel N. Allen, “HIV/AIDS” in *Encyclopedia of Substance Abuse and Prevention, Treatment, and Recovery*, eds. Gary L. Fisher and Nancy A. Roget, vol. 1 (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2009), 465-469.

<sup>18</sup> Jenkins, 152.

<sup>19</sup> “Future Shock,” *Newsweek*, 24 November 1986, 30-31.

of the Congressional Research Service, which synthesized a plethora of public opinion surveys, concluded that AIDS was considered the country's most pressing health problem by far.<sup>20</sup> Fear of contraction was greatest among single people, Blacks, people under thirty, and residents of urban areas. While most recognized that sexual contact and sharing needles with IV drug users transmitted the disease, Americans were "divided on whether AIDS transmission is possible by eating with, kissing, or having other less intimate forms of contact with someone with AIDS." In summation, many Americans "are still guided by misinformation, discomfort with or prejudice toward high risk groups, and an exaggerated fear of contagion."<sup>21</sup>

### *AIDS Chicago*

In the national AIDS epidemic, Chicago was a so-called "second wave" city. HIV/AIDS began noticeably afflicting Windy City residents months after diagnoses had mounted on east and west coast urban areas such as New York and San Francisco.<sup>22</sup> Public policy-makers and health officials in Chicago could therefore potentially learn from the failures of "first wave" cities in preventing and treating HIV/AIDS. They could also consult the city's past. On the one hand, AIDS was not entirely unprecedented, as Chicago had a lengthy history of dealing with epidemics. For instance, it had been stricken by cholera in the late 1840s and 1850s, typhoid in the 1880s and 1890s, and syphilis in the 1930s.<sup>23</sup> The latter was most like AIDS in that it could be spread through sexual contact and prompted "fear of disease and death, discomfort with discussing

<sup>20</sup> 68 percent of respondents deemed AIDS the top health priority. Cancer was next, at 14 percent. See "American Public Opinion on AIDS."

<sup>21</sup> "American Public Opinion on AIDS."

<sup>22</sup> *Voices of Survival, Voices of Service: AIDS Case Management in Chicago* (Chicago: AIDS Foundation of Chicago, 1994), 1.

<sup>23</sup> Dominic A. Pacyga, *Chicago: A Biography* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 44-45, 105-106.

sexuality, distrust of people or groups whose culture or values differ from one's own.”

On the other hand, AIDS's lethality *was* unparalleled in the history of Chicago epidemics spread through sexual contact. As Suzanne Poirier distinguishes in *Chicago's War on Syphilis, 1937-1940*, syphilis “is not AIDS”: syphilis could already be cured by 1937, and “never reported AIDS's mortality rate.”<sup>24</sup>

Despite the benefit of hindsight, city government and health care agencies responded sluggishly. Some agencies allegedly “feared and shunned” PWAs, while critics charged city officials with mismanagement.<sup>25</sup> Consider the Chicago Health Department's AIDS Activity Office (AAO). Although established in December 1983, the AAO had just one staff member until mid-1987. By Spring 1988, neither the AAO nor the city Health Commissioner had launched a “comprehensive public plan” to counter the epidemic. Officials and the AAO were accused of funneling inadequate funds to AIDS prevention and treatment, and belatedly releasing grant money to community organizations or failing to compensate them for work completed. Perhaps most unpardonably, the AAO returned tens of thousands of unspent city, state, and federal funds, which had been earmarked for AIDS prevention and treatment. “The city of Chicago can't plead that they've lacked money,” remarked gay journalist Randy Shilts, “In truth, they don't have concerned public officials or specific plans that they can carry out.” He concluded that “The city is acting like the problem doesn't exist.”<sup>26</sup>

Initially, community-based organizations and individual volunteers, some of whom themselves had AIDS, more vigorously met the needs of the afflicted and

<sup>24</sup> Suzanne Poirier, *Chicago's War on Syphilis, 1937-1940: The Times, the Trib, and the Clap Doctor* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1995), 213-214.

<sup>25</sup> *Voices of Survival, Voices of Service: AIDS Case Management in Chicago*, 1.

<sup>26</sup> Jennifer Juarez Robles, “Eight Years Into Epidemic, City AIDS Office Only Now Gets Underway,” *CR*, March 1988.



inaugurated prevention efforts. Openly gay and bisexual males were particularly active because, as *Gay Life* Publisher Chuck Renslow acknowledged in 1983, “The fear runs so deep, it’s grabbing us at the core and pulling the gay community together.” “Any culture with a threat,” he continued, “will start to rally around the issue.”<sup>27</sup> Gay physician Ron Sable was at the forefront of medical efforts. Employed at Cook County Hospital, Sable along with Dr. Renslow Sherer established the Sable/Sherer Clinic in 1983, which specialized in treating PWSs and patients with an AIDS Related Complex (ARC).<sup>28</sup> In the homosexual community, AIDS catalyzed political efforts to secure gay rights and anti-discrimination legislation and was a radicalizing force. ACT UP Chicago, for example, embodied an angrier and more belligerent variant of gay AIDS activism. The AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power (ACT UP) was initially formed in New York City in March 1987 as a response to what members perceived as indifference towards AIDS victims from governments, pharmaceutical and insurance companies, the medical establishment, and the media.<sup>29</sup> Although some city health care agencies acted tardily, exceptions existed. The North Side’s Howard Brown Memorial Clinic (now Howard Brown Health Center, 2676 N. Halstead) was unusually active in initiating “safer sex education” campaigns and helping PWAs. Spearheaded by medical students and community volunteers, Howard Brown was first known as the Gay Horizons and Gay Medical Students Association VD Clinic when it began operating in May 1974. Gay men were its principal patients, and the clinic gradually became a leading Midwestern

<sup>27</sup> Barbara Mahany, “Dollars, Votes Promotes Gay Power,” *CT*, 4 March 1983.

<sup>28</sup> Tracy Baim, “AIDS: The Plague Years,” in *Out and Proud in Chicago: An Overview of the City’s Gay Community*, ed. Tracy Baim (Chicago: Surrey Books, 2008), 152.

<sup>29</sup> Jennifer Brier, *Infectious Ideas: U.S. Political Responses to the AIDS Crisis* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2009), 156-189.

HIV/AIDS service provider.<sup>30</sup> To coordinate the efforts of a growing number of local prevention and treatment agencies, health professionals and civil leaders in 1985 founded The AIDS Foundation of Chicago. It also advocated for PWAs at the state and federal levels to secure funding and lobby for salutary legislation.<sup>31</sup>

When interpreting the number of diagnoses and fatalities, as well as the personal characteristics and physical location of AIDS cases in Chicago, one should be mindful of the following. First, not all PWAs notified local medical authorities. Health officials speculated that the number of minority cases in particular was underreported. Second, there may be a time lag between the date that AIDS appears and the date that it is diagnosed. Third, many more Chicagoans were infected with the HIV virus than had full blown AIDS. Finally, in the United States, the CDC is responsible for AIDS's case definition, which was amended three times between the first CDC definition in 1982 and 1996. A January 1993 redefinition, for example, widened the number of "AIDS defining categories" or indicator conditions, thereby increasing the number of classified AIDS patients.<sup>32</sup>

A few trends are immediately apparent upon examining Chicago AIDS cases. First, the lethality of AIDS throughout the 1980s is striking, as Table 10 makes evident. The case fatality rate did not dip below 80 percent until 1992. Second, despite trailing only New York City and Los Angeles in population, the Chicago metropolitan area had

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<sup>30</sup> "History," *Howard Brown Memorial Clinic, 1991 Annual Report*, CHM. Howard Brown's namesake was a physician from Illinois who served as New York City's first public health "superagency" commissioner under Mayor John Lindsay.

<sup>31</sup> *Voices of Survival, Voices of Service: AIDS Case Management in Chicago*, 1-12.

<sup>32</sup> *AIDS Chicago, Fourth Quarter, 1993*, in *A Compilation of Cover Stories from AIDS Chicago, 1993-1997* (Chicago: Chicago Department of Public Health, 1997).

far fewer AIDS cases than N.Y.C. or L.A. (see Table 11). Chicago was a slightly smaller city, and medical experts hypothesized that residents were less sexually promiscuous.<sup>33</sup>

**Table 10. AIDS Cases and Death, Chicago, Cumulative Through 1996<sup>34</sup>**

Diagnosis Year	Cases	Dead	Case Fatality Rate
1980	1	1	100%
1981	4	4	100%
1982	16	15	94%
1983	41	38	93%
1984	111	103	93%
1985	222	206	93%
1986	373	338	91%
1987	606	551	91%
1988	765	689	90%
1989	904	788	87%
1990	1,130	966	85%
1991	1,392	1,162	83%
1992	1,703	1,282	75%
1993	1,887	1,226	65%
1994	1,740	844	49%
1995	1,420	479	34%
1996	880	207	24%

**Table 11. AIDS Cases Reported Through By Metropolitan Area of Residence<sup>35</sup>**

Area	1980-3	1983	1985	7/88-6/89	7/92-6/93	7/95-6/96
Atlanta	--	--	--	773	1,528	1,762
Chicago	20	48	222	910	2,432	1,807
Houston	26	77	317	844	2,136	1,323
L.A.	94	215	815	2,129	5,083	3,834
Miami	56	120	265	946	2,409	2,355
N.Y.	583	993	2527	5,552	11,424	11,275
San Fran.	142	307	910	1,739	3,744	1,774
Wash, DC	18	59	311	867	2,032	2,063

<sup>33</sup> Rogers Worthington, "Figures Show Chicago Area Ranks Low with AIDS Cases," *CT*, 14 April 1986; Ronald Kotulak, "AIDS Up Sharply in Chicago," *CT*, 13 June 1985. *Gay Life* publisher Dan DiLeo thought that gay bathhouses, often indicted for facilitating the spread of AIDS, "never got that big here because of Midwest conservatism. We have more gays than San Francisco and nearly as many as New York City, but the gay communities there are like one big party." See Eric Zorn, "AIDS Turns Gays from Bathhouses," *CT*, 6 January 1986.

<sup>34</sup> This chart is taken from *AIDS Chicago*, First Quarter 1997, in *A Compilation of Cover Stories from AIDS Chicago, 1993-1997* (Chicago: Chicago Department of Public Health, 1997).

<sup>35</sup> "HIV/AIDS Surveillance Report," U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, December 1996, <http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/topics/surveillance/resources/reports/past.htm>.

Third, PWAs began to conspicuously acquire a “new face” in the late 1980s; whereas the overwhelming majority of the city’s initial cases were gay White men, the percentage of minority, female, and child PWAs climbed, as Table 12 suggests. By 1996 most still contracted AIDS via sex with infected male partners. However, heterosexual AIDS cases rose to 9 percent, while IDU cases ominously doubled between 1988 and 1996 (16 percent to 32 percent).<sup>36</sup> Considering AIDS’s incubation period, it is reasonable to conclude that a significant number of people contracted HIV as teens. The disease overwhelmingly struck people in their 20s, 30s, and 40s, although percentages in the last age group steadily increased.<sup>37</sup> Whites last composed over half of all reported cases in 1987. Blacks, on the other hand, have comprised over 50 percent since 1992; by 1996, that number had reached 64 percent. The relative imprecision of these minority percentages should be kept in mind, however, especially when one considers that Latino health officials believed that the number of Latino PWAs was underreported, perhaps upwards of 50 percent.<sup>38</sup> A number of factors account for the trends of minority contraction. The decline of White cases reflects the efficacy of prevention campaigns in gay communities, primarily located on the North Side lakefront.<sup>39</sup> The rise of minority

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<sup>36</sup> There is a correlation, as IDU PWAs potentially facilitate the spread of AIDS among heterosexuals. In 1988, the “first comprehensive study” of AIDS among admitted drug users in Chicago indicated that the Near Northwest Side had the highest infection rate in the city. This was the case, the principal investigator of the project hypothesized, because “there is a great deal of mobility between Puerto Rico and those neighborhoods in Chicago [on the Near Northwest Side], and the incidence of AIDS in Puerto Rico is fairly high.” See Jean Latz Griffin, “Drug Use, AIDS, Tracked in Study,” *CT*, 3 November 1988.

<sup>37</sup> By 1996, AIDS was the leading cause of death among Chicago residents between the ages of 25 and 44. See Dana Harper, *Leading Causes of Death in Chicago, 1994-1996* (Chicago: Chicago Department of Public Health), 1997.

<sup>38</sup> Jennifer Juarez Robles, “‘Official’ AIDS Count Underreports True Measure of Epidemic, Experts Say,” *CR*, March 1988.

<sup>39</sup> The dramatic decline of other sexually transmitted diseases in Chicago, such as gonorrhea and syphilis, suggest that prevention programs had a degree of success among the gay population; the “homosexual community,” according to one health official, “has long been a reservoir of sexually transmitted disease.” See Jon Van, “AIDS Care Leading to ‘Safer’ Sex,” *CT*, 14 August 1985. See also

cases, on the other hand, suggests the absence or inefficacy of prevention campaigns in Black and Latino neighborhoods. By the mid- to late 1980s, leaders of AIDS organizations oriented toward minority groups, such as Kupon Network (for gay black men) and the Hispanic AIDS Network, bemoaned that city leaders and AIDS service providers either lacked the tools to effectively communicate their message to minorities, or neglected them. Statistics validated the latter charge; whereas Blacks and Latinos comprised 44 percent of Chicago AIDS cases in 1988, they had received only 27 percent of money that the city awarded to community groups between 1985 and 1987. Minority critics pointed out that organizations such as Howard Brown principally served gay White men. Additionally, Howard Brown's North Side location "pose[d] a barrier" to minority PWAs, many of whom dwelled on the West or South Sides. Neither city policy makers nor existing AIDS outreach programs were entirely at fault. The culture of minority communities, and the high-risk habits therein, exacerbated the spread of HIV/AIDS. That IDU was "endemic" in some minority communities, for instance, doubtlessly hastened the spread of AIDS among heterosexuals, women, and children. Latinos and African Americans were also less receptive to educational efforts. Some Latino leaders acknowledged the "tremendous ignorance" of AIDS in their communities, and suggested that "machismo" bred "intolerance of homosexuals and resistance to education efforts."<sup>40</sup>

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"AIDS: A Time for Healing, A Report of the AIDS Task Force, Archdiocese of Chicago," 15 May 1986, Folder: Archdiocese, AIDS: A Time for Healing, ABPA.

<sup>40</sup> Robles, "Eight Years," *CR*, March 1988; Julio Ojeda, "Forty Percent," *CR*, September 1986; Jean Latz Griffin and Constanza Montana, "Minorities Demanding Share of AIDS Funds," *CT*, 29 November 1987. In regard to African Americans, Cathy J. Cohen explains that AIDS aggravated "stigma, fear, rejection, invisibility, classism, sexism, homophobia, and drug phobia." The syndrome was a "cross-cutting" issue that stratified the Black community, whose political agenda had hitherto been dominated by consensus issues, "construed as having an equal impact on all those sharing a primary identity based on

**Table 12. Case Percentages by Selected Characteristics, Chicago, 1988-1996<sup>41</sup>**

<b>Characteristic</b>	<b>1988</b>	<b>1989</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>1991</b>	<b>1992</b>	<b>1993</b>	<b>1994</b>	<b>1995</b>	<b>1996</b>
<b>Gender</b>					<b>PERCENT</b>				
Male	93	91	91	87	86	85	84	81	80
Female	7	9	9	13	14	15	16	19	20
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>					<b>PERCENT</b>				
Black, Non-Hisp.	36	41	46	49	53	55	56	63	64
White, Non-Hisp.	48	44	39	37	32	30	29	23	21
Other, Non-Hisp.	1	0	1	<1	1	1	1	1	1
Hispanic	14	15	14	13	15	14	15	13	14
<b>Transmission Group</b>					<b>PERCENT</b>				
Male sex w/Male	71	67	64	59	53	51	50	43	43
IDU	16	19	21	25	32	33	33	34	32
MSM* and IDU	4	4	5	6	5	5	3	4	3
Hemophiliac	1	1	1	<1	<1	1	<1	1	<1
Heterosexual	3	3	4	6	6	7	7	8	9
Transfusion	1	2	1	1	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1
Perinatal Trans.	1	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1
Other	2	2	2	2	2	3	5	8	11
<b>Age Group</b>					<b>PERCENT</b>				
Less than 13	1	3	2	1	1	1	1	1	1
13-19	1	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1	1	<1	<1
20-29	21	20	16	16	17	14	14	14	14
30-39	45	45	47	44	45	46	45	42	39
40-9	20	21	25	27	25	28	29	31	33
50+	11	11	10	11	12	10	10	12	13
<b>Total # of Cases</b>	765	904	1,130	1,392	1,703	1,887	1,740	1,420	880

Note: Groups may not total 100% due to rounding

\*Men who have sex with men and inject drugs

A final trend, regarding the location of PWAs, is closely linked to the third trend. As AIDS disproportionately occurred among gay White men especially in the epidemic's early years, PWAs were initially concentrated on the North Side, and in particular along the lake front. The first Chicago PWA resided in Lincoln Park, and November 1987 statistics reveal that all community areas that had over fifty diagnoses in that year were located on the North Side: Lakeview, Uptown, Lincoln Park, Logan Square, West Town, and the Near North Side. Residents in Lake View and Uptown had the highest

race." See Cathy J. Cohen, *The Boundaries of Blackness: AIDS and the Breakdown of Black Politics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 8-9.

<sup>41</sup> This chart is taken from *AIDS Chicago*, First Quarter 1997, in *A Compilation of Cover Stories from AIDS Chicago, 1993-1997* (Chicago: Chicago Department of Public Health, 1997).

concentration of AIDS cases—one diagnosis for every three hundred inhabitants. Be that as it may, demographics were already shifting, as the number of cases in West Town and Logan Square suggest; the majority of residents in both areas by 1980 were Latino. AIDS was spreading west across the Kennedy Expressway to communities where Latino and/or African American residents were numerically superior, such as Humboldt Park and Austin, and to a lesser degree, south.<sup>42</sup> By 1994, at least one PWA resided in all community areas. Table 13, which lists the twelve community areas that by 1994 had the highest number of diagnoses, reflects these changes. It details the number of cumulative diagnoses, living PWAs, diagnoses for the years 1994-1995, as well as the annual rate of contraction. Community areas on the North Side along the lake front—Lakeview, Uptown, and Edgewater—precede two communities (West Town and Austin) that are west of the Kennedy. The South Shore, which was nearly 95 percent African American in 1980, also appears on the list.<sup>43</sup>

**Table 13. AIDS Cases by Community Area, Chicago<sup>44</sup>**  
**Cumulative, Living and Cases Diagnosed 1994-5 (Number and Avg. Annual Rate/100,000)\***

Community Area	Diagnosed	Alive (as of March 1997)	#94-95	Rate
Lakeview	1,505	379	248	136.2
Uptown	1,250	394	275	215.4
Edgewater	762	251	168	138.4
West Town	562	191	128	73.0
Austin	524	192	151	66.2
Near North Side	475	125	75	59.7
Rogers Park	458	162	106	87.8
Logan Square	414	156	95	57.5
Lincoln Park	366	81	67	54.8
South Shore	358	116	86	69.9

<sup>42</sup> Jean Latz Griffin and Constanza Montana, “Minorities Demanding Share of AIDS Funds,” *CT*, 29 November 1987; Jean Griffin, “AIDS Reported in Every Ward and Almost Every Neighborhood,” *CT*, 1 November 1988; *Local Community Fact Book, Chicago Metropolitan Area, 1980* (Chicago: Chicago Review Press, 1984), 58, 62.

<sup>43</sup> *Local Community Fact Book, Chicago Metropolitan Area, 1980* (Chicago: Chicago Review Press, 1984), 119.

<sup>44</sup> This chart, in an expanded form, appears in *AIDS Chicago*, First Quarter 1997, in *A Compilation of Cover Stories from AIDS Chicago, 1993-1997* (Chicago: Chicago Department of Public Health, 1997).

Near West Side	347	142	117	126.6
Humboldt Park	335	121	86	63.6

\*Average annual rate for the two year period 1994-95

Beyond its objective impact, AIDS exacted a heavy toll on Chicagoans' emotions, fueling in many a degree of fear or uncertainty. This should not be overstated. Apathy was also common, especially among heterosexuals who considered AIDS an essentially homosexual or IDU scourge. However, fear and uncertainty was palpable and, indeed, recognized by knowledgeable medical authorities, who construed the emotions as a threat to effectively preventing and treating the disease. AIDS was "the mystery disease of the century," according to then Associate Deputy Commissioner for the Chicago Department of Health, Dr. Bernard Turnock. He warned that "The fear of AIDS is spreading more rapidly than the disease itself."<sup>45</sup> Fear seemed to spike in 1986, doubtlessly in part to the escalating number of PWAs, warnings that AIDS would spread through the heterosexual population, and media reports of Rock Hudson's revelation and subsequent death. The director of Cook County Hospital's AIDS Clinic, Dr. Renslow Sherer, went so far as to suggest that "There is tremendous fear and hysteria out there, probably by about 99.99% in some sectors of the general public."<sup>46</sup> Some Chicagoans took precautions to eliminate genuinely high-risk activities, such as practicing "unsafe" sex. In other extreme cases, individuals (the "worried well") puzzled by the syndrome's transmission routes and seeking to limit exposure risks ceased activities that we now know were low-risk or innocuous: using community washing machines, purchasing homes, allowing children to use local playgrounds, frequenting trains and buses, avoiding crowds. A small number of

<sup>45</sup> Fern Schumer, "Group Here Joins Drive for AIDS Aid," *CT*, 6 May 1983; Jon Van, "AIDS Fear at Hospital 'Unreasonable,'" *CT*, 17 August 1983.

<sup>46</sup> Andy Knott, "AIDS Fear Infecting City's Police Officers," *CT*, 5 April 1987.



undertakers and dentists refused to bury or treat PWAs. The *Tribune* carried a story detailing police officers who, guarding against contraction, would not arrest prostitutes or drug users for fear of being pricked by an infected needle. Some Chicagoans were cautious to breathe the re-circulated air of office co-workers; others ceased donating blood, which led to a shortage and provoked Cook County Commissioner John H. Stroger and local hospital administrators to publicly reassure that hospitals and blood banks used disposable equipment to draw blood, and therefore donors had little reason to fear AIDS contraction.<sup>47</sup> Chicago physicians and medical experts were generally sensible and pragmatic in their public statements about AIDS, although there were a few publicized instances of unwarranted alarm. In 1983, a healthy Haitian newborn was isolated in a Chicago hospital over fears of the disease. The Cook County Hospital Board in February 1987 barred one physician with AIDS “from all his assigned duties, including routine administrative work.”<sup>48</sup> In January 1986, officials from the Chicago Public Health Department debated quarantining city prostitutes known to be infected. Officials emphasized that the action would “be considered only as a measure of last resort” and in fact never implemented a quarantine.<sup>49</sup> However, the episode viscerally displays AIDS-related fears and dramatizes how the syndrome taxed the uneasy balance between individual rights and the common good.

Ironically, medical advances could generate new anxieties. In 1985, a test was first developed for detecting the presence of HTLV-III (Human T-cell lymphotropic virus, eventually renamed HIV) antibody in human blood. The screen would be used to

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<sup>47</sup> Joseph A. Reaves, “AIDS Hot Line is Kept Busy,” *CT*, 19 June 1983; Eric Zorn, “AIDS Spreads ‘Epidemic of Fear,’” *CT*, 30 September 1985; Robert McClory, “Legal AIDS,” *Chicago Reader*, 16 February 1989; Andy Knott, “AIDS Fear Infecting City’s Police Officers,” *CT*, 5 April 1987; Chinta Strausberg, “Blood Donors Not Susceptible to AIDS,” *CD*, 7 January 1986.

<sup>48</sup> Robert McClory, “Legal AIDS.”

<sup>49</sup> Ronald Kotulak, “AIDS Pushes City Toward Prostitute Quarantine,” *CT*, 7 January 1986.

locate infected blood donors, and purge potentially harmful blood from banks. The test, however, could not detect the HTLV-III virus itself, nor could it determine if an individual would develop ARC or AIDS. Some anxious hospital and blood bank officials dreaded that curious individuals in high-risk groups would flock to blood banks to discover if they had been exposed to the virus. Medical experts and lawmakers debated about whether or not tested individuals—and third parties such as employers or insurance companies—should be notified of a positive result. Gay activists charged that this would breed discrimination and recalled that the antibody was commonly found in people with no HIV symptoms. Other Chicagoans proposed mandatory testing and demanded that positive results be shared with health officials who could track the disease.<sup>50</sup>

AIDS fears and concerns for proper public policy could rend the social fabric and overlay and intensify already existing divisions. A few episodes are particularly notorious. In a 1988 lecture to Louis Farrakhan's Nation of Islam followers, Steven Cokely, an African American aide to Mayors Harold Washington and Eugene Sawyer, accused Jewish American physicians of genetically engineering the AIDS virus and deliberately infecting Black children. The resulting controversy seethed when the Black chairman of Chicago's Commission on Human Relations remarked that Cokely's comments had a "ring of truth" and Sawyer dragged his feet in firing the aide.<sup>51</sup> AIDS

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<sup>50</sup> Jon Van, "Blood Risk Feared in AIDS Virus Test," *CT*, 13 January 1985. Ultimately the federal government assumed responsibility in 1985. It provided over ten million dollars to establish separate sites to test for the HTLV-III antibody. No blood was collected there. Additionally, the federal government mandated that blood donors who test positive for the antibody be informed, which drew a formal protest from Chicago Health Commissioner Lonnie Edwards who, along with local gay leaders, argued that confusion and fear over AIDS would spread. See Robert Blau, "Blood Feud," *CT*, 15 December 1985; Jon Van, "City Protests Rule on AIDS Virus Test," *CT*, 2 April 1985.

<sup>51</sup> Joseph Epstein, "Racial Perversity in Chicago," *Commentary* 6 (December 1988): 27-35; Dirk Johnson, "Aide's Comments on Whites Put Chicago Mayor in a Critical Spot," *NYT*, 7 May 1988. Epstein charged that the "public outbreak of black anti-Semitism" was due in part to the fact that, "with all the political power they have achieved, blacks have been able to do very little to change the kind of life among

intensified suspicion of and hostility toward male homosexuals. In 1987 at the University of Chicago, a cadre of students that called themselves the “Great White Brotherhood of the Iron Fist” used a personal advertisement in the campus newspaper to solicit the names of homosexual undergrads, whose families were subsequently notified by mail of the sexual orientation of their children. This was putatively done to “protect the community from AIDS.”<sup>52</sup>

Finally, fear of AIDS and concern for public health spawned state legislation. Perhaps most controversially, the Illinois General Assembly in 1987 passed a law, approved by Governor James Thompson, that required marriage-seeking couples to be tested for HIV. Couples could be married in the event of a positive test for either potential spouse; however, the law compelled them to first receive state Health Department counseling on the risks of having a child with AIDS. Critics warned that the legislation would be ineffectual as unwed mothers—not married people—bore the overwhelming majority of infants with AIDS, and that couples would flock to adjoining states to be married. They were redeemed when Thompson repealed the premarital testing requirement in September 1989, after Illinois-issued marriage licenses plummeted 22 percent. Nearly forty thousand residents had applied for licenses in neighboring states.<sup>53</sup>

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their fellow blacks that they had claimed was attributable to the absence of political power. Someone else must be to blame, and why not the Jews?” See Epstein, 35.

<sup>52</sup> Robert B. Marks Redinger, “United States – The Midwest,” in *Encyclopedia of AIDS: A Social, Political, Cultural, and Scientific Record of the HIV Epidemic*, ed. Raymond A. Smith (Chicago: Fitzroy Dearborn Publishers, 1998), 510-513.

<sup>53</sup> Dirk Johnson, “Veto of AIDS Testing Bills is Urged in Illinois,” *NYT*, 7 July 1987; “Mandatory AIDS Test is Repealed in Illinois,” *NYT*, 12 September 1989; “HIV Testing,” *Issues and Controversies On File*. Facts on File News Service, 13 Oct 2000. Web. 11 Nov 2011. <http://0-www.2facts.com.libus.csd.mu.edu/article/i0502260>.

*A Horror Deserving Holism*

Individuals affiliated with religious orders, hospital chaplains, and lay healthcare workers who labored among PWAs were among the first Chicago Catholics to respond to the epidemic. A few had the disease. By October 1986, lay Catholics, members of religious orders, and diocesan priests—especially but not exclusively in a cluster of Lincoln Park and Lakeview parishes—were “involved in all of the major Catholic AIDS groups.”<sup>54</sup> Members of the AIDS Pastoral Care Network and the Alexian Brothers understood AIDS—because it was a crushing terminal illness that was closely tied to morally objectionable behavior—as a physical, psychological, spiritual, and social malady. The fear of AIDS threatened to segregate the afflicted and putative high risk groups from society; believers’ negative judgments and the internalized self-hatred of PWAs threatened to isolate them from God. Christian precepts and, in the case of the Alexians, the charism of their order, fashioned their understanding of AIDS; religious reciprocity informed how they met the needs of PWAs, their loved ones, and the larger community. AIDS generated opportunities for the sanctification of individuals, religious orders, or the Chicago Church. Treating PWAs imitated Christ, whose concern for social outcasts was unquestioned.<sup>55</sup>

The AIDS Pastoral Care Network (APCN) was founded in October 1985 by a group of people who ministered to Chicago’s gay community and were connected to

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<sup>54</sup> “AIDS: A Time for Healing, A Report of the AIDS Task Force, Archdiocese of Chicago,” 15 May 1986, Folder: Archdiocese, AIDS: A Time for Healing, ABPA.

<sup>55</sup> It must be stated that their reaction was not reflective of Chicago Catholicism on the whole, as apathy and an unstated suspicion of PWAs were serious obstacles. However, it should also be said that I located no evidence of Chicago Catholic leaders, priests, religious, or nuns publicly characterizing AIDS as a God-sanctioned scourge for sinners.

local churches.<sup>56</sup> The APCN was one of the first organizations that consciously marshaled theological traditions to meet the needs of AIDS patients and their families.<sup>57</sup> Although it was not exclusively comprised of Catholics, the APCN had an unmistakable Catholic element during its formative years. Claretian seminarian Stephen Martz and Augustinian priest James Corrigan, who also served as the director of pastoral services at Rush-Presbyterian-St. Luke's Medical Center, were co-founders.<sup>58</sup> Other active members from religious orders included Jesuit Carl Meirose, whose order funded his full-time position as the APCN's first director; his brother Harold; Kenneth Heavey, a Benedictine priest and director of pastoral care at St. Mary of Nazareth Hospital; and Jesuit Richard VandeVelde.<sup>59</sup> Diocesan priests also had important roles, and in particular clergymen from parishes in the Lincoln Park and Lakeview areas: James Noone, John Fahey, John Flavin, Robert Oldershaw, Thomas Healy, and Patrick Lee.<sup>60</sup> North Side churches such as St. Clement's Catholic Church and All Saints Episcopal Church hosted ACPN

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<sup>56</sup> The organization initially referred to itself as the Pastoral Care Committee of the AIDS Action Project. In 1985, it decided to operate independently of all other groups. Steve Martz to APCC Member (or Friend), 15 December 1985, Folder: Archdiocese Task Force on AIDS, 1985-1987, ABPA.

<sup>57</sup> Stephen Martz contends that the APCN was "for many years the locus of the pastoral response to AIDS in the Chicago area." See Rev. Stephen Martz, "AIDS Ministry," *CT*, 2 December 2011.

<sup>58</sup> Stephen Martz, "AIDS Ministry," *CT*, 2 December 2011; Delia O'Hara, "AIDS Liaison Seeks to Provide Comfort, Not Lesson in Ethics," *CST*, 29 January 1987.

<sup>59</sup> Stephen Martz, "AIDS Ministry," *CT*, 2 December 2011; Delia O'Hara, "AIDS Liaison Seeks to Provide Comfort, Not Lesson in Ethics," *CST*, 29 January 1987. Carl Meirose also served on the board of the AIDS National Interfaith Network (ANIN) and chaired its Lay and Professional Training Program. See *The Spirit: The Newsletter of the AIDS Pastoral Care Network*, May 1988, CHM. Harold Meirose was Provincial Assistant for Social Ministries for the Chicago Province of the Society of Jesus. See *Contact: Chicago Province of the Society of Jesus* (Fall/Winter 1987-1988), CHM. Heavey died in 1989 after a drawn out battle with AIDS. See *The Spirit*, October 1989, CHM. VandeVelde earned a doctorate in Mathematics from the University of Chicago, and served as a professor at Loyola University Chicago from 1968 until his death in 2009. See "Celebrating the Eternal Life of..." Jesuits, Chicago-Detroit Province, [http://www.jesuits-chgdet.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/Partners\\_SEP09Celebrating.pdf](http://www.jesuits-chgdet.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/Partners_SEP09Celebrating.pdf).

<sup>60</sup> "Fear Called Top AIDS Challenge," *CC*, 20 February 1987; "Church Reaction to AIDS Grows Across the U.S.," *CC*, 25 July 1986; Martz, *CT*, 2 December 2011. Noone, the pastor at St. Teresa of Avila parish and former president of the ACP (1985-1987), died of AIDS-related complications in 1991. He specifically requested that the cause of his death be stated during the funeral sermon. The APCN established a "Jim Noone" award for religious leadership. See Heidi Schlumpf Kezmoh, "AIDS Group Recognizes Archdiocese with Award," *CNW*, 15 December 1995; Kenan Heise, "James Noone, Pastor of St. Theresa," *CT*, 1 February 1991.

meetings until organizational headquarters were established at 2035 N. Lincoln Ave.<sup>61</sup> The APCN numerically and geographically expanded. By the late 1980s, workers were in contact with religious communities south of Chicago and in neighboring states. Carl Meirose explained that they ambitiously aspired to locate “pastors across the nation whom we can refer people.”<sup>62</sup> APCN activities multiplied. Between October 1986 and July 1987, Meirose and the Reverend Ann Showalter, a Mennonite minister and director of the APCN’s pastoral services, reportedly staged presentations before forty groups and reached an estimated 2,500 people. Public memorial services for the deceased, presentations by other members, and circulated APCN videos and television programs multiplied the number of individuals reached.<sup>63</sup>

The religious faith of APCN founders energized them to mitigate the physical, spiritual, and psychological devastation that AIDS inflicted and demolish the barriers that threatened to isolate PWAs from God and society. The organization sprang from the Howard Brown Clinic’s AIDS Action Project, which began in 1982 to offer services to PWAs, their families, and the community. Martz, who worked as a Support Manager at Howard Brown in the early 1980s, realized that the clinic was ineffectively “dealing with the spiritual and religious questions that terminal illnesses bring forward.” Martz maintained that Howard Brown’s unwillingness or inability to address these needs was the consequence of animosity between the gay community and religious institutions. “Religion was just something they didn’t want to deal with,” Martz remarked, and some at the clinic had borne hurt “at the hands of religion.” Martz’s own sentiments regarding

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<sup>61</sup> Steve Martz to APCC Member (or Friend), 15 December 1985, Folder: Archdiocese Task Force on AIDS, 1985-1987, ABPA.

<sup>62</sup> “Fear Called Top AIDS Challenge,” CC, 20 February 1987.

<sup>63</sup> *The Spirit*, July 1987, CHM.

the Catholic Church and homosexuality was that the former “worrie[d] too much about moral theology and not enough about pastoral theology.” Nonetheless, the “baggage” of Howard Brown workers “was interfering with the real needs” of PWAs, and therefore the APCN was established.<sup>64</sup>

The organization initially served as a referral service for PWAs who desired spiritual guidance; word of mouth had hitherto accomplished this. Gradually, it developed plans to minister to PWAs, aggrieved family and friends of victims, AIDS workers, and religious communities. Pastoral counseling services would be extended to PWAs and their loved ones. Martz explained that during the “coming out process,” PWAs commonly severed ties with their religious roots. However, a connection with God was greatly valued after diagnosis of a terminal illness.<sup>65</sup> To allay the stress of staff and volunteers who daily witnessed the syndrome’s human toll and to help them “integrate the AIDS experience into their faith lives,” retreats, counseling, and spiritual direction would be offered. The APCN also made efforts to enlighten social workers and medical staff of the “importance and advantage of a pastoral care approach.” Religious communities were another targeted group. AIDS was rapidly outpacing the resources of the gay community, which had been at the forefront of the AIDS fight. APCN founders therefore wished to induce from religious institutions and leaders a more zealous and systematic response to the epidemic. Persuading institutional religion and the gay community to partner together was challenging; however, the APCN was optimistic. Members “enjoy good credibility” in both communities, and could effectively bridge the ideological divide. The APCN initiated a pastoral educational campaign—consisting of

<sup>64</sup> James LiSacchi, “Support Managers: The Emotional Link,” *Wellspring: AIDS Action Chicago Newsletter* (Summer 1985), CHM; “AIDS Outreach Heals Spiritual Wounds,” *CC*, 21 March 1986.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*

workshops, an “AIDS Awareness Month,” preaching, public presentations and printed literature—to accurately inform clergy, hospital chaplains, congregations, and seminarians about AIDS, the gay community, and proper pastoral care. Particularly during AIDS Awareness Month, efforts would be made in local congregations to “de-mythologize” the disease, which the ACPN recognized had mutated into a metaphor for society’s “deepest fears of sexuality and death,” rather than an infection.<sup>66</sup>

AIDS was not simply a medical “problem” for PWAs but also a spiritual, psychological, and social affliction for PWAs *and* their loved ones. Shrewdly, APCN workers realized that the disease not only threatened to isolate PWAs from God and society; AIDS deaths also emotionally sequestered survivors, whose grief too often went unacknowledged. Death has profound social repercussions, and APCN members were considerate of the manifold and unusual effect of AIDS’s deaths on the living. The staggeringly high fatality rates of PWAs and the fact that AIDS especially ravaged the gay community transformed some of the city’s homosexual enclaves into “communities of mourning.” Family members sometimes abandoned PWAs after their diagnosis, and the afflicted therefore developed intense kin-like attachments to others, such as caretakers. The health of survivors and society benefits from public acknowledgement of grief, as the gerontologist and prolific scholar Kenneth J. Doka has illuminated. Doka posits that all societies establish normative grieving rules that specify “who, when, where, how long, and for whom people should grieve,” or essentially “who has a legitimate right to grieve.” The grief of survivors that violates these rules may be “disenfranchised,” that is, it “cannot be openly acknowledged, publicly mourned, or

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<sup>66</sup> “AIDS Pastoral Care Committee,” Folder: Archdiocese Task Force on AIDS, 1985-1987, ABPA.



socially supported.” Disenfranchised grief may have negative personal and social consequences. Bereft of grieving channels, feelings of anger, powerlessness, depression, or guilt may intensify in the bereaved. Because it was “infectious, chronic, fatal, disfiguring, and morally stigmatizing,” and carried “associations and perceptions” that inhibited the bereaved from publicly acknowledging their grief, AIDS was a disenfranchising illness: family members were hesitant to publicize their loss for fear of community scorn; the grief of former partners was regularly ignored, as society only tentatively accepted homosexual acts; and the grief of caregivers, who watched PWAs rapidly deteriorate and then succumb to death, could be disregarded.<sup>67</sup>

In Chicago, the APCN used religious ritual—which members believed was indispensable to survivors’ healing—to enfranchise grief, underscore AIDS’s spiritual and social dimensions, and integrate griever into the mainstream. Soon after the APCN was established, members made efforts to locate Chicago clergy who were willing to celebrate rituals for PWAs and victims’ loved ones; the APCN was painfully aware that funeral homes sometimes refused services to AIDS victims. An annual interfaith Memorial Day Liturgy also met the needs of the grief-deprived, afforded gays alienated with religion an opportunity to “reclaim a sense of spirituality,” and strongly affirmed that AIDS was not a manifestation of God’s punishment of sinners. In 1986, Carl Meirose contacted John Fahey, then the priest of St. Clement’s parish. Meirose requested, and Fahey agreed, that the APCN commence coordinating a Liturgy at the church for PWAs, and victims’ partners, families, friends, and caregivers. The service developed into an “emotionally intense” shared ritual consisting of “storytelling,

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<sup>67</sup> Kenneth J. Doka, “Disenfranchised Grief,” and “Disenfranchised Relationships,” in *Disenfranchised Grief: Recognizing Hidden Sorrow*, ed. Kenneth J. Doka (Lexington, MA: Lexington Books, 1989), 3-12, 31-32.

remembrance, and healing.” Inscribing the names of AIDS victims who had died during the preceding year was the central event. Thereafter, participants and mourners held a “Candlelight Walk” to Howard Brown, where a tree seedling—called the “tree of life”—used in the liturgy was planted to honor the agency’s service to PWAs and their former partners, friends, and families. By 1997, approximately eight hundred people attended, including individuals from outside the city and state.<sup>68</sup>

### *Sickness and Sanctity*

Members with ties to diverse religious orders—Jesuits, Benedictines, Claretians—helped establish the APCN; however, the most sweeping collective response from a Chicago religious order came from the Alexian Brothers, whose pledge in September 1985 to assist PWAs finally materialized with the opening in Spring 1989 of Bonaventure House, a North Side assisted-living facility for PWAs. The nursing order developed in the fourteenth century in present-day northwest Germany and Belgium, where members courageously cared for victims of the Black Death and buried the dead. Thenceforward, Alexians secured a reputation as caregivers to social outsiders, such as the insane, impoverished, and sick. In 1866, the Alexians established a presence in the United States, when Brother Bonaventure Thelen—eventually the namesake of the AIDS residence—settled in Chicago and opened a small hospital, which immediately confronted a deadly cholera outbreak. As the number of Alexians grew in the U.S., the order’s infrastructure expanded and by the 1960s it operated a handful of health care institutions throughout the United States. Although vocations plummeted in the years

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<sup>68</sup> Carol Reese, “Ritual in the AIDS Community: Remembering, Celebrating, Healing,” *The Spirit*, Spring 1995, CHM; *The Spirit*, May 1988, CHM; Leo Keegan, “Memorial Day Liturgy,” *The Spirit*, Spring 1995, CHM; Terry Wilson, “Loved Ones of AIDS Victims Mourn Together at Memorial Day Service,” *CT*, 23 May 1997.

that followed, the Alexians maintained the Alexian Brothers Medical Center in Elk Grove (formerly the St. Alexius Hospital), a western suburb of Chicago.<sup>69</sup>

The Provincial Chapter's charism of "seeking discipleship with the Lord Jesus in reaching out with care and compassion, in collaboration with others, towards the powerless poor and marginalized, especially the sick and dying," motivated members to establish Bonaventure House.<sup>70</sup> That the order should assist PWAs and make Provincial resources available to them was first proposed in September 1985 during a Provincial Chapter for the American Province.<sup>71</sup> The Alexians likened PWAs to Black Death victims: both were physically and spiritually ravaged, socially marginalized, and said to be suffering from Divine punishment. As past Brothers had attended the plague stricken, contemporary Alexians would nurse PWAs, thereby becoming more authentic disciples of Jesus Christ and "contemporizing" the Alexian charism, according to Provincial Felix Bettendorf.<sup>72</sup> Brother Frank Souza, who with Bettendorf was principally responsible for

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<sup>69</sup> Lawrence Davidson, *The Alexian Brothers: An Evolutionary Look at the Monastery and Modern Health Care* (New York: Vantage Press, 1990), 1-13; Christopher J. Kauffman, *The Ministry of Healing: The History of the Alexian Brothers from 1789 to the Present* (New York: Seabury Press, 1978), 274-5. The Alexian Brothers were also known as the Congregation of Cellites. Alexian Jim Classon has offered the lengthiest treatment of Bonaventure House's establishment, which he completed for a course at DePaul University in August 1988. Classon centers on how the Alexians used "power" to realize their goals. See Jim Classon, C.F.A., "A Study in Establishing an Assisted-Living Residence for People with A.I.D.S.," DePaul University, 2 August 1988, Folder: Study in Establishing an Assisted-Living Residence for People with A.I.D.S., ABPA.

<sup>70</sup> Brother Felix Bettendorf, C.F.A., Provincial to All Brothers, Immaculate Conception Province, 13 December 1985, Folder: History of AIDS Project, Bonaventure House, Inc., ABPA.

<sup>71</sup> "A Tradition Continues," Folder: History of AIDS Project, Bonaventure House, Inc., ABPA. Clarification of Catholic religious order terminology may be helpful for this portion of the chapter. The Congregation of Alexian Brothers is a religious institution of Catholic men. Four "Provinces" located around the world comprise the congregation. Members ("Brothers") in the United States are part of the Immaculate Conception Province. A "Provincial" refers to the major superior of all Brothers in a particular Province. Felix Bettendorf, for instance, was the Provincial of the Immaculate Conception Province. Finally, a "Provincial Chapter" is a Province's legislative body.

<sup>72</sup> In 1968, Bettendorf at the age of 44 was elected superior general of the worldwide Alexian Brothers order, the youngest to ever hold the position. Following his six year term, he served as president and CEO of the Alexian Brothers Medical Center. Between 1984 and 1992, he was the Provincial of the Immaculate Conception Province and president and CEO of Alexian Brothers Health Systems. In 1994, Pope John Paul II bestowed on Bettendorf the *Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice* medal for "work outstanding in

Bonaventure House, echoed, “Because AIDS so mimics the plague victims, this [forming Bonaventure House] is a way of reaching back into our history and saying this is what we are about....As those people were rejected in society, so are AIDS patients today.”<sup>73</sup>

In addition to implementing their charism and imitating Jesus’s compassion for social outcasts, AIDS generated opportunities for the sanctification of the Alexian order. Responding in a Christ-like way to PWAs, Bettendorf personally believed, “will bring many blessings to our Congregation.” The world would perceive that the Alexians were “a sign of God’s love for His neediest people,” and the order would thereby become more socially “relevant.” Fearlessly assisting PWAs could potentially be an antidote to dwindling vocations as well. In fact, Souza acknowledged that the Alexians’ decision to focus on health care for PWAs, which had received unanimous Chapter support when it was first proposed, had already begun to unify Brothers following a period of post-conciliar “renewal” and “turmoil.” Bettendorf wrote, “When asked the question, ‘What do you see as a sign of hope for our Province,’ the Brothers inevitably answer, ‘Bonaventure House.’”<sup>74</sup>

The Alexians determined that their efforts should meet a significant local need. Chicago was selected because the order had a concentration of resources in the area. The city, rather than the suburbs, was optimal for an AIDS residence, which had to be adjacent to public transportation to facilitate patients and volunteers.<sup>75</sup> Upon evaluating

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zeal and public value.” See Megan Graydon, “Brother Felix Bettendorf, 1923-2007: Leading Figure for Alexian Brothers,” *CT*, 10 May 2007.

<sup>73</sup> Felix Bettendorf, C.F.A., “Contemporizing a Charism: The Alexians Opt for AIDS Ministry,” *CMSM Forum* 56 (Spring-Summer 1990): 1-9; Vicki Quade, “Saint Sebastian’s Neighbors Object to Proposed Facility for AIDS Patients,” *Chicago Reader*, 26 November 1987.

<sup>74</sup> Bettendorf, “Contemporizing,” 2, 6, 7; “Extension of Our Charism,” Folder: History of AIDS Project, Bonaventure House, Inc., ABPA.

<sup>75</sup> “ABHS Board of Governors – Minutes,” 17 September 1986, Folder: History of AIDS Project, Bonaventure House, Inc., ABPA.

local needs, the Brothers initially concluded that a nursing home for PWAs would plug a distressing health-care gap. An investigation by Souza discovered that area hospitals served acute care needs. Nursing homes, however, were unable or unwilling to furnish intermediate and skilled care. Operating them for PWAs was expensive, and many managers feared that accepting AIDS patients would invite public notoriety and repel potential clients. Although Howard Brown coordinated a home care program, a meager four nursing home beds were available in Cook County. PWAs with intermediate and skilled care needs usually stayed in hospitals, which were incurring financial losses and unsuited for the task.<sup>76</sup> In May 1986, the archdiocese's AIDS Task Force (discussed below) agreed that chronic care facilities were desperately needed in Chicago, thus fortifying the Alexians' resolve, and introducing Bettendorf—an appointed member—to other Catholics in AIDS ministry, as well as PWAs and their loved ones who delineated to him the services required to “live and die with dignity.”<sup>77</sup>

A series of hurdles impeded the Alexian vision. The initial plan was to purchase a nursing home with one hundred or fewer beds. However, a suitable facility eluded them; attractive homes were either not for sale or unaffordable. The Brothers did submit one bid in Spring 1986, but plans collapsed when the Board of Governors of the Alexian Brothers Health System expressed reservations about high renovation costs and the possibility that the expensive building would burden the Brothers if an AIDS cure was

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<sup>76</sup> Brother Frank Souza, C.F.A., “AIDS Research Project,” September 1986, Folder: History of AIDS Project, Bonaventure House, Inc., ABPA; Quade, “Saint Sebastian’s Neighbors Object to Proposed Facility for AIDS Patients,” *Chicago Reader*, 26 November 1987. The average hospitalization cost of one AIDS patient from diagnosis to death in 1987 was approximately \$64,500. As nursing home costs were approximately 75 percent less than hospitalization costs, Mark Horning writing in *Crain’s Chicago Business* remarked that the state of Illinois—which via Medicaid covered “half the bills for four in ten AIDS patients”—would be wise to fund home care and hospices so that patients could be shifted from hospitals to nursing homes and hospices. See Mark Horning, “State AIDS Council Seeking Home Care, Hospice Funding,” *Crain’s Chicago Business*, 30 March 1987.

<sup>77</sup> Bettendorf, “Contemporizing,” 2.

discovered.<sup>78</sup> The Alexians shifted their objective. In December 1986, Bettendorf and Souza proposed that an assisted living facility, rather than a nursing home, be established. The community needed the former, too; after diagnosis, families often abandoned PWAs, who therefore required emotional solace and a residence prior to their “final hospitalization.”<sup>79</sup> At the time, Chicago House was the city’s only hospice center for AIDS patients. It operated two facilities (Lake View, Uptown) that collectively served fourteen PWAs, and planned to open a third center on the Near Northwest Side.<sup>80</sup> Souza recommended that the Alexians establish an “assisted residential care” or “assisted living” residence “for people who are a little more sick than the ones in the Chicago House.” He wished to avoid the appearance that the Alexians were competing with Chicago House, thus antagonizing Howard Brown—which assisted Chicago House—into “not support[ing] our endeavor.”<sup>81</sup> Bettendorf decided to partner with the archdiocese and scrutinize available archdiocesan properties to lease, rather than buy.<sup>82</sup> A former convent at St. Gregory’s parish (5520 N. Paulina) attracted the Provincial’s attention. Complications followed. The archdiocese notified Bettendorf that negotiations must be done with the parish priest, who was retiring at the end of 1986.<sup>83</sup> During a meeting between Alexian, archdiocese, and parish representatives, the latter conceded that

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<sup>78</sup> The Alexians offered \$935,000 for a fifty-five bed home on the North Side. “ABHS Board of Governors – Minutes,” 28 May 1986, Folder: History of AIDS Project, Bonaventure House, Inc., ABPA; “ABHS Board of Governors – Minutes,” 30 July 1986, Folder: History of AIDS Project, Bonaventure House, Inc., ABPA.

<sup>79</sup> “Provincial Council Meeting,” 10-11 December 1986, Folder: History of AIDS Project, Bonaventure House, Inc., ABPA.

<sup>80</sup> Daniel J. Lehmann and Suzy Schultz, “Catholics to Open AIDS Residence,” *CST*, 3 September 1987.

<sup>81</sup> “Provincial Council Meeting,” 10-11 December 1986, Folder: History of AIDS Project, Bonaventure House, Inc., ABPA.

<sup>82</sup> Father Frank Kane, director of the archdiocese’s Division of Community Services, acted as liaison between the Chancery Office and the Alexians.

<sup>83</sup> “Provincial Council Meeting,” 10-11 December 1986, Folder: History of AIDS Project, Bonaventure House, Inc., ABPA.

neighborhood residents and parish members would likely resist the Brothers. Additionally, the new parish priest explained that, despite his personal sympathy for PWAs, he was “alarmed at the possibility that the very first thing he would have undertaken in the parish is to bring AIDS patients into the parish plant, which would make for a very strong negative relationship between him and many members of the parish.”<sup>84</sup>

Addressing the thorny problem of AIDS could spark a measure of antagonism among people with legitimate concerns. This was again made plain when another opportunity arose for the Alexians. Thomas Moser, Provincial of the Brothers of the Holy Cross in South Bend, Indiana, informed Bettendorf of his order’s willingness to lease a soon to be vacated residence for Holy Cross Brothers at Holy Trinity High School (1110 Noble St.) on the near North Side, which the Holy Cross staffed.<sup>85</sup> Bettendorf and the Alexians seized the chance. A lease was drawn up, the facility was named (Bonaventure House), and Bettendorf petitioned Bernardin for permission. In a letter to his Brothers, Bettendorf asked that the location of the facility remain confidential so as to protect the anonymity of PWAs and evade picketing and harassment.<sup>86</sup> Despite their efforts, powerful opposition from Alderman Terry Gabinski (32<sup>nd</sup> ward) and Congressman Dan Rostenkowski abruptly doomed the project. During a July 30 meeting, Bernardin informed Bettendorf and Souza that he had conducted his own “direct

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<sup>84</sup> “Provincial Council Meeting,” 14-15 April 1987, Folder: History of AIDS Project, Bonaventure House, Inc., ABPA.

<sup>85</sup> “Provincial Council Meeting,” 14-15 April 1987, Folder: History of AIDS Project, Bonaventure House, Inc., ABPA; Bettendorf to All Alexian Brothers, Immaculate Conception Province, 1 May 1987, Folder: History of AIDS Project, Bonaventure House, Inc., ABPA.

<sup>86</sup> Bettendorf to All Alexian Brothers, Immaculate Conception Province, 1 May 1987, Folder: History of AIDS Project, Bonaventure House, Inc., ABPA; “Congregation of Alexian Brothers,” 15 May 1987, Folder: History of AIDS Project, Bonaventure House, Inc., ABPA; Bettendorf to All Brothers, Immaculate Conception Province, 17 June 1987, Folder: History of AIDS Project, Bonaventure House, Inc., ABPA.



consultation” to determine the degree of local acceptance for an AIDS residence at Holy Trinity. Seeking political support, he had notified Rostenkowski of the upcoming announcement for Bonaventure House. The congressmen’s “unalterable” opposition was unanticipated. In his reply, Rostenkowski made plain that the announcement or establishment of Bonaventure House would elicit the residents’ hostility and anger and, in the words of Bettendorf, “would result in a counterproductive attitude and measures by the citizenry, such that the Cardinal and we would regret it.”<sup>87</sup> A disappointed Bernardin consequently told Bettendorf that “it is not realistic to proceed” with Holy Trinity, as the Alexians and the archdiocese would have to devote a good deal of time to confronting opposition, and the well-being of Bonaventure House may be jeopardized.

Hoped dawned, however, when Bernardin offered to lease the former convent at St. Sebastian’s to the Alexians. After receiving Rostenkowski’s reply, Bernardin, through Father Kane and the Division of Community Services, contacted St. Sebastian to determine if the parish would be agreeable. To entice the Alexians—renovating St. Sebastian’s would be much more expensive than Holy Trinity—Bernardin pledged \$200,000 from the archdiocese, and subsequently \$50,000 for the first year’s operating costs.<sup>88</sup> St. Sebastian’s location would facilitate the work of Bonaventure House: it was adjacent to the Illinois Masonic Medical Hospital, which treated PWAs, and situated in a community with gay enclaves and the highest concentration of AIDS cases in Chicago. “I believe the political and general social climate will be more amenable to the home,”

Bernardin accurately forecast, and St. Sebastian parishioners would “offer strong support

<sup>87</sup> “Provincial Council Meeting,” 19-20 August 1987, Folder: History of AIDS Project, Bonaventure House, Inc., ABPA; Bettendorf to All Alexian Brothers, Immaculate Conception Province, 6 August 1987, Folder: History of AIDS Project, Bonaventure House, Inc., ABPA.

<sup>88</sup> Dan Montalbano, “Bonaventure House,” *Upturn*, April-May 1988, CHM; Michael Hirsley, “Archdiocese Opens AIDS Shelter,” *CT*, 7 April 1989. The Alexians estimated that renovation costs for Holy Trinity would be \$90,000, as compared to \$500,000-\$600,000 for St. Sebastian’s.



to this ministry.”<sup>89</sup> Father John Flavin and associate pastor Father Daniel Montalbano were strongly supportive. During a pastoral council meeting in August 1987, Souza tried to placate fears, e.g., that some parishioners would elect to worship elsewhere rather than share a chalice with Bonaventure House Mass attendees. Mindful of Holy Trinity, Souza also dismissed the suggestion that the Alexians hold an open “town hall” meeting for the entire community, which threatened to disrupt and perhaps foil plans. Flavin agreed: the council “will make the decisions for or against and then take the flak.” Pastoral council members were satisfied, and overwhelmingly voted in the Alexians’ favor. The convent could be used. Additionally, the Alexians could commission the construction of another building on an adjacent parish-owned parking lot.<sup>90</sup>

Among gay rights activists, the announcement of Bonaventure House provoked a degree of suspicion. Journalist Vicki Quade of the *Chicago Reader* noted that the gay community bitterly recalled the archdiocese’s opposition to the gay rights ordinance of 1986. In general, it “seems reluctant to discuss” Bonaventure House. Rick Garcia of the Catholic Advocates for Lesbian and Gay Rights, while praising the Alexians, believed Bonaventure House was another example of the archdiocese “content[ing] itself to sit back and take credit for the hard work of others.”<sup>91</sup> Dignity’s Jim Bussen professed

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<sup>89</sup> Bettendorf to All Alexian Brothers, Immaculate Conception Province, 6 August 1987, Folder: History of AIDS Project, Bonaventure House, Inc., ABPA.

<sup>90</sup> “St. Sebastian Pastoral Council Meeting, Minutes,” 10 August 1987, Box: Administrative Records, Minutes, Archdiocesan Parishes, Folder: St. Sebastian Parish, Planning Committee/Pastoral Council Minutes, 1985-1987, AAC. The final tally was 16 yes votes, 2 no votes, and 3 abstentions. Considering the land and building values in the Lake View area, Montalbano estimated that St. Sebastian’s total gift to the Alexians totaled \$600,000. See Dan Montalbano, “Bonaventure House,” *Upturn*, April-May 1988, CHM.

<sup>91</sup> Vicki Quade, “Saint Sebastian’s Neighbors Object to Proposed Facility for AIDS Patients,” *Chicago Reader*, 26 November 1987; Rick Garcia, “AIDS and the Church, Letters,” *Chicago Reader*, 14 January 1988. “Conservative Roman Catholics,” wrote Daniel J. Lehmann and Suzy Schultz in the *Sun Times*, were generally happy with Bonaventure House, although they also expected the Cardinal to emphasize sexual abstinence in his teaching. See “Catholics to Open AIDS Residence,” *CST*, 3 September 1987.

surprise at the Lake View location: “Why not on the West or of the city, where there is a growing need for such a place among blacks and Hispanics?”<sup>92</sup> There was more formidable opposition in Lake View. The principal community organization in the area, the Central Lake View Neighbors, approved of the project, but about a half dozen local homeowners did not. They banded together to form the Lakeview Neighbors United to Preserve Residential Integrity (LNUPRI).<sup>93</sup> Anti-gay sentiment did not ostensibly motivate LNUPRI opposition. Rather, homeowners objected to the “ugly institutional” look of the proposed aluminum-sided Alexian facility, which was “unsuited for a residential neighborhood” and might decrease property values. Other concerns were garbage disposal, service vehicles that blocked the alley, and the potential “inappropriate use” of the building, in particular that in the future it may be converted into a “halfway house.”<sup>94</sup>

A legal tussle ensued. The Alexians endeavored to meet LNUPRI objections. Garbage was cordoned off, and brick rather than aluminum siding would be used to harmonize the edifice’s appearance with the buildings that surrounded it. A promise that the new addition would be erected further from the street met “set-back” requirements. Finally, the archdiocese issued a statement pledging that the facility would not be used as a halfway house for drug addicts or the mentally ill in the event that an assisted living residence for PWAs became superfluous. Some homeowners remained unsatisfied and hired attorneys to prevent the Alexians from obtaining the necessary “Special Use Permit” from the city. In January 1988, the Chicago Planning Commission ruled in the

<sup>92</sup> Daniel J. Lehmann and Suzy Schultz, “Catholics to Open AIDS Residence,” *CST*, 3 September 1987.

<sup>93</sup> Montalbano thought that the LNUPRI counted no St. Sebastian parishioners among its members. See *CST*, 3 September 1987.

<sup>94</sup> Vicki Quade, “Saint Sebastian’s Neighbors Object to Proposed Facility for AIDS Patients,” *Chicago Reader*, 26 November 1987; Classon 14.

order's favor, although opposition succeeded in integrating stipulations into the Special Use Permit: convicted felons or former drug abusers could not be admitted to Bonaventure House, and the maximum number of beds was set at thirty.<sup>95</sup>

### *Archdiocesan Solutions*

The Catholic Church's response to AIDS in Chicago migrated up from the bottom; the first "movers and shakers" were individuals who personally labored among PWAs, such as individuals affiliated with religious orders, hospital chaplains, and Catholic healthcare workers. In comparison to other American bishops, however, Cardinal Bernardin was uniquely sensitive to the ordeals faced by the afflicted, their loved ones, Catholic institutions such as schools and hospitals, and the community at large. Pastoral thoughtfulness and his own genuine interest in, and knowledge of, the health care industry fueled his concern. Bernardin envisaged AIDS as a physical, spiritual, psychological, and social malady; proper prevention and treatment considered each dimension. Ameliorating fear and PWAs' social and spiritual isolation was pivotal. In responding to AIDS, Bernardin prioritized extensive planning, consultation with "experts," and dialogue in order to procure unity. The painstaking process invited accusations from gay rights activists that the archdiocese was "fail[ing] miserably" in assisting people menaced by AIDS.<sup>96</sup> The Cardinal's contribution to "Many Faces," the inauguration of an archdiocesan AIDS Task Force in 1985, and his pastoral statement on AIDS reveal that his recommendations to treat and prevent the syndrome tried to balance

<sup>95</sup> Donna Carl Dahl, "The Alexian Story: Bonaventure House," 18 March 1989, Folder: History of AIDS Project, Bonaventure House, Inc., ABPA; Classon, 18; Keith David Picher, "Residence for AIDS Patients Dedicated," *CNW*, 7 April 1989; Vicki Quade, "Saint Sebastian's Neighbors Object to Proposed Facility for AIDS Patients," *Chicago Reader*, 26 November 1987. The Alexians retained local lawyer Daniel L. Houlian, a specialist in zoning law who was also the legislative counsel to the Illinois Bar Association. The firm of Winston and Strawn usually handled the Alexians legal matters.

<sup>96</sup> Brother Rick Garcia, "Catholics, Gays," *CT*, 18 August 1987.

specificity, pastoral sensitivity, and adherence to doctrinal orthodoxy—an invariably difficult task.

This dissertation is principally concerned with Catholic life in Chicago; however, Bernardin’s national role in regard to the epidemic illustrates his earnest concern with AIDS, as well as the means and goals he preferred to prevent and treat the disease, and should therefore briefly be addressed. Bernardin was an influential member of the four-person committee that drafted “The Many Faces of AIDS” for the USCC.<sup>97</sup> Despite the debate that it engendered, Bernardin in January 1988 defended the document and expressed frustration that some in the media had misinterpreted and misreported “Many Faces.” Bishops throughout the country were encountering AIDS related dilemmas—particularly regarding the proper instruction of school children—that demanded practical guidance. The statement was admittedly “highly nuanced” but “theologically sound,” and in no way implied a shift in Church teaching on sexual morality. The most controversial paragraph that addressed the morality of teaching about prophylactics in public schools conveyed a realization of social pluralism and complexity, rather than approval of condom use. Additionally, Bernardin reminded, the Administrative Board had categorically discouraged public school instruction in a “morally neutral context.” In any discussion of prophylactics, certain values had to be underscored to effectively meet the AIDS epidemic: abstinence, monogamy in marriage, and the avoidance of illicit drugs. That “safe sex” was chimerical should also be acknowledged.<sup>98</sup> Bernardin defended the bishops’ willingness to confront problematic, multifaceted, and potentially

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<sup>97</sup> Daniel J. Lehmann, “Bishops Take a Stand on AIDS – Back Condom Education, if...,” *CST*, 11 December 1987.

<sup>98</sup> Cardinal Joseph Bernardin, “Cardinal Joseph Bernardin on AIDS Statement,” *Origins* 17, no. 30 (7 January 1988).

divisive ethical questions, and proffer concrete recommendations. He knew that two risks were inherent in the bishops' specificity: vulnerability in "practical moral judgments," and the possibility that "people of good will" may disagree with their conclusions. Despite his support of "Many Faces," Bernardin acknowledged during a radio interview in Chicago that he had not anticipated the intensity of criticism. "In retrospect," he said, "I think it would have been better to have submitted [the document] to the full body of bishops."<sup>99</sup> Intent on episcopal unity, the Cardinal during the bishops' June 1988 meeting moved that a new committee update and clarify "Many Faces." This time, the USCCB and the Holy See must dialogue. "Many Faces," however, should not be retracted as that would suggest that it was irremediably flawed and the Administrative Board had seriously erred, and exacerbate lay confusion.<sup>100</sup>

That Bernardin helped spearhead the episcopal response to AIDS is unsurprising; two full years before the release of "Many Faces," the archbishop had already appointed an "AIDS Task Force" in the Chicago archdiocese, which gathered local data on AIDS and made recommendations to Bernardin on how to effectively "minister and service people affected by the AIDS crisis."<sup>101</sup> According to Father Francis Kane, the archdiocese's Director of Community Services and Bernardin's liaison to the task force, the Cardinal desired the group's approach to be "quiet, supporting, reaching out, collaborating with others in the area."<sup>102</sup> Caring for PWAs was a primary concern; so was dealing with the "fear involving this disease," explained Passionist Brother Patrick

<sup>99</sup> Daniel J. Lehmann, "Heavy Fire at Bishops' AIDS Letter Jars Cardinal," *CST*, 9 January 1988.

<sup>100</sup> Cardinal Joseph Bernardin, "Remarks and Proposal Approved by Bishops on AIDS Document," *Origins* 18, no. 8 (July 1988).

<sup>101</sup> "AIDS: A Time for Healing, A Report of the AIDS Task Force, Archdiocese of Chicago," 15 May 1986, Folder: Archdiocese, AIDS: A Time for Healing, ABPA.

<sup>102</sup> "AIDS Task Force, Report of Meeting," 12 November 1985, Folder: Archdiocese Task Force on AIDS, 1985-1987, ABPA.

Hanson, co-director of the archdiocesan Office for Religious and chair of the task force.<sup>103</sup> Felix Bettendorf, James Corrigan, John Flavin, and Stephen Martz were among the task force's seventeen members, which included priests and nuns from religious orders, hospital chaplains, archdiocesan priests, and lay men and women with backgrounds in medicine.<sup>104</sup> Over half of task force members had "direct AIDS ministry experience, and some of them have been involved from the earliest days of the epidemic."<sup>105</sup> Over the course of seven full meetings, which took place at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel parish (728 West Belmont Ave.) as well as the archdiocese's Pastoral Center (formerly the Chancery), the task force interviewed twenty professionals and volunteers—including doctors, nurses, and representatives of local medical agencies—to gather information on AIDS and its personal and social toll.<sup>106</sup> Two living PWAs and

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<sup>103</sup> Daniel J. Lehmann, "Catholics Study Action on AIDS," *CST*, 15 January 1986.

<sup>104</sup> The following individuals comprised the Task Force: Passionist Brother Patrick Hanson, Co-Director, Archdiocesan Office Religious; Brother Felix Bettendorf, Provincial, Congregation of Alexian Brothers; Ms. Joan Callahan, Parish Staff, St. Clement's Church; Augustinian Father James Corrigan, Director of Pastoral Services, Rush-Presbyterian-St. Luke's Medical Center; St. Joseph Sister Carol Crepeau, Co-Director, Archdiocesan Office for Religious; Mr. Edward Crawley, Deacon, Director, St. Vincent DePaul Society; Father John Flavin, Dean, Deanery IV, Pastor, St. Sebastian's Church; Father Thomas Healy, Pastor, Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church; Father Francis Kane, Director of Community Services, Archdiocese of Chicago; Claretian seminarian Stephen Martz, Co-coordinator, AIDS Pastoral Care Network; Ms. Judy Masterman, Director of Family and Aged Services, Catholic Charities; Jesuit Father Carl Mierose, Ministry Team, Dignity Chicago; Jesuit Father Harry Mierose, Provincial Assistant for Social Ministries; Dominican Sister Lois McGovern, Co-Director, Dehon House, Board Member Chicago House; Dr. Terry McGuire, Ed.D, Vice President of Mission Effectiveness, Alexian Brothers Health Sisters; Father James Noone, Chair, Association of Chicago Priests, Pastor, St. Theresa Church; Mr. Jon Parrish, Deacon, RN, MS, Director of Nursing, St. Joseph Hospital; Father Leroy Wickowski, Archdiocesan Office for Health Affairs.

<sup>105</sup> "AIDS: A Time for Healing, A Report of the AIDS Task Force, Archdiocese of Chicago," 15 May 1986, Folder: Archdiocese, AIDS: A Time for Healing, ABPA.

<sup>106</sup> The following people were interviewed: Ms. Beth Beakman, RN, Head Nurse on an AIDS Unit, Illinois Masonic Hospital; Mr. Abner Cunningham, Director of Chicago House; Mr. Jack Doherty, Director of Patient Support Services, Howard Brown Memorial Clinic; Dr. Alan Harris, MD, Department of Infectious Disease, Epidemiologist, Rush-Presbyterian-St. Luke's Medical Center; Mr. Chet Kelly, Chicago Board of Health; Mr. Jeff Levi, Director of Governmental and Legal Affairs, National Gay Task Force; Dr. David Moore, MD, Attending Physician, Illinois Masonic Hospital, Chairperson of the Patient Advocacy Committee, Illinois AIDS Interdisciplinary Advisory Council; Mr. Tim Offutt, Kapuna Network; Dr. John Phair, MD, Senior Attending Physician, Department of Infectious Disease, Northwestern Memorial Hospital, Principal Researcher for National Institute of Health on Longitudinal Study of AIDS Epidemiology; Dr. Ron Sable, MD, Co-Director Cook County Hospital AIDS Center and Attending

three surviving relatives were also interviewed and provided testimonies of living with AIDS. The task force invited all interviewees to suggest how the archdiocese could best meet AIDS “at a community and personal level.”

Articulating the needs of PWAs and their families, pacifying fear, and de-mythologizing AIDS were three chief objectives of the final report, which was entitled “AIDS: A Time for Healing,” and submitted to Cardinal Bernardin on May 16, 1986. The Chicago Church, the report noted in its introduction, had a “strong history in responding to the AIDS crisis,” and should be proud that “so many of its members have been involved in responding to the AIDS crisis.” Parish and hospital ministers had performed commendably in ministering to people affected by the syndrome. AIDS demanded a “compassionate, sensitive response,” the report continued. Prejudice, apathy, and the casting of moral judgments were temptations that inhibited assistance to PWAs and their family and friends, and should therefore be avoided. In addition to a preface, introduction, recommendations for the archbishop, and an epilogue, the report was divided into five sections: “medical epidemic”; “epidemic of fear”; “epidemic of compassion”; “issues in the care of persons with AIDS” that addressed proper medical and “psycho-social” care as well as social justice issues; and “contextualizing ministry to persons with AIDS.” Regarding the report’s recommendations to the Cardinal, the task force contended that there were essentially two approaches to AIDS ministry. The first model focused on caring for those that AIDS impacted and “minimize[ed] the link

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Physician for the Cook County Correctional System; Dr. Renslow Sherer, MD, Co-Director, Cook County Hospital AIDS Center, Chairperson, Illinois AIDS Interdisciplinary Advisory Council; Dr. James Sincux, Psy.D., Chicago AIDS Action Project; Ms. Katie Sprutta, Former Executive Director, AIDS Action Project; Dr. Robert Washington, PhD, Director, Community Mental Health Center, Support Manager, Cook County AIDS Center; Ms. Kathy Woods, Assistant Director, Illinois Masonic Hospice Program; and five unnamed people (two PWAs, one mother of a deceased person with AIDS, one wife of a deceased person with AIDS, one female lover of deceased person with AIDS)

between AIDS and homosexuality.” The second, which the task force accepted and promoted to the Cardinal, held that spiritual care for PWAs and their loved ones was simply one vital pastoral objective; the other was “healing the alienation” that had resulted from the “association...of AIDS and homosexuality.” “What is being said here,” task force members delineated, “must be carefully understood and not taken out of context.” The report was not “examining, debating, or criticizing Catholic moral theology regarding homosexuality”; rather, it was chiefly concerned with “the alienation from and judgment of the Church that so many gay people and others affected by AIDS have experienced.” The report proceeded to offer Bernardin recommendations—which were classified as “immediate priority,” “priority,” and “longer range priority”—in the areas of reconciliation, networking/collaboration, education, direct service/housing, social justice, and internal policy.<sup>107</sup> Among notable immediate priorities, the report recommended that Bernardin issue a pastoral statement or letter on AIDS, appoint a full time AIDS Pastoral Care Coordinator, and use his moral clout to condemn efforts to quarantine PWAs or members of high risk groups and mandatory HTLV-III tests for the purpose of discriminating against those who tested positive. The task force also urged archdiocesan collaboration with other AIDS organizations, people who worked with the chemically dependent, religious communities who desired to minister to PWAs and their loved ones, and interfaith efforts. The APCN, as well as local religious communities who

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<sup>107</sup> In each area, a team of task force members formulated recommendations: Corrigan and Healy (Reconciliation); H. Meirose and Martz (Networking/Collaboration); McGovern and C. Meirose (Housing); Bettendorf, McGuire, Masterman, Wickowski (Direct Care); Callahan, Flavin, Funk (Education); Crepeau, Kane, Noone (Internal Policy); Crawley, Hanson, Parrish (Social Justice). See “AIDS Task Force, Report, February 13, 1986 Meeting,” Folder: Archdiocese Task Force on AIDS, 1985-1987, ABPA.



sought to establish a chronic care facility for PWAs, should receive archdiocesan funding and help.<sup>108</sup>

Complying with task force advice, Bernardin five months later issued “A Challenge and a Responsibility: A Pastoral Statement on the Church’s Response to the AIDS Crisis.”<sup>109</sup> It was one of only a handful of episcopal documents issued by an American Catholic bishop before “Many Faces.”<sup>110</sup> “Challenge” is important because it was a blueprint for the archdiocese’s subsequent response to the syndrome. AIDS, Bernardin began, was a human disease that was not restricted to homosexual and bisexual men, who nevertheless comprised nearly ninety percent of all reported cases in Chicago. For some gay PWAs, alienation from the Church—which either stemmed from the prejudice of some Catholics or homosexuals’ misunderstanding/rejection of Church doctrine—had intensified their grief. If the Church held that homosexual acts were immoral, it likewise taught that all people were created in God’s image, in possession of human dignity, and therefore owed respect and protection. Discrimination against PWAs violated the Christian ethic, and should not be exercised in the housing, insurance, or funeral industries. Quarantining PWAs and screening blood for “discriminatory purposes” were deplorable. Among Catholics, alienation and fear should be expunged; Christ reached out to outcasts and those in need. His servants had a responsibility to do the same. Government, human and health service providers, and religious groups should

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<sup>108</sup> “AIDS: A Time for Healing, A Report of the AIDS Task Force, Archdiocese of Chicago,” 15 May 1986, Folder: Archdiocese, AIDS: A Time for Healing, ABPA.

<sup>109</sup> While occupying the Chicago See, Bernardin issued five pastoral statements, as well as four pastoral letters and three pastoral reflections. Pastoral letters are generally understood to be of more importance than pastoral reflections or statements. Alphonse P. Spilly, C.P.P.S., “Introduction to Part One: Teaching Documents,” in *Selected Works of Joseph Cardinal Bernardin*, ed. Alphonse P. Spilly, C.P.P.S., vol. 1 (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2000), 3.

<sup>110</sup> Daniel J. Lehmann, “Bishops Take Stand on AIDS – Back Condom Education, If...,” *CST*, 11 December 1987.

collaborate to fund and care for PWAs. Particularly important were acute long-term care, the service education of hospital personnel, educational programs to limit social prejudice and discrimination, services to meet the needs of grieving families and friends of AIDS victims, and the encouragement of Black and Latino leaders to be sensitive to the special needs of PWAs in their communities. Bernardin pledged archdiocesan support for interfaith collaborations to help PWAs and their loved ones, as well as the bereaved. To truthfully communicate the facts about AIDS, and thus reduce fear and prejudice, the Cardinal issued two directives to archdiocesan agencies: first, the Center for the Development of Ministry would develop programs to provide priests, religious and lay leaders “with accurate information about the medical, psychological, and pastoral issues related to AIDS and ARC,” and other programs for training Catholics who minister to AIDS and ARC sufferers; second, the Archdiocesan Department of Educational Services would avail schools and religious education programs with accurate information about the syndrome. Bernardin made other promises. The HTLV III screen test would not be used in archdiocesan hiring or in admission to schools or other church institutions. He would appoint a Pastoral Care Coordinator for AIDS Ministry, who would work within the Archdiocesan Department of Community Services and with Catholic Charities, coordinate AIDS initiatives, and serve as archdiocesan liaison to non-Catholic AIDS organizations and initiatives. Finally, Bernardin beseeched local parishes to “open their doors and their hearts” to people affected by AIDS.<sup>111</sup>

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<sup>111</sup> Joseph Cardinal Bernardin, “A Challenge and a Responsibility: A Pastoral Statement on the Church’s Response to the AIDS Crisis,” in *Selected Works of Joseph Cardinal Bernardin*, vol. 1, ed. Alphonse P. Spilly, C.P.P.S. (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2000), 187-194.

Bernardin's opposition to the proposed gay rights ordinance a few months earlier, and activists' insistence that the archdiocese was deliberately segregating homosexuals from the body politic, colored the public's response to the pastoral statement. The *Sun Times* calculated that the statement's "conciliatory tone" implied that Bernardin was "attempting to put [the ordinance fracas] behind him." Paul Varnell, the director of research for the Illinois Gay and Lesbian Task Force, was unusually critical, scolding the sluggish response to AIDS of the archdiocese and the Cardinal in particular. Bernardin, he thought, exhibited no "moral leadership" on the matter.<sup>112</sup> Howard Brown's support services director, Jack Doherty, agreed that "We could have used [archdiocesan] support...a lot sooner," but continued that "we are grateful to have it now."<sup>113</sup>

Unsurprisingly, the remarks of former task force members such as Father John Flavin and Stephen Martz were more favorable. The former replied that the statement was "good enough, strong enough, poignant enough and helpful enough to accomplish its purpose," while Martz suggested that the Cardinal "went as far as he could go" within the boundaries of Catholic doctrine.<sup>114</sup> Writing in *Upturn*, Father Jim Quinlan of St. Eulalia's described his reaction. He noted that AIDS presented an uncommon opportunity for the archdiocese, local priests, and laity to grow in holiness. With the pastoral letter, the Chicago Church was "on the threshold of a new and controversial involvement." Its recommendations posed a challenge to "our very lives as believing followers of the resurrected Lord. As the "altar Christus," priests "must be the first voices raised in compassion." Quinlan promptly enrolled as an APCN volunteer.<sup>115</sup>

<sup>112</sup> Tom McNamee, "Bernardin AIDS Letter Late, Gays Say," *CST*, 26 October 1986.

<sup>113</sup> Daniel J. Lehmann, "Bernardin Urges AIDS 'Care, Compassion,'" *CST*, 24 October 1986.

<sup>114</sup> Tom McNamee, "Bernardin AIDS Letter Late, Gays Say," *CST*, 26 October 1986.

<sup>115</sup> Jim Quinlan, "Passing the Buck No More," *Upturn*, April-May 1988, CHM.

Bernardin's pastoral statement set in motion a multi-pronged archdiocesan strategy to treat and prevent AIDS. Archdiocesan spokespeople, churches, health care agencies, and schools inculcated AIDS prevention, Catholic sexual morality, and compassion and acceptance of PWAs in an attempt to curtail the spread of HIV, alleviate fear, and eliminate apathy. Three developments occurred in the next few years. First, following the recommendations of the AIDS Task Force, Bernardin in December 1986 appointed Marianne Zelewsky as Pastoral Care Coordinator for the archdiocese's AIDS Ministry. Zelewsky was an assistant professor of community and mental health nursing at Loyola University and a member of St. Athanasius parish in Evanston. As Pastoral Care Coordinator, Zelewsky acted as a liaison between the archdiocese and various medical, social, and church agencies working with PWAs; provided referral services to AIDS patients and their loved ones; and began to coordinate the burgeoning individual efforts of parishes, clergy, and laity to counter the AIDS epidemic.<sup>116</sup>

Second, the Cardinal instructed the Center for Development of Ministry (CDM) to disseminate accurate information about the syndrome to priests, religious and lay leaders. The first CDM seminars, conducted in January 1987, invited Catholics ministering to PWAs and their loved ones, and addressed the medical facts of the epidemic, society's fear of AIDS, and holistic pastoral approaches to healing AIDS-related psychological and spiritual needs. Catholic hospitals hosted, such as St. Joseph, Mercy, and Loyola University Medical Center, as well as Mundelein and St. Mary of the Lake seminaries.<sup>117</sup> Gradually, the CDM drew up sample homilies that carefully broached AIDS, and

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<sup>116</sup> R. Bruce Dold, "Church Appoints Liaison on AIDS," *CT*, 31 December 1986; Delia O'Hara, "AIDS Liaison Seeks to Provide Comfort, Not Lesson in Ethics," *CST*, 29 January 1987; "Cardinal Names Coordinator for AIDS Ministry," *CC*, 2 January 1987.

<sup>117</sup> "Seminars on AIDS Care, Ministry Slated," *CC*, 16 January 1987; K.O. Dawes, "Catholic Seminar Airs AIDS Worries," *CST*, 29 January 1987.

disseminated them to archdiocesan priests. The CDM specifically requested that clerics in October 1988 center their sermons on Catholic sexual morality and the compassion owed to PWAs; caution against unfounded fear; and underscore that Catholic youth needed to be better educated about “human sexuality and moral norms.” Four Cardinal Bernardin-drafted letters that dealt with these themes subsequently appeared in parish bulletins.<sup>118</sup>

Finally, an AIDS curriculum was introduced into Catholic primary schools and religious education programs in Fall 1988.<sup>119</sup> Entitled “A Christian Response,” the material was first distributed to principals, religious education directors, and parents in February. The curriculum had four objectives: teach pupils about Catholic teaching and tradition in relation to AIDS; explain that chastity was the foundation for healthy lives; offer accurate information on HIV/AIDS; and encourage students to develop “non-judgmental and compassionate attitudes” for PWAs. In a prefatory note to parents, Archdiocesan Director of Educational Services and Congregation of Notre Dame Sister Anne Leonard admitted that “some of the material was sensitive” but appropriate. She urged parents to discuss AIDS and sexual morality with their children.<sup>120</sup>

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The AIDS epidemic, and the fear that it wrought, was another event that threatened to isolate Chicagoans from one another—in this instance, the ailing and perceived high risk groups from the healthy. AIDS also compromised the public grief of the living. Two of the earliest and most systematic Catholic responses to AIDS, the APCN and the Alexian Brothers’ Bonaventure House, and eventually archdiocesan

<sup>118</sup> Jim Quinlan, “Passing the Buck No More,” *Upturn*, April-May 1988, CHM; “Archdiocese Starts Next Phase of AIDS Education,” *CC*, 14 October 1988.

<sup>119</sup> “Archdiocese Starts Next Phase of AIDS Education,” *CC*, 14 October 1988.

<sup>120</sup> Archdiocese of Chicago, “A Christian Response, AIDS Curriculum: Parent Guide for Elementary Schools and Religious Education Programs,” CHM.

leaders, took the approach that AIDS was emotionally and spiritually damaging, as well as a physical malady. These Catholics attempted to alleviate fear and interconnect the afflicted as well as living grievors with each other, to the broader community, and to God. Reciprocally, ministering to social outcasts and grappling with the real human suffering of AIDS could foster spiritual renewal, as the Alexians in particular emphasized.

## *Conclusion*

### *Urban Trauma and Areas for Further Study*

Post-industrial transition, interpersonal and gang violence, the racial and political discord during the 1983 mayoral election, gay liberation, and AIDS accelerated turmoil and uncertainty among many Chicagoans between 1965 and 1996. They also accentuated a host of social and/or spatial rifts between city and suburbs, a grievously impoverished underclass and higher income earners, machine and reform politicians, neighborhoods, races, sexual majorities and minorities, and the physically sick as well as the healthy. Each tested Chicago's identity as a "city that works." Likewise, these events and trends challenged the confidence and liberalism of Chicago Catholics and sometimes the viability of their institutions.

That industrial jobs streamed from the city, the middle class contracted, city revenue dwindled, some neighborhoods were awash in handguns, violent crime rates spiked, and AIDS reminded inhabitants in the densely populated city that epidemics were real threats to community well-being suggests that *urban trauma*, or deep distress resulting from conditions generally unique to cities, had a considerable bearing on Catholic expressions of their faith in the post-conciliar and post-industrial era. These ordeals were not exclusive to Chicago but in fact troubled many cities throughout the United States to varying degrees. It is reasonable therefore to conclude that trauma may be a helpful analytic lens for historians to study and interpret urban American Catholicism between the 1960s and the 1990s.

In Chicago, there were other trends that alarmed many Catholics, notably the public proliferation of pornography and threats to children; space considerations prohibited these issues from being explored in depth in this dissertation. In the 1970s, “hard core” public pornography was increasingly evident in the Loop and a growing number of Chicago neighborhoods via book and video stores and movie houses. Although social acceptance of some types of pornography increased, “smut” and sexual obscenity remained morally dubious in many communities, breeding a variety of concerns about “quality of life” and “the intellectual and emotional environment in which...children grow,” in the words of the archdiocesan newspaper.<sup>1</sup> In 1977, grave concerns about pornography’s undesirable impact on young people coincided with a rash of child pornography cases. Chicago became the epicenter of what reporters Michael Sneed and George Bliss called a “national child porno ring” wherein child prostitutes were trafficked and men snapped and sold sexually explicit photographs, as well as video, of young boys.<sup>2</sup> Reports in the *Tribune* helped to spark national revulsion and led to federal legislation, and the formation of an Illinois Legislative Investigating Commission, to root out the sexual exploitation of children.<sup>3</sup>

Other less sensational topics regarding Church-city interaction recommend themselves to further study. Satisfactory answers to some inquiries, however, will have

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<sup>1</sup> “Sex and Violence: The Pollution Grows,” *CNW*, 3 December 1976. In regard to Catholics and pornography, the *Chicago Tribune* in 1976 reported one highly unusual but perhaps in some ways noteworthy anecdote: two adjacent bookshops on the 1600 block of West Howard Street on the North Side had Catholic owners. One operated a religious bookstore; the other an “adult bookstore which panders to kinky sexual taste in films, magazines, and paperbacks.” The former was a member of St. Jerome’s Catholic Church and participated in a charismatic prayer group; the latter was a weekly Mass-goer at St. Sebastian’s. See James Robison, “God Versus Sex in Battle of Bookstores,” *CT*, 19 December 1974.

<sup>2</sup> Michael Sneed and George Bliss, “Chicago is Center of National Child Porno Ring,” *CT*, 16 May 1977.

<sup>3</sup> Illinois Legislative Investigating Commission, “Sexual Exploitation of Children: A Report to the Illinois General Assembly,” 1977, CHM.



to wait until the personal papers of Cardinal Bernardin, as well as major political figures like Richard J. Daley, are officially opened. Scholars could consider the development of organizations and movements in the city with high concentrations of baptized Catholics. How did the labor movement and its Catholic leaders, for instance, weather post-industrial transition? How did Catholic policemen integrate their faith into their profession, and negotiate new methodologies in law enforcement strategies, such as “community policing”? Did the dwindling Catholic presence in many neighborhoods alter the dealings between these communities and the police? In what ways did the incipient pro-life/anti-abortion movements utilize city space to protest their causes?

Further inquiries could be made into the Church’s dealings with the strategies of city policymakers and managers. How did Harold Washington’s policy of funneling money and support into local neighborhoods and community organizations influence the dynamics between these communities and their parishes? Inversely, did downtown parishes suffer as a consequence of Washington’s community strategy? How did the archdiocese and theologically-motivated Catholics influence and respond to the ascendancy of Mayor Richard M. Daley, a baptized Catholic? In what ways did city managers marshal urban resources and carve out urban space to facilitate Pope John Paul II’s official visit to Chicago in 1979? How did this unprecedented event impact the local culture?

This dissertation’s examination of the influence of urban trends on the Catholic Church particularly but by no means exclusively considered the archdiocese and individual parishes. Other research that uses the lens of urban religious history has and should continue to situate individual demographic groups, such as Latinos, Polish

Americans, or women, as the center of analysis. How did Catholic female religious, for instance, shape Chicago women's movements? How were nuns reciprocally impacted? As the introduction to this dissertation indicated, a growing number of scholars have recognized Latino struggles to acquire recognition in their parishes, neighborhoods, and wards, and Latinos' use of parishes and Catholic organizations to realize these objectives. Others have addressed how Latinos in Chicago used city space to express their Catholic spirituality. Many questions remain, however. For example, how did Latinos marshal their religion to create a sense of community in a frenzied urban environment? How did the drift of a not insignificant number of Latinos away from Catholicism and toward evangelical Protestantism impact their conception of the city and the civic good?

Finally, it should be restated that intra-Church issues, such as the local reaction to Vatican II inspired changes to the liturgy, developments in spirituality, or ecumenism, were not the primary foci of this dissertation. Nonetheless, it would be remiss not to acknowledge two trends of unmistakable importance to Chicago Catholicism. First, allegations of clergy sexual abuse of minors, and then sometimes nauseating legal corroboration, began to surface in the 1990s. Perhaps the most infamous accusation was made against Cardinal Bernardin by a former seminarian, who later recanted. Nonetheless, verifiable accusations have been made throughout the country. The immediate impact on individual dioceses and the Catholic Church in the U.S., not to mention the personal devastation of victims, has been colossal and uniformly negative. However, many years must pass before historians can adequately contextualize and assess the historic meaning of clergy sexual impropriety and scandal. Second, the flow of Catholic social activists out of the seminary, their orders, the priesthood or religious life,

and sometimes out of the Catholic Church, is also noteworthy. Of the *dramatis personae* in this dissertation alone, Father Charles Kyle earned a Ph.D. in sociology, left the priesthood in the early 1990s, and then worked at several area colleges<sup>4</sup>; Alexian Brother Frank Souza, instrumental in the establishment of Bonaventure House, left the community in 1988<sup>5</sup>; Claretian seminarian Stephen Martz, also an early activist in the Catholic response to AIDS, converted to the Episcopal Church, the theology of which he evidently believed was more inclusive, and wherein he was ordained a priest in 1994<sup>6</sup>; James Keck of the Southwest Parish and Neighborhood Federation was a former seminarian<sup>7</sup>; and Father Frank McGrath, who had espoused a gay rights ordinance in the first half of the 1970s, left the priesthood in 1975.<sup>8</sup> A unique set of circumstances presumably influenced the decisions of each individual; it would be too rash to jump to the judgment that a particular Catholic theological tenet or pastoral approach was to blame for their collective disaffection.

### *Religious Reciprocity*

This dissertation argues that theologically-motivated Chicago Catholics marshaled religious reciprocity to respond to rift inducing events and trends. Reciprocity—or identifying common grievances and bringing them to the fore to be resolved, and fostering interdependence and rapport among Chicagoans—was one

<sup>4</sup> Michael Kates, “School-chief Aspirant Waging a Campaign,” *CT*, 14 April 1993;

<sup>5</sup> “Board of Governors, Minutes,” 14 December 1988, Folder: AIDS Ministry, Series 1, ABPA.

<sup>6</sup> Martz is presently pastor of the Church of Our Saviour in Elmhurst. Previously, he ministered at the Episcopal St. Nicholas Church in Elk Grove, during which time the church “became known for welcoming and including all kinds of people, among them children, former Roman Catholics, those in AA and other 12 step groups, interfaith families, and gay men and women.” See Chelle O’Connell, “Episcopal Church Drafts a New Quarterback,” *Trib Local Elmhurst*, 11 September 2011, <http://triblocal.com/elmhurst/community/stories/2011/09/episcopal-church-drafts-a-new-quarterback/>.

<sup>7</sup> Community Organizer Genealogy Project, “Jim Keck,” <http://organizergenealogy.org/jim-keck-0>.

<sup>8</sup> Kenan Heise, “Former Priest Frank McGrath, 62,” *CT*, 17 October 1986.

palpable impulse in post-conciliar Chicago Catholicism that was evident in parishes and archdiocesan leadership, and among religious congregations and influential laypeople. “Bridge building,” “sharing,” “dialogue,” and “common ground” were tangible embodiments of this impulse. Doubtlessly, Bernardin was a strong exponent of religious reciprocity; however, one should not overlook other local efforts to foster mutual exchange and address potentially divisive events and trends.

Encouraging the Church to remain open to secular enrichment was another important element of religious reciprocity. Some Catholics underscored that urban ordeals did not have to be uniformly negative. Grappling with turmoil, and participating in human suffering, could potentially foster the spiritual renewal of individual Catholics, religious orders, and the entire archdiocese. Other Catholics were certain that the everyday experiences of Chicagoans could and should inform Church teaching. Their insinuations were strengthened by the fact that moral theology was in a state of transition and uncertainty.

The politicization of gay liberation presented the sharpest challenge to religious reciprocity. Archdiocesan resistance to the gay rights ordinance, particularly in 1986, stoked allegations that Church rhetoric urging reciprocity merely cloaked archdiocesan efforts to socially ostracize Chicago’s homosexuals. Despite Bernardin’s repeated expressions of solidarity with gays and his exhortations for a citywide public dialogue on the issue of gay rights, a good deal of public and private animosity toward the Church persisted and continues to this day. The politicization of gay liberation was a significant turning point in Chicago Catholic history insofar as it indicated the limits of archdiocesan liberalism; officially, the Church could not appear to be sanctioning the morality of

certain homosexual “lifestyles” or genital acts. For posterity’s sake, the opposition of the archdiocese to the gay rights ordinance—which Cardinal Bernardin reasoned was an incredibly complicated issue that would have myriad social ramifications—should not and must not obscure Chicago Catholicism’s rich heritage of social and political liberalism.

This dissertation has demonstrated that urban contexts influence religious expressions. Theological beliefs, in turn, mold world views and shape everyday decisions. By adopting the lens of urban history, this dissertation implicitly admonishes interpretations of post-conciliar Chicago Catholic history that do not acknowledge the urban milieu as an important catalyst for local ecclesial developments. In underscoring that religion fueled historical actors in the late twentieth-century “secular city,” it simultaneously cautions against undervaluing theological beliefs as a category of historical analysis.

Doubtlessly, taking religion seriously can be a taxing, unsettling, and occasionally exasperating task. It may demand critical engagement with unfamiliar horizons, or conversely, with issues and convictions that are uneasily personal. When appropriate, however, the effort must be made. It is a matter of justice; honestly acknowledging and carefully describing the power of theological beliefs to animate is an obligation to the countless historical actors who understood themselves, and the people around them, as flesh, blood, and spirit.

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