UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA

GRADUATE COLLEGE

TRANSFORMING CATHOLICISM: MEXICAN-ORIGIN PEOPLE AND THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN SAN ANTONIO AND OKLAHOMA CITY IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

A DISSERTATION

SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE FACULTY

In partial fulfillment of the requirement for the

Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

By

JESUS PEREZ

Norman, Oklahoma

2020

TRANSFORMING CATHOLICISM: MEXICAN-ORIGIN PEOPLE AND THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN SAN ANTONIO AND OKLAHOMA CITY IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

A DISSERTATION APPROVED FOR THE

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

BY THE COMMITTEE CONSISTING OF

Dr. David M. Wrobel, Chair

Dr. David L. Chappell

Dr. James A. Cane-Carrasco

Dr. Robert ConDavis-Undiano

Dr. Raphael Folsom

ABSTRACT

"Transforming Catholicism" explores how the Catholic Church in the Archdioceses of San Antonio and Oklahoma City evolved in its relationship with the Mexican-origin community during the twentieth century. The Church in Oklahoma City, beginning with a large influx of Mexican immigrants into the state in the 1910s and 1920s, developed a friendly and supportive relationship with that community. The accompanying outreach efforts, led by Bishops Theophile Meerschaert and Francis C. Kelley, provide insight into how the American Catholic Church viewed Mexican-origin people. The Diocese of Oklahoma was an exemplary leader when it came to helping Mexican-origin people adapt and survive in the United States. The Church throughout the 1920s built various physical structures, which became the Little Flower Complex and remained the spiritual and social center of the Mexican-origin community in Oklahoma City for decades. The Archdiocese of San Antonio would become a preeminent leader on Mexican-origin social, labor, and immigrant rights, but not as early as its Church counterpart in Oklahoma City.

This study explores the Church's relationship with Mexican-origin people primarily through the lens of regional and local church leaders. In addition to the early Bishops of Oklahoma, various San Antonio Archbishops and priests are prominent participants in this story. It would not be until the installation of Archbishop Robert E. Lucey in San Antonio in 1941 that that archdiocese truly found its niche as a progressive ally for the Mexican-origin population. By 1941 the Mexican American middle classes were benefiting from the advocacy of the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), founded in 1929. LULAC's efforts would eventually uplift the entire community; however, those efforts did little to alleviate the impoverished conditions of the Mexican-origin working poor, many of whom were undocumented and shunned by LULAC.

Organizations such as LULAC and the American G.I. Forum are certainly a part of this story, but not the main focus. I argue that while the aforementioned civil rights organizations made great strides in the long-term, the Church through its deep relationship with Mexican-origin people made a greater difference in their daily lives, thereby helping sustain them until major legal and legislative battles were won. It was the Church in San Antonio and Oklahoma City which would come to play the most important role in the lives of working-class Mexican-origin people.

This dissertation also explores how the Church in San Antonio became increasingly active outside its assigned geographic area and expanded its efforts to support the Mexican American labor movement in the Rio Grande Valley in the 1960s and 1970s, an era of progressive transformation for the San Antonio Diocese. Likewise, the Church in Oklahoma became more heavily involved in immigrant rights and social justice efforts in the latter decades of the twentieth century as the number of immigrants from Mexico and other Latin American countries increased.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter 1: The Catholic Church and Mexican-Origin People in the Modern Southwest: A Historiographical Overview 1

Chapter 2: Bishop Francis Kelley, Mexican-Origin People, and the Church in Oklahoma City and San Antonio, 1925-1941 30

Chapter 3: Catholicism and Cold War Consensus: Archbishop Robert E. Lucey and the Bishops' Committee on the Spanish-Speaking, 1942-1950 61

Chapter 4: Catholicism and Social Justice: The Post War World, 1942-1960… 100

Chapter 5: Reformism or Radicalism: The Varied Voices of Fr. Sherrill Smith and Archbishop Robert E. Lucey, 1960-1970… 137

Chapter 6: Transformation and Continuity: Oklahoma City and San Antonio, 1970-1980…190

Chapter 7: Enduring Divisions: Social Justice in a Conservative Age, 1980-1992… 229

Epilogue 269

Bibliography: 273

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This project was only possible through the help and support of many people. However, among all the people that were part of this journey, no one was more helpful and understanding than my advisor Dr. David M. Wrobel without whom I would have stopped working toward my goal of earning a doctorate several years ago. Therefore, I express my deepest appreciation to Dr. Wrobel. His belief that I could complete my dissertation has inspired me to work harder throughout these past years. I am also appreciative of my committee members: Dr. David L. Chappell, Dr. James A. Cane-Carrasco, Dr. Robert Con Davis-Undiano, and Dr. Raphael Folsom. I also appreciate the support I received from Dr. Sterling Evans, who is no longer at the University of Oklahoma, however, he was the Graduate Coordinator when I was first accepted into the Ph.D. program in 2014.Also instrumental to my efforts to finish this project was the moral support I received from family and friends including my parents and close friends.

Lastly, I would like to thank all the amazing archivists and librarians at the following institutions for their help while completing my primary source research: the Texas Collection at Baylor University; the Benson Latin American Collection at the University of Texas at Austin; the J.E. and M.E. Mabee Library at the University of the Incarnate Word at San Antonio; the Louis J. Blume Library at St. Mary's University at San Antonio; the Chicano Collection at the

University of Texas – Rio Grande Valley. I also thank the archivists at the following non-university archives: the Archdiocese of San Antonio, the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City, and the Oklahoma History Center.

Chapter 1: The Catholic Church and Mexican-Origin People in the Modern Southwest: A Historiographical Overview

Foundational Works

Although Mexican-Americans in the twenty-first century have migrated to the furthest corners of the United States, in the latter half of nineteenth-century for and most of the twentieth-century, Mexican-Americans were heavily concentrated in the four border states of Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, and California. Today, these states still have the highest percentage of Mexican Americans and/or Mexican-origin people, however, Mexican-origin people now live all across the country. The historiography of Mexican Americans, while shunned by mainstream academic historians in the early part of the last century, slowly picked-up pace as that group became more educated. Toward the end of the twentieth-century, Mexican American history had become mainstream history in most colleges and universities and with academic presses. Nonetheless, there are gaps of knowledge when seeking to understand this demographic and its relationship with the wider American society.

Among the most studied relationships developed by Mexican-origin people in the United States is their connection with the Roman Catholic Church. However, those studies are either local studies or broad studies, which in most cases, fail to compare how Mexican-origin people and Church officials reacted and worked with each other in distinct regions over time. Therefore, this study will examine the dynamic relationship between Mexican-origin people and the Catholic Church in the greater South Texas region, particularly in San Antonio, and in the central Oklahoma region. These two regions are important because, taken together, they provide a clear picture of how the relationship between Mexican-origin people and the Church have changed over time. Furthermore, while Mexican-origin people have always been a part of the history of

the San Antonio and greater South Texas region, they did not form an important component of the history of Oklahoma until a later period.

With that in mind, one might assume that the relationship between the Church and Mexican-origin people would have been friendlier and more constructive in the South Texas region. It is important to note that the Church in Oklahoma, at least with regard to its leadership, supported Mexican parishioners in myriad ways as early as the 1920s. Under Bishop Francis W. Kelley, who showed little to no discrimination toward Mexican immigrants in Oklahoma City, the Church established a Mexican parish, community centers, and a school for Mexican children at a time when most of American society viewed Mexicans as an enemy, especially after the creation of the U.S. Border Patrol in 1925, and the "rise of the Illegal Alien."[1]

The relationship between Mexican Americans and Church officials in the Archdiocese of San Antonio, was more fraught and had its ups and downs. Additionally, the Mexican connection in Oklahoma City has been less tumultuous than that in the San Antonio region. The Archdiocese of Oklahoma City, and before that, the Diocese of Oklahoma, has not had a tradition of what I term "radical priests," like Fr. Sherrill Smith who was widely outspoken and even made friendly speeches and nods toward Communist organizations in the 1960s, especially regarding labor issues. With figures such as Fr. Smith in the foreground, the Mexican-Catholic connection in San Antonio has shifted back and forth from traditionalist to "radicalized."

This study focuses on the relationship between the Church and lower-income, immigrants, the working-class Mexican Americans. Historians have focused a good deal of attention on the middle-classes and their organizations such the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) and the American G.I. Forum, but have spent less time on the

[1]Joseph Nevins, *Operation Gatekeeper: The Rise of the "Illegal Alien" and the making of the U.S.-Mexico Boundary* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 29.

working-classes. Organizations such as LULAC and the American G.I. Forum are a part of this story, but not the main focus. I argue that while the aforementioned civil rights organizations made great strides in the long-term, the Church through its daily relationship with Mexican-origin people made a greater difference in their daily lives, which helped sustain them until major legal and legislative battles were won. The working-classes and immigrants are examined here, primarily through the eyes of the Church; the study draws heavily on Church publicans including the *Southern Messenger* and *Today's Catholic* in San Antonio, and the *Sooner Catholic* in Oklahoma City.

The study draws from archival sources in Oklahoma City and San Antonio, as well as minor archives located at the University of Texas-Rio Grande Valley in Edinburg, TX and the Texas Collection at Baylor University. The main archival collections located in San Antonio include the *J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library,* University of the Incarnate Word, the *Archbishop Robert C. Lucey* and *Fr. Sherrill Smith Collections,* at the Archdiocese of San Antonio, and *Louis J. Blume Library,* at St. Mary's University. The main sources of information found in Oklahoma City are the *Bishop Francis C. Kelley Collection* located at the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City headquarters, and the *Sooner Collection* found at the Oklahoma History Center. Also, online databases from the *Dorothy Day Center* in Oklahoma City are used primarily as a source regarding Papal Encyclicals beginning with *Rerum Novarum* published in 1891 by Pope Leo XIII.

The study rests on the rich foundations of Mexican American history. One of the earliest works on Mexican-Americans in the United States is Ruth Lande's' anthropological and historical study *Latin Americans of the Southwest* (1965). Lande argues that those Latin Americans occupied a position akin to that of African Americans in the South. Mexican

Americans like African Americans were denigrated by mainstream Anglo-American society. That denigration included second-class educational opportunities, and the relegation of both groups to low social positions and low-paying jobs.

Landes traces the enmity between Mexican Americans and Anglo-Americans all the way back to the English conception of Spanish brutality in the sixteenth century.[2]. She contends that sixteenth-century English Protestant views of Spanish Catholicism as inherently evil were inherited by Americans after the United States won its independence from Great Britain. Furthermore, the Protestant versus Catholic divide was one of the major reasons why Americans viewed Mexican Americans as an inferior group. The supposed ignorance of Mexican Americans after the U.S. acquisition of the Southwest was attributed largely to the fact that Catholicism attempted to keep people ignorant and obedient to the Roman Catholic clergy.

Arnoldo De Leon's *They Called Them Greasers: Anglo Attitudes toward Mexicans in Texas, 1821-1900,* is also among the most prominent early books on Mexican American history in Texas. De Leon's story focuses primarily on the attitudes of Anglo-Americans toward Mexican Americans in the aftermath of U.S War with Mexico. De Leon contends that many earlier histories of Mexican Americans were flawed because they were heavily influenced by historians with racist and ethnocentric perspectives including Walter Prescott Webb and Eugene C. Barker. Therefore, Mexican American history as it relates to Texas was one of cultural chauvinism and racism as recorded by mainstream historians, and De Leon seeks to correct this. His argument concludes that racism originated from varied sources including capitalist development, religion, and the western psyche.

[2]Ruth Landes, *Latin Americans of the South* (New York: McGraw-Hill, Inc, 1965), 47.

David Montejano's masterful *Anglos and Mexicans in the Making of Texas, 1836-1986* (1987), while dated by 2019 standards, remains a landmark study of Mexican-Americans in the Texas-Mexico border region. Montejano's study is broken into four distinct phases. Phase I is the era after the American victory in the U.S. War with Mexico and discusses the dispossession of the old order established by Mexican *hacendados.* Phase II follows with the arrival of the railroad and commercial farmers in the early twentieth century. Montejano then describes phase III as the era of "modern" farm society in which race segregation became the norm in many areas of greater South Texas. Phase IV analyzes urbanization and the industrial order that would eventually lead to the demise of segregation in the years after the Second World War.

While Anglo-American society historically has viewed Mexican-origin people as one and the same, with few exceptions, that perspective is historically and culturally inaccurate. David G. Gutierrez in *Walls and Mirrors: Mexican Americans, Mexican Immigrants, and the Politics of Ethnicity,* contends that the perception of all Mexican-origin people in the U.S. as entirely similar is completely wrong. Mexican-Americans, are in fact, American and not Mexican, while Mexican immigrants are Mexican. The idea that the two groups are the same is an Anglo-American creation, because it is easier for majority society to categorize them as one, instead of noticing the differences between them.

With those views ingrained in the reader's thinking, Gutierrez proceeds to argues that Mexican-Americans have always "been deeply divided over the immigration issue."[3] The divisions over immigration generally are found along socioeconomic lines. Those Mexican-Americas who have moved into the upper-middle classes or the middle-class primarily are opposed to unrestricted immigration from Mexico, or from any Latin American country for that

[3]Ibid, 4.

matter. The working-class and poor are more favorable to immigration from south of the border, but even then, within the working-classes there is a segment which condemns immigration because they view it as a danger to their livelihoods. Broadly speaking the working-classes have lower wages and less skills to offer in job market, therefore they have trouble earning decent incomes, meaning that they are competing with immigrants who are willing to work for less than they will take because they demand at least the minimum wage they due because of the American citizenship.

While the focus of my dissertation is the role of the Catholic Church in helping the Mexican-American working-class in the modern era, the nineteenth-century historical background is important. By understanding the events that shaped the Mexican-American community after the U.S. War with Mexico we can better appreciate the complexities by which that community interacted with the institutions around them, and the socio-economic struggles they faced throughout the twentieth-century.

Historian Jerry Thompson contends, like Landes and Gutierrez, that many of the socio-economic difficulties Mexican-origin people faced in the United States were because of the racist views and policies held by Anglo-Americans and the institutions which they dominated. Thompson in *Cortina Defending the Mexican Name in Texas* discusses the struggles faced by Mexican-origin people in South Texas in the years after the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo was signed. While the focus of the story is the life and activities of Juan Nepomuceno Cortina in the 1850s, for that story to be told, the injustices faced by his people provide the background information. Thompson argues that Cortina's image has gone through rehabilitation in the years prior to his book's publication in 2007. Cortina for many decades after his famous raids across the Rio Grande River was considered a criminal by Anglo-American society

Cynthia E. Orozco's in her monograph *No Mexicans, Women, or Dogs Allowed: The Rise of the Mexican American Civil Rights Movement* (2010) analyzes LULAC and its assimilationist approach to civil rights from its establishment in 1929. Even though that concept is not entirely original, Orozco does take it a step further than previous academics. For example, Gutierrez in *Walls and Mirrors* discusses the assimilationist approach LULAC took; however, that was not his primary focus. Instead, Gutierrez treat that theme within the larger framework of immigration policy.

While Orozco does discuss immigration as important to her overall story that is not the primary focus of her study. Orozco contends that past historians did not appropriately place LULAC within the political and economic contexts of the 1920s, which her book does. Furthermore, she argues that many historians have referred to LULAC as a middle-class organization, which is not a mischaracterization, nevertheless, there was a Mexican immigrant middle-class found in the United States with which the Mexican-American middle-class competed.[4] Therefore, Orozco touches on ideas presented by historian Richard A. Garcia nineteen years earlier.

Garcia in his monograph *Rise of the Mexican American Middle Class* (1991) acknowledges that a Mexican immigrant middle-class and even an upper-class found in San Antonio in the years after the Mexican Revolution attempted to retain control over Mexican-origin people in the city. Their idea was that they were all Mexican, meaning they needed to care about issues south of the border and keep their Mexican identity while residing in the U.S. Orozco like Garcia concedes that the differing viewpoints between the Mexican immigrant

[4]Cynthia E. Orozco, *No Mexicans, Women, or Dogs Allowed: The Rise of the Mexican American Civil Rights Movement* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2010), 6.

middle-class and the Mexican-American middle-class was an important reason why LULAC closed its ranks to Mexican immigrants in its early years.

World War One and Its Aftermath

Regarding the San Antonio region and the Church-Mexican relationship, sources are sparse for the 1920s, because this was prior to major involvement of the Church in that group's civil and labor struggles. On the other hand, the Church in Oklahoma was very active in assisting the small Mexican-origin community in the Oklahoma City area. The development of the relationship between the Church and Mexican Americans followed different chronological trajectories in the two regions. Scholarship on World War One and its aftermath for residents of the U.S.-Mexico border region is important for contextualizing the early parts of this study's core coverage.

Progressive and World War I era ideals of Americanization and English-only were not lost on Mexican Americans seeking to remedy their status as second-class citizens of the United States. Mexican Americans throughout this period, and more so as time went on, sought to prove to mainstream American society that they too loved their new adopted country and that they could be as patriotic as any other Americans. These ideas are developed with great care and detail by historians Jose A. Ramirez and Nicolas Villanueva in their respective works *To the Line of Fire: Mexican Texans and World War I* (2009) and *The Lynching of Mexicans in the Texas-Mexico Borderland* (2017).

Ramirez's work chronicles two overlapping stories. The first is an overarching story of the effects of World War I on Mexican-Texans both immediate and long-term. The second, is the story of two Mexican American *Tejanos* who served in World War I and the challenges they faced in American society, including the military. These men, Jose de La Luz Saenz and David

Cantu Barkley, both fought bravely in support of American ideals of freedom and making the world safe for democracy, however, the way they served was different.

Jose De La Luz Saenz served as a Mexican American because he could not hide his Hispanic features. Barkley, on the other served as an American, and was able to conceal his Mexican American ancestry. Barkley was half-white and could pass alongside American recruits. Ramirez argues that while one was upfront about his heritage, and the other was not, by understanding their motives and where they came from, we are able to analyze the "experiences of Mexican-origin individuals" in World War I and the reasons for embracing or concealing their heritage.[5]

Likewise, Nicholas Villanueva, Jr. in *The Lynching of Mexicans in the Texas Borderlands* contends that World War I was a major turning point for Mexican Americans in the United States. It is during this era the number of lynchings of Mexican-origin people declined rapidly, Americans up until this period considered Mexican-origin people as an enemy as an culturally different. Additionally, the 1910s was the era in which the Mexican Revolution was in full swing, a revolution that caused the destruction of American property in Mexico and in some U.S. border towns, too. The perspective of Mexicans as not respectful of property rights and as ruthless played into the fears and disdain that Americans had of Mexican-origin people. Villanueva claims that World War I gave Americans a new enemy that was not Mexican-origin people -- Germans and German-descendent people in the United States. This, alongside the fact that many Mexican Americans actively participated in World War I, would provide them an opening to demand their civil rights.

[5]Jose A. Ramirez, *To the Line of Fire: Mexican Texans and World War I* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2009), 2.

The Catholic Church and Mexican Americans

The relationship between Mexican Americans and the Catholic Church is the primary story addressed in this study; therefore, it is imperative that we consider some of the majorworks that examine that relationship. Additionally, some of the larger Catholic ideas regarding economics also deserve space, because neither of these stories – of religion and economy - can be told without the other. The scholarship of Timothy Matovina has been instrumental in exploring these stories.

Matovina is one of the pre-eminent historians of the Church and the Latino community. His *Guadalupe and Her Faithful: Latino Catholics in San Antonio, from Colonial Origins to Present* (2005) and *Latino Catholicism: Transformation in America's Largest Church* (2013) are both foundational to the present study. Matovina's examination of San Antonio's Mexican American Catholics is focused mainly on the San Fernando Cathedral, which he argues that "for nearly three centuries has sustained its Guadalupian devotion," through many hardships including Anglo discrimination, new Mexican immigrant arrivals, and economic dislocations.[6] Matovina, by addressing the relationship at a single location, effectively delineates the at times sometimes rocky association between the Church and Mexican-origin people.

Early in the history of San Antonio Catholicism, the leadership at that outpost of the Spanish Empire was not friendly toward the idea of worshiping the Virgin of Guadalupe. Fray Francisco de Bustamante was among the critics of the promotion of Guadalupan devotion because in his view that was an assault against the "proper Christianity" of indigenous peoples across New Spain.[7] Franciscan Fray Bernardino de Sahagan was another critic of Guadalupan

[6]Timothy Matovina, *Guadalupe and Her Faithful: Latino Catholics in San Antonio, from Colonial Origins to Present* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2005), xi.
[7]Ibid., 2.

worship because it closely resembled pre-Colombian indigenous worship practices. Bernardino contended that Catholic acceptance of Guadalupan veneration disguised indigenous idolatry, because there were close similarities between Indian views on Guadalupe when compared to Tonantzin who had been an Aztec mother goddess.[8]

Mexican Catholicity in the early decades of Spanish conquest was not a given. The syncretism of Catholic religious concepts with those of the Aztecs was necessary to transform the indigenous inhabitants into loyal Catholics, a loyalty that has remained throughout the centuries and regardless of the nation that they are living in. Guadalupan devotion among San Antonio's Mexican Catholics was not strong at first, but once it took hold it remained steadfast. As the most sacred image of Mexican-origin people the Virgin of Guadalupe has provided strength to that community. The strength provided by Guadalupan veneration has also influenced Mexican-origin people's relationship with American Catholics whose own religious ideas were different from their own, likewise, the American Catholic Church's relationship with Mexican-origin people has been influenced by the loyalty those people feel toward the Church.

Matovina through his study of San Fernando Cathedral is also able to bring to light the differences between Mexicans who arrived in the wake of the Mexican Revolution and Mexican Americans. Cynthia Orozco, Benjamin Johnson, and Richard Garcia all emphasize that there were significant differences between Mexican nationals and Mexican Americans. Matovina contends that Ignacio E. Lozano founder of "La Prensa" a San Antonio-based newspaper was among the most influential voices of Mexican nationals. This worldview of being Mexican and seeking the betterment of Mexico was not well-received by Mexican American leaders because

[8]Ibid.

unlike the émigré Mexican middle and upper classes they did not wish to leave the United States this was their county.[9]

San Fernando Cathedral was in the 1920s and 1930s the center of the animosity between Mexican nationals and Mexican Americans. Both groups venerated the Virgin of Guadalupe and looked to the Church as an important political and economic player; however, both groups competed for leadership positions within the parish societies and associations. Nonetheless, members of the Mexican American middle classes tended to downplay their worship of the Virgin of Guadalupe and the Church in general while seeking to become more American than was the case with most Mexican nationals. Mexican immigration to the United States allowed for the resurgence of Guadalupan devotion at San Fernando Cathedral.[10]

Although Matovina's work, does not describe how the Church worked with the Mexican American working class and the poor in general by focusing on one aspect of the Catholic Church and the Mexican-origin community in San Antonio's San Fernando Cathedral, Matovina illuminates the experience of Mexican-origin people and their close relationship with the Church from the days of the Spanish empire through to the present. My study focuses more directly on Catholic struggles to aid the Mexican-origin community in their flight for labor rights and social justice.

In *Latino Catholicism,* Matovina does not focus on one physical location, but instead sets out to demonstrate how the Church in America is being transformed by its Latino members, including Mexican-origin people, the largest single Hispanic group in the United States. Matovina also examines how American society in general plays a significant role in the transformation of the Latino and Catholic community. Unlike in *Guadalupe and Her Faithful*,

[9]Ibid., 105.
[10]Ibid., 115.

which provides a wide chronological arc to discuss San Fernando Cathedral and Mexican Catholics in San Antonio, Matovina here focuses primarily on the latter part of the twentieth-century.[11]

Furthermore, Matovina chronicles the divisions between Mexican-origin people in the United States and those of European descent. Those divisions include differences in racial and religious ideologies. Even though most scholars of history in the United States know that Anglo Americans historically viewed Mexican Americans as inferior as portrayed in works by Montejano, Johnson, De Leon, and others, those works do not focus solely, or even primarily on the Catholic Church. These authors pivot toward the political and economic aspects of the American Mexican relationship that developed in the century after the U.S. War with Mexico culminated in 1848. The war itself was, according to Matovina, viewed as divine providence in the minds of many nineteenth-century Protestant leaders. The idea was that Protestantism was superior to Catholicism, especially the Hispanic Catholicism found in Mexico and the rest of Latin America, which differed from European Catholicism, which for all its flaws was still considered by American Protestants superior nonetheless.[12]

Moreover, Matovina brings to light the concerns of both Hispanic Catholics and Euro-American Catholics. These concerns go a long way toward explaining why many Anglo-American Catholics in the early years of the Mexican American civil rights movement remained passive observers at best. Matovina argues that Catholics of European descent in the United States are more likely to be concerned "with issues of authority and adaptation of the Church to the U.S. milieu," than Hispanic Catholics, who viewed the Church as an institution that could

[11]Timothy Matovina, *Latino Catholicism: Transformation in America's Largest Church* (Liguori: Liguori Publications, 2013), 6.
[12]Ibid., 19.

"uplift" the poor, the working-class, and the immigrant community.[13] Hispanic Catholicism, therefore, remains more attached to the Church than mainstream American Catholicism. Nonetheless, Hispanic attachment to the Church has brought with it demands that the Church become politically active, such as in matters of immigration, labor, and social rights struggles. The Church in San Antonio and Oklahoma City has often played that more politically active role. Conversely, traditionally minded conservatives within the Church and among the laity have opposed Church interference in secular affairs. These more traditional Church perspectives and practices have also been evident in San Antonio and Oklahoma City.

The reasons for official Church interference in political, economic, and social affairs are not solely based on local issues and necessities, instead, they are based on a top-down authority. Nevertheless, it is the local archdioceses and dioceses that put into practice the policies issued by the Papacy, or other organizations such as the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. Church involvement in economic affairs comes primarily through the sway the Church has on its vast membership, and even though the Catholic Church in America has never held a majority of religious adherents, it is still the largest single denomination in the country, with an economic purchasing power not matched by any other religious denomination. Moreover, the Church has often used its economic influence in helping communities of color, particularly Mexican Americans in attaining civil and labor rights, and that has certainly been the case in the Archdioceses of San Antonio and Oklahoma City.

Notwithstanding the fact that this study is local in nature, priests such as Fr. Sherrill Smith and prelates including Archbishops Robert E. Lucey and Charles Salatka of San Antonio and Oklahoma City respectively were well versed in Catholic theology that stretched back

[13]Ibid., 152.

centuries. Besides, these same Catholic leaders who led and worked alongside the Mexican American community were proficient in Catholic teachings on economics and labor issues. Economics and labor have been central to the Church throughout its existence but became even more so with the publication of Rerun Novarum. From this starting point, subsequent popes have issued their own encyclicals that have influenced actions of national and local churches across the world. Numerous works of scholarship discuss economic, labor, and social issues as they relate to the Church, and a few of those warrant special mention here.

Theology and Church History

Max Weber's seminal work *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (1905) was one of the first modern accounts about Christianity, Protestantism, and the Roman Catholic Church, and their views about the rise and eventual success of the capitalist system. Although Weber's work was not precisely related to Catholic social teaching, it effectively explained how Protestant and Catholic views on the free-market economy-emerged and then effected, worldviews on labor, charity, and government regulation of the economic system.

According to Weber capitalism itself was not a creation of the reformation or the enlightenment in Europe, it had in fact been a part of human history to one degree or another since the start of organized civilization. Weber traces the various forms of early capitalism to Babylon, Ancient Egypt, India, as well as to Medieval Europe. Early capitalism in the sense presented by Weber is primarily based on trade, barter, and the production of goods for the betterment of living standards. However, Weber does differentiate between the early forms of capitalism and the one that developed in the capitalistic West. Modern Capitalism, thereof, is the "rational organizational of formally free labor," which means that modern capitalism is

characterized by free and independent men (and women) working for wages and creating wealth, even though they might not see that wealth.[14]

Weber's next main concept was his explanation of the development of capitalism in Protestant versus Roman Catholic countries. He focused particular attention on Germany, arguing that most businessmen and bankers there, alongside technical skilled labor were largely Protestants. His reasoning was that Protestantism gave believers an impetus to be more involved in this world's functioning than did Roman Catholicism. Discussing contemporary times (the beginning of the twentieth-century), he claimed that middle-class and working-class Protestants while believing in a higher-power are not consumed by all the festivities and doctrines of their Catholic counterparts. He then went on to argue that the difference between Catholic and Protestant views on capitalism are easily apparent when observing the upper ranks of the aforementioned groups. Weber claimed that the upper-ranks of Protestantism "are most indifferent to religion," which stands in sharp contrast to what he saw in the upper-ranks of Catholicism.[15]

Richard H. Tawney, an English economic historian writing in 1926 was among the first economists or historians to take issue with Max Weber's argument that Reformed Protestantism played such a big role in the development of the capitalist economic system, a system defined as formally free labor engaging in wage employment. Tawney's in *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism* examined "the development of religious thought on social and economic questions." To a significant degree Tawney contended that Protestantism does not play as large a role as Weber argues regarding the development of capitalism in Germany and in other countries with

[14]Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism,* translated by Talcott Parsons (New York: Alexander Street Press, 2011), 4.
[15]Ibid., 43.

significant reformed traditions.[16] Tawney, however, did agree with Weber on a number of issues including the origins of the modern capitalist system. More specifically, they agreed that capitalism in the sense that we now we have come to know it originated in Renaissance and Reformation Europe. Weber conceded that some aspects of capitalism predated those eras, but not the modern aspects.

Tawney further argued that modern-day capitalists and government officials who view Church interference as negative and who claim that there is no basis for it are wrong. The idea that the Church, particularly the Catholic Church, should not pressure government in support of legislative acts that are pro-worker or social in nature was not new; in fact, it had many historical precedents. Tawney contended that the real problem would be if the Catholic Church were not involved in social and economic affairs. According to Tawney, the Catholic Church could not be separated from its efforts to a have a say in social policy, which in most cases put it at odds with the practices of an unregulated capitalist system. Lastly, he concluded by stating that Protestantism did not play the role assigned to it by Weber in the development of capitalism. He concluded that modern capitalism is irreligious and without "public spirit," thereby negating the older view of Protestantism presented by Weber.

Michael J. Schuck in *That They Be One: The Social Teaching of the Papal Encyclicals, 1740-1989* (1991), examines the social teaching of papal encyclicals, exploring Catholic social teaching and not the relationship between Capitalism and Christianity, as the much earlier works of Weber and Tawney did. Schuck, however, does build on those earlier works and addresses some of the same issues, particularly how Catholic social thought developed. Of particular note, Schunk, unlike most Catholic social historians, does not start his analysis of Catholic social

[16]Richard H. Tawney, *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism* (New York: Harcourt Brace and Company), xi.

teaching with Pope Leo XIII; instead, he goes back further in the past to provide a broad understanding of the issues and how they affected the last decade of the nineteenth-century.

Schunk separates Catholic social thought into three separate, but not indistinguishable periods, which he classifies as the "pre-leonide," "leonide," and "post-leonide." The last two of these periods cover from 1877 to the present, and this is the period most Catholic social historians look at. In this era, Pope Leo XIII issued *Rerum Novarum*, which is hailed by social historians as a momentous turning point for the Catholic worldview in the new industrial and capitalist world.[17]

Kevin E. McKenna's *A Concise Guide to Catholic Social Teaching* (2002) is an authoritative study of the social teachings of the Church. Mckenna acknowledges that the Catholic Church has a historical significance like few other institutions have held, nonetheless, he maintains that the great contribution of the Church is "the cohesive body of thought known as Catholic social teaching."[18] To support his argument, McKenna draws on the major papal teachings starting in the late nineteenth-century and continuing through the end of the twentieth-century, in addition to focusing on teachings from various U.S. Catholic organizations. Some of these organizations are the Episcopal Conference of the United States and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.

Admittedly the teachings of these national and international Church institutions greatly influenced the local actions of archdioceses, dioceses, and parishes across the United States including the areas that this study focuses on. A key event that led to greater Church participation in the struggles of Mexican-origin people was the Second Vatican Council. This council, according to McKenna, signaled the increased promotion of Catholic social teaching at

[17] The pre-leonide period covers the years from 1740 -1877.
[18]Kevin E. McKenna, *A Concise Guide to Catholic Social Teaching* (Notre Dame: Ave Maria Press, 2002), xi.

all levels of the Church, both among the clergy and laity. The council opened the door to the establishment of various lay ministries that were organized at both the diocesan and parish levels with the goal of transforming the society around them along the lines established by the Church.

Granted, the local Church across the country already had social assistance programs prior to the council; however, a major difference was in the way they were administered. The Church had a history of seeing its less fortunate adherents in a paternalist fashion for most of the twentieth-century, which changed significantly in the 1960s. The 1960s were an era in which Church leadership sought to give a voice to the underprivileged in their communities. This was the space, I contend, that would give central figures of my study, such as Fr. Sherill Smith, the opportunity to act in more assertive ways when confronting entrenched business interests that sought to keep the Mexican-origin people in subservient and impoverished conditions in both the greater South Texas region and Oklahoma City.

In *Economics as if God Matters: More Than a Century of Papal Teaching* (2011), Rupert J. Ederer examines papal teaching on social justice, and the obligation to be involved in the betterment of our fellow man. However, Ederer in researching and analyzing many of the same documents that McKenna examines, comes to a different conclusion. Whilst, McKenna contends that knowledge of social justice has become greater in Catholic minds in the aftermath of the Second Vatican Council, Ederer argues that social justice has "receded in importance" since the conclusion of the Second Vatican Council in 1965.[19] Ederer contends that the decline in the importance of social justice is due to a number of factors, foremost among them the criticisms and scandals the Church has been involved in including sexual abuse cases, and the collapse of the main enemy of western democratic societies: the Soviet Union.

[19]Rupert J. Ederer, *Economics as if God Matters: More than a Century of Papal Teaching* (Lanham: The Scarecrow Press, 2011), xvii.

Though the decline in social justice activism in many areas of the Church may be, in fact, true, that does not mean that the Church has put those concerns aside. Popes and other Catholic prelates through to the present have continued publishing treatises on economic rights and social justice. The problem is that in the closing decades of the twentieth century and in the twenty-first century, the Church in western society has lost its hold on moral issues and its sway over public opinion is not what it once was. A problem in attaining popular support for Catholic social teaching is the criticisms that have been leveled at the Church concerning the scope of its proper jurisdiction.

The Church's jurisdiction according to opponents of Catholic social justice, whether they be liberal capitalists, Protestants, conservative Catholics, or a combination of any of those groups, should be limited to only spiritual concerns. According to Ederer the critics of Church social justice theology are wrong, because in caring for the spiritual needs of God's people, the Church needs to make sure that God's people also have the basic needs in order for them to find and serve God as well as their brethren. He also contends that much modern economic writing on Catholic social justice originates from the works of a German Jesuit priest, Heinrich Pesch, S.J., who in the latter part of the nineteenth century attempted to bridge the need for the Church to be involved in both temporal human wants and the "inherent religious need in human nature."[20]

Ederer analyzes and explains each of the major papal encyclicals starting with *Rerun Novarum* and concluding with Pope Benedict's XVI *Caritas in Veritate* published in 2009. Yet, Ederer differentiates his work by briefly weighing in on the importance of two lesser known encyclical published prior to Novarum. Pope Lex XIII in 1878 issued both *Inscrutabili Dei Consilio* and *Quod Apostolici Muneris*, which Ederer considers to be the launching pad for

[20]Ibid., 6.

modern Catholic social teachings, thereby departing from the common idea that Novarum was the starting point for Catholic Church engagement with non-theological matters.

Ederer also emphasizes the unsavory relationship the Catholic Church has held with the idea of liberal capitalism as espoused by French Physiocrats, a group of French economists led by Francois Quesnay, who challenged the ideas of mercantilism and brought forth the idea that regulated economies do not work as well as unregulated market economies. Although the Church has opposed the concept of *laissez-faire,* or the market economy, it was Pope John XXIII who in his 1961 encyclical *Mater Et Magistra* began by categorically rejecting the "Enlightenment philosophy of the French Physiocrats."[21] Ederer claims that John XXIII's opposition to liberal capitalist ideology, as well as the Church's general opposition, resulted from that ideology's contention that there is no connection between economic and moral law, a position that the Church simply cannot support.

Catholic social teaching has in content and spirit remained the same; however, the way it is presented and written has changed. Daniel K. Finn in *The True Wealth of Nations: Catholic Social Thought on Economic Life* (2010) argues that Catholic social thought remains grounded in the equality of all humans based on their likeness to God. While religiosity has declined in importance in the twenty-first century, Finn states that Catholic social thought provides "an effective path to sustainable property for all," whether many realize it or not.[22] Furthermore, Finn, like Schunk and McKenna, argues that there are noticeable differences in Catholic social thought as religion recedes into the background of the modern world.

[21]Ibid., 64.
[22]Daniel K. Finn, *The True Wealth of Nations: Catholic Social Thought on Economic Life* (Oxford University Press, 2010), 2.

However, unlike Shuck who contends that one of the significant changes to take place was evident in *Redemptor Hominis,* an encyclical by Pope John II, Finn claims that the change came in another of John Paul II's letters, *Centesimus Annus* issued in 1991. Thus far most economic historians who discuss social justice in relation to Catholicism contend that the Church has stood in opposition to free market capitalism throughout history, and while Finn does not negate that, the fact that he is writing in 2010 allows him to have a different perspective. Finn states that papal encyclicals up to *Centesimus Annus* did oppose the free market, but that Pope John II changed that. According to Finn, John Paul II thought that a "market-driven economic system could, in the right conditions, promote the economic good."[23]

Nonetheless, that does not mean that the Church entirely supports a market economic system. As John Paul II asserted, a market economy can only function in certain conditions, which include the presence of labor's right to organize, quality health care, living wages, and many other social justice matters that have been supported by Catholic social teaching. Further, Finn states that the market economy as espoused by John Paul II and subsequently by the Catholic Church was one in which the "common good" was promoted. The common good in the minds of Church leadership could only be found in God as the "final end" of all good things in the world.

Finn also finds evidence which he argues proves that not all Catholic institutions were opposed to the rise of capitalism. In fact, there are some Catholic organizations that may have provided a pathway for the flourishing of the capitalist state in later decades and centuries. Finn contends that the Franciscan School of the thirteenth through fifteenth centuries was administered in a manner that resembled a market institution. Therefore, Franciscans although

[23]Ibid., 5.

subordinate to the Pope had some commonalities with Protestant denominations. Nevertheless, Franciscans still maintained their nominal opposition to the free-market.

Ultimately, Finn also brings into the argument documents published by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). In doing so he brings into light something the USCCB refers to as the "Catholic Framework for Economic Life," which he argues follow closely papal encyclicals but breaks them down for the United States. Among the main social justice arguments presented by the USCCB are that the economy is made for the person and not the person for the economy; all people have the right to life and to secure the basic necessities of life (e.g., food, clothing, shelter, and education) through a regulated market economy.[24]

Finn's *Christian Economic Ethics* (2013) focuses on western Christianity as a whole, not just Roman Catholicism and examines what Christian views on the economy mean for the twenty-first century. Finn claims that most Christians, regardless of denomination, do not know much about the social justice documents published by either the Protestant or Catholic Churches. Catholic social justice can be found in encyclicals, other publications by the papacy, or by other Catholic organizations like the USCCB. Protestant documents on social justice started to be crafted primarily early on in the Protestant Reformation, but largely by those denominations that remained more closely connected to Catholicism, such as the Anglicans and Lutherans. Many charities and social justice programs, originated in Church-supported programs during what in the United States is known as the Gilded Age, roughly 1870-1900. Finn's study takes into account the entire history of Christianity in order to explain social justice, and not just encyclicals from 1893 to the present.

[24]Ibid., 5.

The Church and Mexican-Origin People

Among the many works published by or about Mexican-origin people, there are several studies that examine their relationship with the Roman Catholic Church in America. Most of these works focus on either the Mexican-American Generation of middle-class activists who came to prominence in the late 1920s or the Chicano generation which became more noticeable in the 1960s and 1970s.[25] Although those groups had different ideologies, they had various things in common. First, they both sought the betterment of their community, and second, they both came from a better-off, or at least more educated backgrounds than the common Mexican American person. With that in mind, what was the average Mexican American thinking or doing during this time period, and how did they react to life's daily struggles.

The fact is that while both the Mexican American Generation and Chicano Generation activists sometimes referred to themselves mass movements because most members of their communities supported at least some of their efforts, the vast majority of Mexican Americans were more concerned with their immediate needs including housing, food, education, health, better working conditions, and higher wages. These Mexican-Americans also tended to be more attached to the Catholic Church than their more educated brethren, which makes one thing clear: people who were less educated and working-class looked to the Church for leadership both in spiritual and temporal matters.

[25] See Richard Alba, Albert J. Raboteau, and Josh DeWind, Ed., *Immigration and Religion in America: Comparative and Historical Perspectives* (New York New York University Press, 2009); Orlando O. Espin, *Building Bridges, Doing Justice: Constructing a Latino/a Ecumenical Theology* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2009); Stephen R. Warner, Judith G. Wittner, *Gatherings in Diaspora: Religious Communities and the New Immigration* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1998); Jay P. Nolan, Gilberto M. Hinojosa, *Mexican-Americans and the Catholic Church, 1900-1965* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1997); Saul E. Bronder, *Social Justice & Church Authority: The Public Life of Archbishop Robert E. Lucey* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1982); Steven M. Avella, *Sacramento and the Catholic Church: Shaping a Capital City* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 2008).

Among the many excellent publications detailing Catholicism in the West/Southwest where Mexican-origin people predominated for most of the twentieth-century, is John McCreery's *Catholics, Democrats, and the GOP in Contemporary America* (2007) in which he examines the relationship between the Catholic Church and both the Republican and Democratic parties. McCreery argues that there are three interrelated stories within the main conceptual framework of the Catholic Church and American politics.

First, the Catholic Church, as a Church of immigrants, had a good relationship with the Democratic Party everywhere in the country, except the South, because the Democratic Party supported immigrant rights, labor rights, and up until the 1970s tended to be more conservative on social issues. Second, the defining moment in the Catholic/Democratic relationship arrived in the early 1970s with the seminal *Roe v. Wade* case that legalized abortion in the first trimester of conception. Third, the "liberalism" and social justice views of the 1960s and 1970s Church had given way to a new breed of Catholic intellectuals, bishops, and priests who are against social liberalism, especially contraception and abortion at all costs, even if it means supporting Republican candidates who oppose labor rights, immigrant rights, and social welfare assistance to the less fortunate.[26]

Even though the relationship between Catholics and Democrats may appear to have declined since the Democratic Party embraced feminism, LGBT rights, and abortion, many Catholics still back Democrats. Among them, Mexican Americans, who have historically been affiliated with the Democratic Party, and who remain staunchly in that camp, even though as McCreery contends most of them are united in their view that abortion is wrong. Other Catholics who traditionally were Democrats started moving away the party because of its support for

[26]John McCreery. "Catholics, Democrats, and the GOP in Contemporary America," *American Quarterly*, Vol. 59, No. 3 (2007), 669.

African American civil rights in the late 1960s and 1970s. McCreery argues that while Democratic conservatism has become very weak, there were still 32 members of the Democrats for Life caucus within the House of Representatives in 2007. These social conservatives attempt to bridge the gap between the party and the Catholic Church to rejuvenate their alliance.

Jeffrey M. Burns in *Prelude to Reform: The Church in San Francisco Before the Council* (2005), argues that the Catholic Church in San Francisco did not wait for social reform initiatives to come from the top, instead, it was reformist prior to the Second Vatican Council. Burns contends that San Francisco among the many Catholic dioceses and archdioceses was especially inclined toward social justice and labor activism during the 1960s.[27] San Francisco's Catholic activism, as remarkable as it might be, was no more so than as that of Fr. Sherrill Smith and Archbishop Robert E. Lucey in the Archdiocese of San Antonio and adjacent regions of greater South Texas. Nevertheless, the claims made by Burns are not false either, instead they are part of the same story which I tell about the radicalization of San Antonio-based Catholic clergy. Further, my claim vis-à-vis the Archdiocese of San Antonio's eminent position regarding Mexican American labor and social rights is not that they were the most radical, instead that they were ahead of other Catholic dioceses and archdioceses, and that their assistance played a greater role in the life of working-class Mexican-origin people in their day-to-day activities.

For example, Burns mentions that San Francisco became a center for social activism beginning in the 1950s, which was almost a decade later than Archbishop's Lucey installation in San Antonio. The interesting correlation between San Francisco and San Antonio is that it could be argued that they were working in partnership, because many of the activities enacted in both archdioceses mirrored each other. However, the Archdiocese of San Antonio was a premier

[27]Jeffery M. Burns, "Prelude to Reform: The Church in San Francisco Before the Council," *U.S. Catholic Historian*, Vol. 23, No. 4 (2005), 4.

leader in the struggle for Mexican American rights, therefore, it is likely that many of its initiatives were copied in other areas of the country. Those activities included the creation of a small groups of priests to minister to farm workers in the fields; priests that would see the harsh living conditions and would join the fight for labor rights, and the increase of coverage of social issues in archdiocesan publications. As fascinating as the story of social and labor rights in both archdioceses might be, that is a story left for another day. The importance here lies in understanding that the Church was active in Mexican American labor, social, and civil rights across America in both urban and rural centers, in areas with traditional Mexican-origin populations, and in areas such as Oklahoma City where Mexican Americans remained only small minority, even through to the present-day.

Steven M. Avella's *Catholicism in the Twentieth-Century American West: The Next Frontier* (2011), while not entirely or even mainly focused on Mexican Americans and politics, is a very good work that brings the Church into the historiography of the American West. My purpose is not to tell a story that encompasses the American West as a whole; nevertheless, Avella's work helps us understand that the story of Oklahoma City and greater South Texas fits into the larger picture of the West. Avella's work brings to into perspective how federal investment starting with the New Deal, and rapidly expanding during the Second World War helped the expansion of the Catholic Church in many western communities. [28]

Avella, like many other historians, contends that federal investment drove population growth in the West, which affected the Catholic population dramatically. Catholics from the Midwest and Eastern Seaboard, as well as tens of thousands from Mexico settled throughout the West in the 1940s and after. This growth of Catholic population led to an increase in Catholic

[28]Steven M. Avella, "Catholicism in the Twentieth-Century West: The Next Frontier," *Catholic Historical Review*, Vol. 97, No. 2 (2011), 222.

dioceses and archdioceses from thirty-nine in 1950 to sixty-six in 2000. This story also correlates with the growth of Texas Catholics, and to a lesser extent to that of Oklahoma as both regions received federal investment throughout that period. Furthermore, Avella's contention that the Catholic West is a new frontier is an appealing narrative, because it shows how Catholicism and American history are both fluid. The new frontier is not necessarily limited to Catholicism, we also need to consider the intermixing of Anglo American and Mexican American culture.

The Catholic Church in the United States through its charitable initiatives, social justice advocacy, and support for labor rights was the main force of change that many working-class Mexican Americans saw in their daily lives. These people obviously took notice of other events going on around them including supreme court cases such as *Delgado v. Bastrop* among others that guaranteed them equality in education. Furthermore, for the Mexican American working-class encyclicals, other papal, or Church writings did not mean much because they did not have widespread knowledge of what was contained in them. Yet, social justice documents whether internationally written by the Pope, or national in scope and written by the USCCB were on the minds of individual Catholic clergy like Archbishop Robert E. Lucey, Fr. Sherrill Smith, and Archbishop Francis Kelley when working on behalf of the Mexican American working classesin areas like Oklahoma City and the greater South Texas region. Consequently, I contend that the Catholic Church in these regions played a much larger and more important role in the daily life of the Mexican American working-class than did Mexican American civil rights organizations that focused on long-term goals rather than everyday needs.

The change in leadership from the Church in Oklahoma to the Church in San Antonio is examined in later chapters. Chapter three follows the Archdiocese of San Antonio during Archbishop Lucey's early leadership and thus covers San Antonio. Chapter four covers both

regions but leans heavily toward San Antonio in its focus. Chapter five also covers San Antonio and during an era when the Church become radicalized primarily through Fr. Sherill Smith's efforts. Chapter's six and seven are combined chapters that cover both regions and emphasize how the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City became more active on behalf of social and labor rights of Mexican-origin people and other immigrants, too. While chapter six is divided roughly equally between the two cities, chapter seven is directed more toward Oklahoma City.

Chapters three and five focus solely on San Antonio and offer a glimpse into how the Archdiocese of San Antonio became the most important one within the Church in its relationship with the Mexican-origin community. San Antonio proved to be a pioneering region in church policy and the horizons of social reform. Chapter five's emphasis on the radicalization of priests in the Archdiocese of San Antonio and their wide-ranging influence finds no parallel in the Archdiocese of Oklahoma; thus, the chapter's sole San Antonio focus.

Chapter 2: Bishop Francis Kelley, Mexican-origin People, and the Church, 1925-1941

The United States Congress created the U.S. Border Patrol in May 1924 under the auspices of the Immigration Act. This new agency, although transformative in the relationship between Mexican-origin people and the United States government for generations to come, would only become wholly detrimental on certain occasions, including the repatriations of the early 1930s. The relationship would become one of fear among many in the Mexican-origin community during such periods of persecution. While it was argued that only "aliens" should worry about any effects of the new federal agency, the fact was that racism and anti-Mexican sentiments on the part of many Anglo Americans would lead to disastrous consequences that touched the lives of many Mexican-origin families.

As the federal government created and organized the Border Patrol during 1924 and 1925 the relationship between Mexican-origin people and the various state governments of the Southwest were not particularly positive either. Therefore, many in the Mexican community still looked at the federal government throughout the 1920s and after for relief from the racist and disfranchising policies that states like Texas had enacted, either through state-level legislation or local ordinances. The fear that the Mexican community held toward the Texas Rangers made some feel less animosity toward the federal Border Patrol. The Texas Rangers were heralded by Anglo-Texans for ensuring safety and law-and-order by providing protection from bandits and cross-border raids. The atrocities that the Texas Rangers committed against Native peoples and Mexican-origin people left a very different perception among those groups. During the 1914-

1915 “Plan of San Diego Uprising” the Texas Rangers hanged Mexican-origin people without adequate court proceedings and the bitter memory of those atrocities remained strong.[1]

The Mexican community in the greater South Texas region stretching from San Antonio down to the Rio Grande Valley started to become more cohesive in nature from the late 1910s through the 1930s. Furthermore, it was during this period that the preeminentMexican-American civil rights organization the League of Latin American Citizens (LULAC), was founded (1929). Also, during this era the divisions among San Antonio Mexicans began to subside. After the immense turmoil of the Mexican Revolution of the 1910s and the Cristero Wars of the late 1920s, many exiled Mexicans returned home, giving leadership of the San Antonio community to the small native Mexican middle-class community, the members of which throughout the 1920s started referring to themselves as Mexican Americans. It is here that the struggle for Mexican American civil, social, and educational rights begins in earnest.

While the main focus of this study is the relationship between Mexican-origin people and the Catholic Church in San Antonio and Oklahoma City, this chapter also focuses on the causes and effects of Mexican immigration to Oklahoma and the roles played by Bishops Theophile Meerschaert and Francis C. Kelley of Oklahoma, Catholic social justice and labor matters, the repatriations of the 1930s, and the Mexican-American community of San Antonio are also touched on in this chapter. Moreover, the reader will notice that very early on, the Church in Oklahoma City became heavily involved in the lives of its Mexican parishioners, most likely because of the lack of a middle-class or strong civil rights movement, like those present in San Antonio.

[1]“Mexicans in Bandit Raid into Texas” *Los Angeles Times,* January 31, 1925, https://login.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/docview/16171158?accountid=12964, accessed July 06, 2020.

The modern Mexican American community in both Texas and Oklahoma City reaches back to the 1910s. While, it is true that San Antonio had existed since its establishment by the Spaniards in 1718, and it had been part of the United States since 1846, it was not yet a Mexican American community marked by its members struggles to earn their rights as American citizens. Meanwhile, the Mexican community of Oklahoma was almost non-existent prior to the 1910s, and there was no established sense of community until the 1920s. The first Mexicans in what would become Oklahoma were sheepherders in the 1890s, but they were not residents or settlers.[2] This helps explain why the Catholic Church in Oklahoma was quicker to aid the Mexican-origin people in their diocese. The Mexican sense of community in Oklahoma City stemmed in large part from their faith in Catholicism which was crucial to their advancement in the United States. The Mexican sense of community in San Antonio, on the other hand, was built not only on religion, but also culture, numbers, history, and institutions that helped themnavigate their daily lives.

Mass Mexican immigration to the United States including to Texas and Oklahoma started soon after the beginning of the Mexican Revolution in 1910, and increased throughout that decade because of the atrocities committed by both the Mexican federal government and the revolutionaries, particularly Francisco "Pancho" Villa in the northern states bordering the United States. Immigrants during this period included both the educated upper classes, including many Spaniards, and the uneducated masses, all of whom were attempting to escape the poverty and devastation caused by war. Most of the immigrants arriving from Mexico made their way to Texas or California, nevertheless, a small number came to Oklahoma.[3] Although Mexicans did

[2]Michael M. Smith, *The Mexicans of Oklahoma* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1980), 4.
[3]Michael W. Smith, "Mission to the Immigrants: Establishment of the Order of Discalced Carmelites in Oklahoma" (1980), Bishop Francis C. Kelley Archival Collection, Archdiocese of Oklahoma City, 1.

not begin settling in Oklahoma in large numbers until after 1910, there were a small number of Mexican communities in the state by 1910. The United States Census reported at least 2,645 Mexicans in Oklahoma by then, which increased by more than 250 percent by 1920 because of the Revolution.[4]

The Mexicans who arrived in Oklahoma prior to 1910 did so in search of jobs which would allow them to provide their families with something better than the impoverished conditions the average working-class Mexican experienced during the Porfiriato.[5] Even though the Revolution affected all regions of Mexico, most immigrants to the United States came from either the northern states or those states that saw heaving fighting. Among the states which sent the highest number of immigrants to Texas and Oklahoma were Nuevo Leon, Guanajuato, and Jalisco.[6]

Among the Mexican immigrants who settled in Texas and Oklahoma were a larger number who did not plan on making the United States their home and were only biding their time until they could return to their native country. These included an exiled upper class that called San Antonio home from the 1910-1920s, and hundreds of exiled Catholic clergy forcibly removed from their country as a consequence of the anti-clerical views of Mexican revolutionary leaders, principally Francisco Villa in the northern and western states. The methods of persecution included burning down churches, murdering clergy and suspending Catholic

[4]Ibid, 05.
[5]The Porfiriato was an era in which Mexico was under the rule of Porfirio Diaz, lasting from 1876 through 1910. In this era the Mexican economy did improve and Mexico attempted to emulate French architecture and American economic policies; however, for the vast majority of Mexicans those advances were nowhere seen as most of the wealth created was in the hands of a small elite minority as well as foreigners, thus leading to the Mexican Revolution (1910-1917).
[6]Dorothy Dunlop, "The Mexican Community in Oklahoma City" (November 10, 1980), Bishop Francis C. Kelley Archival Collection, Archdiocese of Oklahoma City, 1.

publications and institutions.[7] Furthermore, the 1910s would not be the only time in which Catholic clergy would be forced into the United States. A second wave of persecution during the Presidency of Plutarco Elias Calles, the "Cristero Wars," forced hundreds more prelates, secular priests, religious priests, and nuns to seek refuge in the United States.[8]

Those Mexicans who settled in Oklahoma in the early stages primarily came to the United States alone; however, very few of them were single. Most of them were married with children and moved northward alone in order to find jobs and housing for themselves and their families. The hope was that their wives and children would join them within a short time. Additionally, most of the Mexicans who came to call Oklahoma their home during the 1910s and 1920s first settled in Texas and then decided to move north, while only a few settled in Oklahoma directly from Mexico.[9] In these early years Mexicans worked in railroad construction, meat-packing, or agricultural pursuits and tended to stay to themselves with their principle contact being their boss, who knew enough Spanish to tell them what to do and how to do it. Segregation of Mexicans in 1910s and 1920s Oklahoma was non-existent in the legal sense, nevertheless, there were no restaurants that would serve Mexicans in their dining rooms and Mexicans were not allowed in theaters or barbershops, but that was because the individual business owners did not allow it.[10]

Furthermore, the structured religious and spiritual life of Mexicans in Oklahoma during the early stages of immigration was almost entirely lacking. A major reason for this was the fact that most, if not all, Catholic clergy in the state did not speak or understand Spanish; therefore,

---

[7]"Catholic Paper Suspended," *San Antonio Express News,* March 1, 1911, Edinburg Campus – University Library and Special Collections – The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, Edinburg, Texas.
[8]"Mexican Prelates Expelled from Mexico, Formally Deny Charges that they are Conspiring Against Calles," *Southern Messenger,* May 5, 1927, The Texas Collection, Baylor University, Microfilm 1525, Reel 24, Waco, Texas.
[9]Dunlop, 2.
[10]Ibid, 6.

they had few connections with their new adherents who would show up at their parishes without any knowledge of the English language. Nevertheless, Oklahoma's clergy, especially the leadership which included Bishop Theophile Meerchaerts, Oklahoma's first Catholic Bishop, and his successor Bishop Francis C. Kelley desired to welcome Mexican immigrants more completely into the fold, and early on provided both temporal and spiritual assistance to Mexicans to the best of their limited abilities.

The arrival of three religious priests, who were forcibly exiled by Francisco Villa, in Oklahoma City in July 1914 would soon change things for the Church and the small but growing Mexican community in the state. Frs. Cyril Corbato, Luis Benegas, and Bernard Brottons were members of the Discalced Carmelite order, whose stronghold was Spain because of that country's devotion to St. Therese of Lisieux, but who had settled and established churches and monasteries in Mexico beginning in the sixteenth century.[11] Those three men were fortunate among the priests targeted by Francisco Villa since they lived to tell their story. Their place of residence was the City of Torreon in the Mexican state of Coahuila where they resided when Villa captured the city in April 1914. Villa who was known for his hatred of the wealthy and powerful, harbored hatred toward both the Catholic Church and Spaniards. Corbato, Benegas, and Brottons were Catholic clergymen, and Spaniards.[12]

These Discalced Carmelite priests made their way to Oklahoma soon after being captured by Villa. For them to receive safe passage to Ciudad Juarez, Chihuahua, Mexico, and eventually to El Paso, Texas, Villa required them to raise $1,000 pesos by asking Torreon's citizenry for donations, which they were able to raise thanks to the faithful among the Catholic laity. They

[11]Rev. Anselm Valero, O.C.D., "A Few Words About Us" (1927), Bishop Francis C. Kelly Archival Collection, Archdiocese of Oklahoma City.
[12]Randy Kiesport, Dennis Metheny, and Marsha Mobley, "Little Flower Church: A Mooring in a New Land" (Fall 1980), Bishop Francis C. Kelley Archival Collection, Archdiocese of Oklahoma City, 2.

arrived in El Paso, however, their stay there was relatively short because they were staying with Society of Jesus members (Jesuits) and not their own organization. Their goal was to reach Chicago, Illinois, where they had heard there was an order of Carmelites; however, when they arrived they realized that it was not a Discalced Order (the main difference among the two being their degree of involvement with the wider secular world) and while they were extended a welcome to spend the night and share in their meals, they were quickly sent on to Milwaukee, Wisconsin where a Discalced Order of Carmelites was located.[13]

Although the three Mexican Carmelite priests were welcomed to stay by their order brethren, they did not feel at home in Milwaukee because of their cultural background and the language barrier; therefore, they requested to stay at various dioceses in the southwest including Kansas City, Missouri and Oklahoma City, Oklahoma where there was a growing presence of Mexican immigrants. Whether or not, the Carmelite Fathers would have been welcomed by the Bishop of Kansas City is not known since upon their arrival in that location the Bishop was in Europe. They proceeded to Oklahoma City where Bishop Meerschaert, was also in Europe, nonetheless, upon his return to the country he welcomed them and assisted them in establishing the first Carmelite Foundation at Hartshorne, Oklahoma. There the three fathers were joined by Father Eduardo Soler, who had served as the superior at the Carmelite monastery in Aguascalientes, Mexico before being forced into exile in Spain by Villa.[14]

The Carmelites in their first years in Oklahoma were assigned primarily to work with the Choctaw Nation by Bishop Meerschaert but he soon realized that they could be much more useful in ministering to the Mexican communities primarily concentrated in Oklahoma City than being distributed less strategically throughout Oklahoma. From their first base in Hartshorne,

[13]Ibid., 3.
[14]Smith, *The Mexicans in Oklahoma,* 8.

Oklahoma the Carmelite Fathers were not located near the areas where most Mexican immigrants were settling. This led Bishop Meerschaert in 1917, to convince the Carmelites to change the location of their foundation to Oklahoma City where they would continue publication of the newspaper *Catholic Home* and *The Little Flower Magazine;* the former of which would eventually become the official publication of the Diocese of Oklahoma and was edited byJoseph Quinn for more than thirty years.[15]

In terms of overall circulation, within Oklahoma, *Catholic Home* reached a wider audience, however, in its importance for the Carmelite Fathers and the Mexican community in Oklahoma City, *The Little Flower Magazine* played a larger role throughout the 1920s. The magazine was founded by Fr. Bernard Brottons and began official publication in April 1920. This magazine would be an important tool to raise funds for the construction of what would become the social and religious center of Mexican-origin people in Oklahoma City for decades to come.[16] Subscribers, reached over 100,000, and alongside the Diocese of Oklahoma, the Catholic Extension Society, and various private philanthropists they were a major source of revenue to construct the Little Flower Church at 1125 South Walker Street in OklahomaCity.[17]

The Church, known by the Mexican community in the twentieth century simply as the Little Flower Church was officially named Our Lady of Mount Carmel and Saint Therese of Lisieux in Church records. Bishop Meerschaert, who originally placed all Mexicans under the spiritual guidance of the Carmelite Fathers and who had authorized the construction of awooden church for the Mexican community in Oklahoma City, was replaced as bishop by Msgr.Francis

[15]Ibid., 9-10.
[16]The Carmelite Fathers of Oklahoma City, "Gratitudo" (1927), Bishop Francis C. Kelley Archival Collection, Archdiocese of Oklahoma City.
[17]Fr. Gomez, "Thanks Letter" (March 2, 1927), Bishop Francis C. Kelley Archival Collection, Archdiocese of Oklahoma City.

C. Kelley in 1924, Kelly continued to expand Bishop Meerschaert's efforts with the Mexican community. By the time of his appointment as Bishop of the Diocese of Oklahoma Kelly had a reputation as a leader who supported the expansion of the Church through the support of poorer archdioceses and dioceses by having wealthier ones contribute from their surplus wealth. For example, Kelley served as President of the Catholic Extension Society which he had helped organize in 1905 to help poor missions, dioceses, and archdioceses across the United States.[18]

Born Francis C. Kelley in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, Kelley from a young age knew he wanted to serve God and followed a path to the priesthood. Bishop Kelly was an imposing figure whose dark brown hair, intense eyes, and excellent oratorial skills persuaded many throughout his life to see the world through his perspective. Before moving up the ranks of the Extension Society and other appointed offices, he was ordained a priest in 1893 and served his first parishes in Michigan. During the Spanish-American War (1898) he served as a chaplain in the Michigan National Guard. Bishop Kelley would then serve as president of the Extension Society for nineteen years (1905-1924), while also serving as the pastor for Wilmette in the Archdiocese of Chicago. Among Kelley's first actions while a pastor in the Chicago region was the improvement of parochial schools including providing meals for less affluent students who attended Church schools.[19]

Msgr. Kelley was among the best-known Catholic leaders in the United Statesthroughout the late 1910s and 1920s. Kelley, in addition, to his duties as pastor and president of the Extension Society was also "an author of wide note" whose publications included *The Last Battle of the Gods* (1907), *Letters to Jack* (1917), *Domicus Vobiscus* (1922) among manyother

[18]"Msgr. Kelley to Be Made Bishop of Oklahoma," *Chicago Daily Tribune,* June 24, 1924, https://login.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/docview/180561482?accountid=12964, accessed July 06, 2020.
[19]Ibid.

works, including several books authored in the years after his appointment as Bishop.[20] Bishop Kelley was installed as Bishop by Cardinal George Mundelein in the presence of two other bishops, a "large gathering of priests," and many others. In his speech he set his agenda for the Diocese of Oklahoma and for himself. Kelley argued that the Catholic Church in the United States had "neglected" Catholics who were not in the main centers of Catholicism or in poorer dioceses; thus he, foreshadowed his support for poor Catholics in Oklahoma and across the American Southwest.[21]

Bishop Kelley, in 1926, authorized the Carmelite fathers to build a much larger structure to replace the original Little Flower Church. The new structure, completed in March 1927, was a complex of red brick buildings including a parish, school for Mexican children, a home, and a rectory.[22] In approving and helping fund the new Little Flower Church, Kelley turned Bishop Meerschaert's largely spiritual involvement toward the Mexican community into a new social welfare-oriented mission, while still maintaining the focus on spiritually and religion.[23]

Furthermore, within a short time after the completion of the Little Flower Church, the Carmelite Fathers with Bishop Kelley's support also established a free clinic for the Mexican-origin people. The clinic was staffed by volunteer doctors and all associated costs were covered by donations to the Carmelite Foundation and by the Diocese of Oklahoma. Mexican immigrants in Oklahoma during the 1910s and 1920s were thereby met by a Church that although apparently

[20]"Msgr. F.C. Kelley to Be Consecrated Bishop of Oklahoma Oct 2," *Chicago Daily Tribune,* September 12, 1924, https://login.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/docview/180589861?accountid=12964, accessed July 07, 2020.
[21]"Bishop Kelley is Welcomed to Oklahoma," *Chicago Daily Tribune,* October 16, 1924, https://login.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.exproxy.lib.ou.edu/docview/180652782?accountid=12965, accessed July 07,2020.
[22]"Bishop Francis C. Kelley to Carmelite Fathers," (March 2, 1927), Bishop Francis C. Kelley Archival Collection, Archdiocese of Oklahoma City.
[23]"Church of the Little Flower and Our Lady of Mount Carmel Dedication" (March 24, 1927), Bishop Francis C. Kelley Archival Collection, Archdiocese of Oklahoma City.

alien to them because of language and cultural barriers did accept them and provided educational opportunities for their children.[24]

Bishop Kelley's involvement with Mexican-origin people not only extended to those who Bishop Meerschaert had originally worked with, the Carmelites or those in Oklahoma City. Because of his position as president of the Catholic Extension Society, Bishop Kelley was very knowledgeable about issues affecting Mexico and the Southwestern parts of the United States. Kelley saw Mexico and Mexicans as a way forward for Catholicism. He knew that Mexico was by and large Catholic, nevertheless, the anti-clericalism shown by Mexican elites beginning in the 1910s and continuing in some cases through the 1930s weakened the religion, in addition to the economy. Bearing that in mind, Kelley encouraged American businessmen to invest in Mexico to uplift that nation economically, so that American Catholic missionaries could then reignite the faith among the populace. Nurturing the faith in Mexico and among Mexican-origin people was always a potent motivator behind Bishop Kelley's actions both in Oklahoma and elsewhere. As either president or influencer of the Extension Society Kelley would always promote the training of men for the priesthood in the Southwest including in heavily Mexican populated areas, because they were already Catholic, all they needed was the education to promote and defend their faith.[25] Even after leaving his position as head of the Extension Society after he became Bishop of Oklahoma, Kelley would use his influence over its leadership to support causes that were dear to his heart.

Those causes included supporting the establishment of parishes, missions, and schools across the Southwest where Mexican immigrants settled in the decades after 1910. Under his

[24]"Little Flower Shrine, Pride of Carmelite Fathers is Dedicated Thursday, *Southwest Courier,* March 26, 1927, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma Historical Society – Research Division, Reel 8231 – 1078.
[25]"Annual Report of Extension Society is Made by Bishop," *Catholic Home,* November 22, 1924, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma Historical Society – Research Division, Reel 8230-1077.

influence the Extension Society would spend an at least one million dollars per year in the founding of such institutions for Mexican-origin people in rural and poor areas of Texas, Oklahoma, and Arizona in addition to bettering those institutions that already existed.[26] To aid his mission to proselytize among the Mexican people Bishop Kelley, and Archbishop Arthur J. Drossaerts of San Antonio, signaling the latter's archdiocese move toward support and leadership vis-à-vis social and labor rights of Mexican-origin people, alongside various other American Bishops fought for and fundraised money to establish a seminary for Mexicans in the 1930s.[27] The seminary was to be for Mexican-nationals whose vocation to the priesthood might not be fulfilled if they stayed in their homelands because many seminaries, monasteries, and parishes had been under assault in Mexico from the 1910s through the 1930s.[28]

Kelley's commitment to serving Mexican-origin people did not originate from any particular passion for Mexico or Mexican-origin people; rather his goal was to establish parishes, seminaries, and chapels in many areas of rural America where Catholic or Catholic-descendant people lived, but had not received sacraments or religious education for generations because those areas were highy impoverished. Bishop Kelley's commitment to Mexican-origin people thus originates from the desire to bring sacraments and spiritual aid to poor Catholics. As the number of Mexican immigrants increased in Oklahoma and in the Southwest, Kelly observed

[26]"Extension Society Spends Million to Aid Catholic Chapels," *Chicago Daily Tribune,* November 23, 1937, https://login.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/docview/181978835?accountid12964, accessed July 09, 2020.
[27]"U.S. Catholics Plan Seminary for Mexicans," *The Washington Post,* March 21, 1937, https://login.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/docview/15085857?accountid-12964, accessed July 09, 2020.
[28]"Another Mexican Church Forcibly Seized by Troops," *Southwest Courier,* August 15, 1925, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma Historical Society – Research Division, Reel 8230-1077.

that group of people were highly devoted to Catholicism and were poor. This led to his desire to learn more about them, their culture, and the struggles their nation faced.[29]

The Catholic Extension Society's commitment to supporting less affluent parishes and dioceses across the Southwest was noticeable even during the Depression years. Throughout these years as charitable institutions shut their doors because of the lack funding the Extension Society and Catholic Church in general were able to maintain their commitment, at both the spiritual and secular levels, to their people. Among the main reasons why the Church was able to keep its commitments were its longevity, organizational hierarchy, and numbers, which by 1928 had reached 19,689,049, an increase of over 200,000 from the previous year in the United States.[30] That number would increase to over 20 million by the start of the Great Depression.[31] The fact that Catholic Charities provided aid to Catholics and Protestants alike helped change the minds of some of the latter regarding anti-Catholic sentiments which ran deep in the United States.[32] The Extension Society in the harshest years of the Depression did have to cut funding for various institutions, nonetheless, the budget cuts were minimal. For example, in 1932 total funding was only reduced by an estimated ten percent as compared to the previous year when funding had totaled approximately $1,300,000 in gift aid.[33]

Kelley's commitment to justice for Mexican-origin people did not only extend to the working-class, as made evident in his support of the Little Flower Institutions, but to others, too.

---

[29]Christopher Check, "How to be An American Catholic: Bishop Francis Kelley," Crisis Magazine, January 31, 2013, How to be an American Catholic: Bishop Francis Kelley - Crisis Magazine, accessed on December 2, 2020.
[30]"Catholics in U.S. Number 19,689,049 Directory Reports," *Southwest Courier,* April 14, 1928, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma Historical Society – Research Division, Reel 5231-78.
[31]"Catholics in the United States Now Number More than Twenty Million," *Southern Messenger,* May 2, 1929, The Texas Collection, Baylor University, Microfilm 1525, Reel 25, Waco, Texas.
[32]"Past Year Was One of Noteworthy Achievement for Church," *Southern Messenger,* January 12, 1933, The Texas Collection, Baylor University, Reel 1525-27.
[33]"Catholic Aid Fund Reduced only 10%," *New York Times,* November 23, 1932, https://login.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/docview/99774460?accountid=12964, accessed July 09, 2020.

An important event that took place in 1931 received significant coverage in various publications across the United States. The murder of two Mexican youths in Ardmore by two deputy sheriffs drew the condemnation of Bishop Kelley, the Mexican community in Oklahoma City, and the Mexican government. Manuel Gomez and Emilio Cortez Rubio a relative of Mexican president Pascual Ortiz Rubio, were murdered by William F. Guess and Cecil Crosby, as they traveled home to Mexico from St. Benedict's College in Atchison, Kansas.[34]

Cortez Rubio and Gomez came from affluent backgrounds and were being educated in an American Catholic College which meant they were not the typical Mexican-origin people Kelley worked with. Nevertheless, he alongside various state department officials argued that Oklahoma judges should take the murders seriously.[35] For Kelley the big picture included three main tenets. First, the fact that the young men were of Mexican origin meant that the courts might not find in their favor even though most believed the deputy sheriffs were guilty of what today would be considered excessive force. Second, he likely thought that if the American Catholic Church showed sympathy and support during the trial against the murderers of the Mexican President's relative that might help in mending the relationship between the state and Church in Mexico. Third, Kelley wanted to strengthen the relationship between Mexican-origin people and the Church in Oklahoma.

Ultimately, efforts by the Church and the Mexican embassy in the United States would have no effect on the largely non-Catholic and Anglo jury who freed the former deputy sheriffs Guess and Crosby. The jury found that there was not enough evidence against either of the

[34]"Student Slaying Trial is Blocked," *The Washington Post,* November 20, 1931, https://login.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/docview/150080223?accountid=12964, accessed July 10, 2020.
[35]"Spur Investigation on Mexican's Death: Mexican Students Slain in Oklahoma," *New York Times,* June 10, 1931, https://login.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/docview/99341408?accountid=12964, accessed July 10, 2020.

former peace officers, and therefore, district judge Asa E. Walden acquitted them.[36] However, Oklahoma Governor William H. Murray stated to Manuel C. Tellez, Mexican Ambassador in Washington, D.C., "that Oklahoma would give $5,000 to the families of each of the youths," in efforts to mend the relationship between the State of Oklahoma and the Mexican government.[37]

In Kelley's view the idea that Catholicism left the Mexican people ignorant and impoverished, as claimed by Mexican leaders such as Plutarco Elias Calles in the 1920s was a false notion.[38] According to Bishop Kelley the anti-clerical forces in Mexico liked to place blame on the Church for anything that was wrong and to draw attention away from the atrocities that the anti-clericals committed in the name of progress or nationalism.[39] Bishop Kelley defend the Church in Mexico in his speeches and in his writings too. His best-known works about Mexico are *Blood Drenched Altars* (1933) and *The Plain Truth About Mexico: An Exposition and a Challenge* (1926). The first of these was mostly a historical narrative; however, the second was more of an argumentative treatise in which he argued that the Church in Mexico was a positive good. For generations the Church provided the only education in the rural areas of Mexico which the government in Mexico City always ignored.[40] Also, Kelley contended that Mexico in the 1920s was much less ready for democracy than it had been a hundred years prior.

---

[36]"Jury Frees Ex-Officer," *Los Angeles Times,* June 28, 1931. Found at https://login.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/docview/162503172?accountid=12964, accessed July 10, 2020.
[37]"Oklahoma to Give Funds to Mexican Families," *The Washington Post,* November 27, 1931, https://login.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/docview/150186183?accountid=12964, accessed July 10, 2020.
[38]"Businessmen Told of Mexico by Bishop Kelley," *Southwest Courier,* December 13, 1924, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma Historical Society – Research Division, Reel 8230-1077.
[39]"Catholic Bishop Denounces Mexico," *New York Times,* March 1, 1926, https://login.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest.com.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/docview/103744043?accountid=12964, accessed July 07, 2020.
[40]"Bishop Kelley Answers Charges Against Catholics in Mexico," *Southwest Courier,* May 22, 1926, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma Historical Society – Research Division, Reel 8230 – 1077.

This reversal of democratic values in Mexico resulted from the anti-clerical government then establishing itself in Mexico under the false guide of "democracy in republican dress."[41]

According to Bishop Kelley the goal of the Mexican government in the decades after the start of the revolution was not one of greater democracy but one of subservience to new leadership. The aim of the revolutionaries, with the likely exception of Emiliano Zapata, was never to enlarge the rights of the peasantry. Originally the revolution was a struggle between factions of elites and the people were just pawns in their game. He argued that much of the conflict occurred because regional elites feared the centralized power that the Porfiriato had created, a power whose monetary domination came from abroad, mainly the United States.[42]

Additionally, Bishop Kelley argued that the Catholic Church whether in the United States or anywhere else was not involved in the political arena. Criticisms of Church involvement in political affairs were rampant among Protestants and businessmen.[43] American criticism was based on Church efforts on behalf of social justice and labor rights; issues that would later become prevalent in the Archdiocese of San Antonio after the installation of Robert E. Lucey as archbishop. Nonetheless, in the 1920s and 1930s, especially in the aftermath of the Red Scare, many in the United States feared socialism leading to a broader distaste for social justice movement advocacy for labor rights, which in turn led to denunciation of the Church as un-American.[44]

---

[41]"Church in Mexico Defended by Bishop, *New York Times,* August 2, 1926, https://ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/docview/103770912?accountid=12964, accessed July 08, 2020.
[42]"Bishop Kelley Exposes Aim of Mexico," *Southern Courier,* March 13, 1926, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma Historical Society – Research Division, Reel 8230-1077.
[43]W.B. Norton, "Bishop Denies Catholic Church is in Politics," *Chicago Daily Tribune,* May 20, 1925, https://login.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/docview/180683708?accountid=12964, accessed July 09, 2020.
[44]Rev. Thomas Carney, "The Church and the Laboring Man," *Southern Messenger,* January 29, 1931, The Texas Collection, Baylor University, Reel 1525-27, Waco, Texas.

Even though the 1920s and 1930s were not an era of extraordinary pro-labor support in either the Archdiocese of San Antonio or Diocese of Oklahoma, the Church in the United States was taking the side of the workingman more than it had previously. Pro-labor and social justice support were not an American Catholic phenomenon; instead they were part of a hierarchical top-down set of proposal policies from Pope Leo XIII published as *Rerum Novarum* in 1891.[45] Those policy proposals would be utilized by social justice, labor, and immigrant activists across the Catholic world including the United States for decades to come, and when they appeared to need updating, they were brought into the present by subsequent popes through their own encyclicals. For instance, Pope Pius XI's *Quadragesimo Anno* (1931) and Pope John XXIII's *Mater et Magistra* (1961).

The labor struggles and Church support in Northeastern and Midwestern industrial centers would help set the pace for the later labor struggles and social justice efforts in which the Archdiocese of San Antonio would be involved under Archbishop Lucey and his successor Archbishop Francis J. Furey. Across the Northeast there are instances where the Church, both at the regional level or through individual parish priests championed strikes for better wages, better working conditions, and accident insurance in the aftermath of the Red Scare a time when it was highly unpopular to do so. The Church followed the policy proposals of the Pope even whenthey knew that American Protestants would condemn American Catholics for those positions. Although this might make them seem un-American, since they supported papal encyclicals in America, the motivation was not un-American, because they were still loyal to the country and its ideals they just believed that the working-class should be treated more humanely.[46]

[45]"Papal Encyclicals on Industrial and Social Solvents Discussed at Catholic Conference in Chicago," *Southern Messenger*, February 19, 1936, The Texas Collection, Baylor University, Reel 1525, Reel 29.
[46]"Priests Champion Strikers Cause," *Catholic Home,* July 18, 1922, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma Historical Society – Research Division, Reel 8230-1077.

For instance, the Archdiocese of Boston in 1922 threw their support behind a strike of textile workers, even though the mill owners and Protestant Churches seemed to be largely against the strike. In addition to following the vision of worker rights established by the Vatican since at least 1891, among the reasons why the Archdiocese supported the workers' cause was that Boston, the see city of the archdiocese, was home to a majority Catholic population..[47] Additionally, the fact that the workers were not demanding anything new, but only wished to prevent a twenty percent reduction in wages made the Church more favorable to their cause. Rev. James T. O'Reilly, a pastor of St. Mary's Church was one of the leaders of the strike as the chairman of the "citizen' strike committee."[48] In that position O'Reilly, his parish, and the archdiocese backed the strikers without becoming too involved in political and ideological battles. Through that organization, the Church and other strike sympathizers would aid the striking workers by providing an adequate food supply. The committee's goal was to prevent what they called "the terrible days of 1912," when striking workers in the "Lawrence Mills" were on the verge of starvation.[49]

During the Great Depression years, the Church nationwide and at the local level, including the Archdiocese of San Antonio and Diocese of Oklahoma, also focused on charitable activity and government "lobbying" which I argue falls under the rubric of social justice.[50] Even so, during those years it was not unique for the Church to pursue those types of activities as various organizations, religious and secular, supported reforms that benefitted workers because of the economic hardships of those years. For instance, Catholic Church leaders alongside

[47]"Leo XIII's Work for Labor to be Recognized," *Southwest Courier,* February 20, 1926, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma Historical Society – Research Division, Reel 8230-1077.
[48]"Priests Champion Strikers Cause," *Catholic Home,* July 18, 1922, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma Historical Society – Research Division, Reel 8230-1077.
[49]Ibid.
[50]"Many Thousands Go to Charities," *Southern Messenger,* September 11, 1930, The Texas Collection, Baylor University, Reel 1525-26.

leaders of other religions, including Protestant and Jewish groups, called on Congress to enact regulatory laws to provide for the unemployed people of the United States.[51]

Moreover, the Church was engaged in lobbying the federal government to act in new and bold ways to make the life of the average working family better and to help them survive the Depression. During this era, we see the first glimpses of arguments that will later be repeated by Archbishop Lucey in the San Antonio archdiocese. In the Church's view it was the government's job to guarantee a level playing field between workers and businessmen. Rev. Dr. John A. Ryan, Director of the Department of Social Action of the National Catholic Welfare Conference, in the early 1930s argued that the "influential classes" had nothing but contempt and "indifference to human suffering," referring to their lack of action in the midst of the Great Depression. Rev. Ryan encouraged members of the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives to finance government infrastructure projects to put people back to work.[52] However, during the first years of the Depression he found little success because of President Hoover's and the Republican Party's dislike of government spending and their belief in limited constitutional government.

President Hoover, toward the end of his one term in office and after losing the 1932 Presidential Election to Democrat Franklin D. Roosevelt become more favorable in his view of unemployment relief projects as presented by Rev. Dr. John A. Ryan, who was still in office as Director of Social Action. Hoover in close cooperation with the senate did appropriate funds in excess of $500,000,000 for direct relief to the states.[53] Catholic and other lobbying efforts thus

[51]"Religious Leaders Ask for Social Reform," *New York Times,* March 27, 1933, https://login.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/docview/100727200?accountid=12964, accessed July 10, 2020.
[52]Unconcern for Nation's Needy Roundly Scared," *Southern Messenger,* November 12, 1931, The Texas Collection, Baylor University, Reel 1525-27.
[53]Rev. Dr. John A. Ryan, D.D. "The Responsibility of Congress Toward Unemployment," *Southern Messenger,* December 29, 1932, The Texas Collection, Baylor University, Reel 1525-27.

bore fruit in getting the government to care more about the working-classes in America, and this empathy would increase during Franklin Roosevelt's presidency.

The Church through its lobbying of government was also able to attain various government monies to boost its own internal funding to assist of the working-class in these years. An example of the Church using government funding to promote social justice was its construction of various buildings costing millions of dollars which provided employment opportunities.[54] Further, unlike private for-profit businesses, who often had a "white-only" policy for hiring, local Catholic parishes attempted to be color-blind at least with regard to Mexican-origin people. Nevertheless, the hiring of Mexican-origin people was not yet a "Church policy" as it would become in later years. A second example of the Church using governmental resources is the establishment of a homeless shelter in Galveston, Texas whose funding came from the Church, but the building and beds were donated by the United States Army Air Corps (USAAC).[55]

The Church also worked on its own, the clergy and laity together, to build on past successes to support the least fortunate among its ranks. In the worst years of the Depression the Church, at the national and local levels not only maintained its already established orphanages and public health clinics, but opened new ones in an effort to meet the increased needs of the working-classes, both Mexican-origin and Anglo American.[56] The perceived goal was to help as

[54]"Millions in Construction Available to Catholic Agencies in all Parts of the Nation to Give Work to Needy," *Southern Messenger,* January 8, 1931, The Texas Collection, Baylor University, Reel 1525-27.
[55]"Resting Place for Homeless at Galveston," *Southern Messenger,* January 1, 1931, Texas Collection, Baylor University, Reel 1525-27.
[56]"Dedication of New Orphanage on Nov. 24th," *Southern Messenger,* November 7, 1929, The Texas Collection, Baylor University, Reel 1525-26.

many as possible and they utilized both monies donated by those less affected by the Depression, as well as drawing on funds saved from previous years.[57]

The Mexican-origin community of San Antonio was much older than the one in Oklahoma City. San Antonio had originally been founded in 1718 by the Spanish. However, the community, despite having Anglo-American neighbors beginning in the era of American settlement and into the early twentieth century, remained largely marginalized. That said, some Mexican-origin members of the community did flourish within their own community and were successful merchants. The fact that Anglo-American businesses did not allow Mexican-origin people into their establishments, except on Sundays, helped Mexican-origin merchants become successful and respected within their community. The Mexican Revolution of 1910 was a pivotal point for the Mexican-origin community of San Antonio, just as it was for the embryonic one in Oklahoma City. During the 1910s and 1920s Mexican immigrants started pouring into San Antonio including many well-to-do exiles.[58] These exiles differentiated themselves from the established community in several ways, but most significantly by their continued loyalty toward Mexico and desire to return to their country of origin.[59]

Furthermore, as historian Benjamin H. Johnson argues it was the 1910s that turned the long-time Mexican inhabitants of San Antonio into Mexican Americans.[60] Johnson contends that the Mexican-origin people, whose ancestry stretched back to the American conquest following the Mexican American War (1846-1848), because of the "Plan of San Diego" uprising and the

[57]"Catholic Charity Board Announces That Annual Drive Will Start Soon," *Southern Messenger,* January 15, 1931, The Texas Collection, Baylor University, Reel 1525-27.
[58]"Mexican Daily to Be Issued Here," *San Antonio Express News*, November 2, 1914, Edinburg Campus – University Library and Special Collections – The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, Edinburg, Texas.
[59]"Vasquez Gomes Joins Refugees in San Antonio," *San Antonio Express News,* November 3, 1911, Edinburg Campus – University Library and Special Collections – The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, Edinburg, Texas.
[60]See Benjamin H. Johnson, *Revolution in Texas: How a Forgotten Rebellion and Its Bloody Suppression Turned Mexicans into Americans* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003).

way it was handled by the state of Texas, particularly the Texas Rangers, made the long-term, small Mexican-origin middle-class decide to throw their lot in with the United States and become American.[61] This, as historian Richard Garcia contends, placed them at odds with elite exiled Mexicans who sought to keep Mexican-origin people focused on Mexico and shunned Americanization efforts by the newly conscious Mexican American middle class.[6263]

The struggles between the Mexican exiled upper-classes and the Mexican American middle-class for working-class Mexican loyalties to a significant degree helps explain why the relationship between Mexican-origin people and the Catholic Church developed differently in the greater South Texas region, including San Antonio, and Oklahoma City. The Church in San Antonio was not the only voice speaking for Mexican-origin people it was just a minor one inthe 1910s and 1920s, and even into the 1930s. The Church in Oklahoma City, on the other hand, played the preeminent role in the lives of Mexican-origin people from the start.

The Archdiocese of San Antonio, which became the fifteenth Roman Catholic Archdiocese in the United States, was officially created in August 1926 with Mgr. Jerome Drossaerts as the first Archbishop after it was carved out from the Archdiocese of New Orleans.[64] The fact that the Archdiocese of San Antonio itself was created in 1926 sheds light on the lack of sources regarding Mexican-origin people in the region.[65] The Church in San Antonio

[61]"Plot on Border is Being Probed," *San Antonio Express News*, February 5, 1915, Edinburg Campus – University Library and Special Collections – The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, Edinburg, Texas.
[62]"Opposes Plans for Citizenship," *Los Angeles Times,* December 2, 1924, https://login.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/docview/161745680?accountid=12964, accessed July 7, 2020.
[63]See Richard Garcia, *The Rise of the Mexican-American Middle Class: San Antonio, 1929-1941* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1990).
[64]"Mgr. Drossaerts, Texas Archbishop," *New York Times,* September 9, 1940, https://login.lib.ou.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/docview/105158076?accountid?=12964, accessed July 8, 2020.
[65]"Brilliant Ceremonies to Mark Installation of San Antonio Archbishop," *Southwest Courier,* February 12, 1927, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma Historical Society – Research Division, Reel 8231-1078.

would not become a major outspoken supporter of Mexican-origin people until the installation of Archbishop Robert E. Lucey (who had previously served in Amarillo) in 1941 when the Church found its niche focus: the Mexican American working-class and poor. The middle classes already had their own organizations.[66] Moreover, Mexican immigrants were not the major issue in the 1920 as the United States was still debating quotas and European immigration. The border was mostly open up until 1924 when the Border Patrol was created.[67] The 1930s would bring Mexican immigration to the forefront because of the repatriation efforts made by both the federal government and local and state governments as a result of the economic depression, which fueled nativism.

Although the Church in Oklahoma was stronger in its inclusion and support for the Mexican-origin community in Oklahoma City than was the case with the Church in San Antonio in the same era, the repatriation issue was not a very prevalent or important issue for the Diocese of Oklahoma. The Church did not abandon Mexican-origin people and never stopped funding for educational and health assistance. In fact the economic downturn led to the exodus of thousands of Mexicans from Oklahoma as their jobs in coal mining, railroads, meatpacking, farming and other sectors of the economy disappeared.[68] Most of the Mexicans who left Oklahoma at this time migrated to Texas or California, while a small minority returned to Mexico.[69] There was little need for Oklahoma Church involvement in the repatriation debates. Chiefly, the Carmelite

[66]"Bishop Lucey Leaves for Amarillo Installation," *Los Angeles Times,* May 14, 1934, https://login.lib.ou.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/docview/163267702?accountid=12964, accessed July 08, 2020.
[67]Sarah Deutsch, *No Separate Refuge: Culture, Class, and Gender on an Anglo-Hispanic Frontier in the American Southwest, 1880-1940* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 119-126.
[68]"Trains to Take Mexicans Home," *Los Angeles Times,* January 12, 1932, https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/docview/162519644/abstract/844BE866CO44445PQ/?accountid=12964, accessed July 8, 2020.
[69]Smith, *The Mexicans in Oklahoma*, 13.

Fathers and the Diocese of Oklahoma maintained the Little Flower Church complex as their main contribution toward the Mexican-origin community in the 1930s.

Repatriation in San Antonio and the greater South Texas region, as in other areas with significant Mexican settlement, did become a major problem. In the 1930s neither the Mexican American middle-class organizations such as LULAC, nor the Church in San Antonio were major defenders of Mexican immigrant rights; consequently, the story of repatriation is not a major part of Church-Mexican-origin people relationship narrative in this era. Nevertheless, repatriation is an important component of Mexican American history. Among the many reasons why attention was paid to the injustices committed when native-born Mexican American people were forcibly removed from the United States was the fact that LULAC placed itself almost squarely in support of national policies regarding immigration. LULAC's leadership viewed Mexican immigrants as detrimental to their cause of Americanization and to their strategy of using the Constitution to secure their rights.[70]

Mexican repatriation in the early 1930s was primarily portrayed as positive and well-accepted by the Mexican-origin community by most mainstream newspapers of the era, including the *Los Angeles Times, New York Times,* and *Chicago Daily Tribune*, as reflected in headlines such as "Repatriation of Mexicans Wins Praise," claiming that Mexican government officials, Mexican-origin people, and the local American community were all supportive of sending Mexicans back to their country of origin.[71]

[70]"Report: Committee on Organization," February 1, 1929, Box 1, F1, Ben Garza Collection in LULAC, Presidential Papers, 1926-1930*,* Benson Latin American Collection, The University of Texas at Austin.
[71]""Repatriation of Mexicans Wins Praise," *Los Angeles Times*, March 22, 1933, https://login.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/docview163117212?accountid=12964, accessed July 8, 2020.

By the onset of the Great Depression the new other were not European immigrants, or Asians, who had been banned entirely by the 1924 act, instead it was people from the Western Hemisphere particularly Mexico, as around a million people left for the United States in the two decades after the start of the Revolution. Despite the possibility that some within the Mexican-origin community in the Southwest and other areas might have been happy to return to Mexico, they had little choice. The repatriations were led by policymakers with little regard for the safety and well-being of the Mexican-origin community.[72] Moreover, the policymakers were not only American, but also included many Mexican politicians and diplomats seeking to take advantage in an era of increase Mexican nationalism of the knowledge and expertise that Mexican-origin people in the United States had acquired.[73]

In the latter 1930s the directives for repatriation coming from Mexico were entirely top-down as even President Lazaro Cardenas (1934-1940) was among the major proponents of Mexicans returning home, even as Mexicans-Americans who were American citizens were being forced out of their own country.[74] President Cardenas during his presidency attempted to nurture Mexican nationalism and pride. His efforts included nationalizing the foreign-owned oil industry. Among Cardenas's other goals was increasing the amount of land under cultivation with modern methods, for which he hoped to entice Mexican-origin people back from the United States. His administration's desire was to offer Mexican-origin people willing to migrate to Mexico "land to cultivate and credits to build homes and get their first crops harvested,"which

[72]"300 Mexicans to Leave Ohio," *New York Times,* March 20, 1934, https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/docview/101056577/citation/9F3158292791426EPQ/?accountid-12964, accessed July 08, 2020.
[73]"Mexico to Take Back 1,400,000 from U.S.: Official Describes Plan to Repatriate many Farmers," *New York Times*, July 18, 1939, https://login.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/docview/103042944?accountid=12964, accessed July 8, 2020.
[74]"Plans to Repatriate Mexicans from States Along Border Pushed," *Los Angeles Times,* April 24, 1939, https://login.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/docview/164966013?accountid=12964, accessed July 8, 2020.

did lead to some people moving back willingly. Still, many others felt like they had little choice as they were being pushed out of the United States and pulled into Mexico.[75]

There are some moments when it is clear that neither the Mexican nor the U.S. governments really cared about what happened to Mexican-origin people who were being forcefully repatriated. Among those being sent back against their will, there was a minority who were willing to comply and leave the United States as the economy collapsed during the early 1930s. Nevertheless, the Mexican government had no desire to accept them, because it only sought those who could contribute to their economy.[76] Mexico in some ways was not dissimilar from the United States regarding uneducated Mexicans, albeit for different reasons. Mexican-origin people were caught between two countries; one was deeply racially biased against them but needed their labor during periods of economic prosperity, and their ancestral homeland, which did not want those who might be a burden during economic downturns.[77] Nonetheless, the Mexican government attempted to portray its denial of entry to its co-nationals by claiming that some Mexicans who had lived in the United States would not be happy in Mexico, because they had become accustomed to the American way of life. During this era a Mexican American mentality was developing among the middle-classes, especially in San Antonio and the greater South Texas region.

On the American side, claims that Mexican Americans were being deported to a country in which they had never lived mostly went uninvestigated by the authorities. Anglo American

[75]"Mexicans Invited Home," *New York Times*, April 24, 1934, https://login.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/docview/102710522?accountid=12964, accessed July 8, 2020.
[76]"Mexico Bars Door to Many," *New York Times,* August 10, 1939, https://login.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/docview/102871203?accountid=12964, accessed July 8, 2020.
[77]"Supervisor Seeks Return of Ill Indigents," *Los Angeles Times,* October 24, 1938, https://login.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/docview/164906794?accountid=12964, accessed July 8, 2020.

society felt that Mexican Americans, whether here for generations or not, would always be Mexican first and would be more content in Mexico than in America. However, there were some Anglo Americans who sided with and defended Mexican-origin people. Oliver Douglas Weeks, a professor of government at the University of Texas at Austin was one such individual who defended the rights of Mexican-origin people as early as the beginning of the 1920s. Professor Weeks was one of the first members of the Order Sons of America, a predecessor organization to the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), which he also became involved with. Weeks as a member of the pro-American LULAC was not interested much in what happened to the Mexican-born repatriates but was concerned and railed against the unjust removal of those who might have been born in Texas and were thus citizens, yet were still forced out.[78]

Additionally, when American policymakers did pay attention to the removal of Mexican Americans their investigations showed that they were doing no wrong, which was largely because their own agencies conducted internal investigations; therefore, guaranteeing favorable results toward their agents and organizations including the Border Patrol which was in charge of much of the repatriation efforts.[79] One of the most interesting and contradictory issues in the late 1920s and early 1930s regarding Mexican-origin immigrants in the United States was repatriation and quota debates. Repatriation was an important issue, but so was the Harris Bill which would have added countries in the Western Hemisphere such as Mexico to the quota origins system that had already been imposed on European countries with the Immigration Actof 1924. As people and organizations across the country, even LULAC, supported repatriation of

[78]Oliver Douglass Weeks, "Preamble," Box 1, F1, LULAC: Oliver Douglas Weeks, 1922-1932, Benson Latin American Collection, The University of Texas at Austin.
[79]"Tales of Deporting Refuted," *Los Angeles Times,* May 13, 1934, https://login.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/docview/1631943345?accountid=12964, accessed July 8, 2020.

Mexican-origin people, there were staunch defenses of Mexican immigrants from what might be considered the least expected places.

Various businesses, chambers of commerce, and farmers from states such as Texas, Arizona, Oklahoma, and California defended Mexican immigrants, although those defenses were based entirely on economic grounds rather than concern for the immigrants.[80] For American and Mexican policymakers the issue was political and not human, as it almost always is. American businessmen who had enterprises in Mexico or who traded heavily with that country feared the negative consequences that imposing a two percent national origins quota would have because Mexico was fast becoming one of the most important trading partners for the United States. Further, they feared losing their investments or possible economic opportunities if Congress approved the Harris Bill.[81]

The Harris Bill was the brainchild of Senator William Julius Harris of Georgia, whose aim was to limit Mexican immigration to "an estimated 2,500 annually." Senator Harris whose state did not rely on trade with Mexico, or Mexican labor did not see what the farmers and businessmen in the Southwest took into consideration. Harris only saw the undesirability of non-whites living within the borders of the United States and categorized Mexicans the same way he did Southern and Eastern Europeans.[82]

Farmers, especially Cotton farmers in the Southwest, like the businessmen with interests in Mexico proper, argued that having Mexico on a quota system like European countries was

[80]"Oppose Mexican Quota," *Wall Street Journal,* May 28, 1930, https://login.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/docview/1308003177?accountid=12964, accessed July 8, 2020.
[81]Ibid.
[82]"Senate Bill Reported to Fix Mexican Quota," *New York Times,* January 17, 1932, https://login.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/docview/99603400?accountid=12964, accessed July 8, 2020.

detrimental to the local economies of the region.[83] The main argument made was that the Mexican-origin people were different from all European immigrants. Mexican-origin people were "spenders," which is to say they spent their hard-earned money with little regard for what tomorrow would bring.[84] This trait would be detrimental to them long-term because they did not have savings for unexpected events, but it was good for merchants in the border regions including Texas where cotton was a major crop. Moreover, according to chamber of commerce leaders in the same border regions there was no one better than Mexicans to work the cotton fields, thus they were necessary and should be excluded from the quotas imposed on Europeans.[85]

Although the modern Mexican American communities in Texas and Oklahoma originated around the same period (1910s), their development was quite different. In early nineteenth century Texas there was a Mexican-origin community concentrated in San Antonio and greater South Texas, but they were yet to become Mexican American, a changed that started to take place in the late 1910s and 1920s. The history and longevity of the Mexican-origin community in San Antonio, the fact that San Antonio was yet to become a see city, and the increased Mexican immigration starting in 1910 explains why the Church had not yet to become highly active on behalf of that Catholic community. The process of engagement and support really began with the installation of Robert E. Lucey as archbishop in 1941.

---

[83]"Labor Needed by Cotton Men," *Los Angeles Times,* October 6, 1930, https://login.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.exproxy.lib.ou.edu/docview/16234942?accountid=12964, accessed July 8, 2020.
[84]"Texans Will Fight Quota on Mexicans," *New York Times*, December 4, 1927, https://login.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/docview/104011943?accountid=12964, accessed July 8, 2020.
[85]"Danger Seen in Mexican Quota," *Los Angeles Times,* January 12, 1926, https://login.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/docview/161828527?accountid=12964, accessed July 08, 2020.

Additionally, the lack of cohesion within the Mexican-origin community in the 1910s and 1920s complicated any efforts by the Church to bring people together. The warring factions in the Mexican-origin community were the Mexicans who evolved politically into Mexican Americans and threw in their destiny with American institutions. These Mexican Americans would become the founders of the Order Sons of America (OSA) and eventually the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) which were middle class activist organizations. Their efforts to use the American system and Constitution to earn their educational and voting rights would bear fruit in the decades to come for all Mexican-origin people, but in their early existence they largely shunned the Mexican-origin working classes including the farm laborers, for whom the Archdiocese of San Antonio would become a major supporter. The other faction were the exiled upper class Mexicans who made efforts to keep the same working classes concentrated on what was happening in Mexico to garner political support for their own eventual return to that country, which meant they had little desire to improve the lives of their less well-offcompatriots.

While the Church in San Antonio was not actively involved with helping the Mexican-origin community, other than in religious and spiritual affairs, the Church in Oklahoma City was engaged from the beginning. Oklahoma's first two Catholic Bishops Theophile Meerschaert and Francis C. Kelley were exceptional spiritual and philanthropic leaders. These two men accepted the Mexican immigrants in the 1910s and 1920s into their diocese for spiritual services, in addition to providing them their first schools, clinics, and community events. Bishop Kelley had a long history of caring for less fortunate Catholics as a founder and President of the Catholic Extension Society. Under his rule the Diocese of Oklahoma became an exemplary leader in how the Church could help Mexican-origin people navigate the American system. That said, it would

take many years for the white Catholic laity to embrace Mexican-origin people into their parishes, even while they were the main contributors to charities that benefited the Mexican poor. However, as time progressed that leadership position would shift to the Archdiocese of San Antonio, partially because the Mexican-origin population in Oklahoma decreased over the course of the 1930s and would not increase dramatically until the latter half of the twentiethcentury.

Church activism on behalf of labor and social justice toward the working-class in the 1920s and especially in the Great Depression years was also pivotal because it helped set the stage for a modern and activist Church, a Church that even though it was criticized for its involvement in workers struggles of various types including strikes, held to the idea that it had an important role to play in the betterment of humankind both spiritually and temporally. Early Church support for strikes likely gave future Catholic prelates and clergy encouragement to join causes such as labor struggles of Mexican-origin people in the Rio Grande Valley where Fr. Sherill Smith of San Antonio became active.

Chapter 3: Catholicism and Cold War Consensus: Archbishop Robert E. Lucey and the Bishops' Committee on the Spanish-Speaking, 1942-1950

The growth of Mexican American civil rights accelerated in the aftermath of the creation of the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) in 1929. Throughout the 1930s and 1940s, LULAC was the most active organization promoting educational and legal opportunities for Mexican Americans. The battle for education and citizenship rights in due course uplifted a great segment of the aforementioned population; however, I argue that in the short-term the Roman Catholic Church, offered greater day-to-day help to the impoverished Mexican American population of the greater San Antonio region. This chapter traces the development of a Catholic worldview of Mexican Americans as equals in the American political system 1942-1950 in the Archdiocese of San Antonio primarily through programs and initiatives sponsored or supported by Archbishop Robert E. Lucey.

Robert E. Lucey was born in Los Angeles, California on March 16, 1891 and received his undergraduate education from St. Vincent's College and St. Patrick's Seminary before enrolling at the North American College and the University of the Propaganda in Rome from which he earned a Doctor of Sacred Theology. Lucey was ordained in Rome at the Church of St. Apollinaris before becoming a parish priest in California. While serving as a priest he wouldalso be appointed as a hospital chaplain and serve with the Catholic Charities. Lucey would serve eighteen years as a parish priest before being appointed as Bishop of Amarillo, in 1934, on his way to the position he is most known for, Archbishop of San Antonio, to which he was appointed at the age of fifty in 1941.[1]

[1]"Remembering Archbishop Robert E. Lucey," satodayscatholic.org. http://www.satodayscatholic.org/remembering-archbishop-robert-e-lucey/ (accessed October 2, 2020).

This chapter highlights an important transition within the Archdiocese of San Antonio. With Robert E. Lucey's arrival, the Church became much more active than previously. Individuals, including Fr. Carmelo Tranchese had been involved in labor and public housing struggles throughout the 1930s; nonetheless, the direction of the entire archdiocese entered a period of transformation beginning in 1942. That transformation would continue over the next couple of decades, which would not only affect the Archdiocese of San Antonio and its Mexican American population, but the entire Southwest, and even the nation.

The American Roman Catholic Church had been the most welcoming institution toward Mexican Americans, even prior to that community referring to itself as Mexican American. There are, I contend, three major reasons why the Church accepted the impoverished Mexican-origin people while few other organizations maintained close contacts with them. First, the Catholic Church genuinely believed that all Catholics are brothers in Christ; therefore, they had to welcome and assist their unfortunate brethren. Second, the Catholic Church was a symbol for Mexican-origin people, and they sought it out, both for spiritual and temporal needs. This meant that the Church hierarchy, whether it liked it or not, had to deal with these people, like no other religious group had to. Third, the Catholic Church saw the potential of cultivating the Mexican American vote in an attempt to grow their own power in a secular nation-state whose majority Protestant population had historically disdained Roman Catholicism.

Additionally, the Catholic Church not only provided day-to-day assistance to Mexican Americans in San Antonio, but was also involved in the struggle for educational, health, and citizenship rights, which makes its contribution to civil and social welfare rights greater than even LULAC's during the period from 1942-1950. 1942 was the first-full year of Robert E. Lucey's position as Archbishop of San Antonio. Lucey was appointed to the archdiocese in

January 1941 and inaugurated in March of that year; however, 1942 was his first year as the intellectual and spiritual voice of the archdiocese in respect to its efforts on behalf of Mexican Americans. While Lucey was no doubt the leader of the Archdiocese throughout 1941, his initial policies may have just reflected those of his predecessor. Beginning in 1942, his policies, his views, and his vision for the Archdiocese of San Antonio fully emerged.

By the summer of 1942, the Archdiocese of San Antonio included 232,975 Catholics spread-out across 31 counties with a total area of 39,272 square miles in south-central Texas.[2] The total population of the region according to the *Alamo Register* was approximately 950,000. The number of Catholics in the region was over one-quarter of the total population. Archbishop Lucey understood the significance of the large and growing number of Catholics in his archdiocese. Lucey knew that a large segment of the population was Mexican-origin, and that many of those people were desperately poor and in need of assistance. Furthermore, Lucey imagined the power that Anglo and Mexican Catholics alike could bring to the voting booth if both groups were united. Therefore, one of the first steps Archbishop Lucey took was job training and educational programs directed toward both Anglo and Mexican Catholics.

The vehicle for those early efforts was St. Mary's University, San Antonio.[3] While it is true that St. Mary's was not (and still not) under the control of the Archdiocese, Lucey and the Church did have influence over the institution. St. Mary's was a Marianist school under the control of *The Society of Mary*. The main influence the Archdiocese of San Antonio held over the university was moral support, because their joints efforts to benefit the Catholic population of the region were well known, at first by the small-educated middle classes, but as the 1940s

[2]"The Archdiocese of San Antonio," *Alamo Register* Collection, June 26, 1942, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, Texas.
[3]"St. Mary's University will Train Men for Both War and Post-War Leadership," *Alamo Register* Collection, June 19, 1942, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, Texas.

progressed by the lower-class and poor Mexican-origin people. Additionally, while the Archdiocese did not contribute direct financial support to the St. Mary's it encouraged the better-off parishioners across their religious jurisdiction to contribute to special collections in support of the institution.

St. Mary's throughout the Second World War years and after made great efforts to train young men with the skills necessary for both war time and peacetime.[4] The focus in the early phases was on both Anglo and Mexican Catholics who were directly contributing to the war effort. However, the fact that lower-class Mexican Americans were fighting in the war made their training an important aspect of St. Mary's program for postwar leadership.

Lucey's first full year as Archbishop was not spent solely on educational efforts, and attending spiritual functions, he was quickly involved in the temporal needs of the people entrusted to him by God. San Antonio's "west side" was, throughout the early 20th century all the way through the 1940s, the impoverished home of its Mexican American population. Lucey, in the spring of 1942 visited that region of San Antonio, and was shocked by the "uncivilized" conditions in which the people lived.[5] Lucey's viewpoint was that a "civilized" nation such as the United States that was fighting for freedom abroad should not permit a large segment of its population to fall so far behind the average American standard of living which had been slowly improving in the aftermath of the Great Depression. The creation of the Catholic Welfare Bureau was the result of Lucey's visit to San Antonio's West Side.

Although Lucey only held control over the Archdiocesan institutions in south-central Texas, his view of a Church without borders was evident from this early stage of his involvement

[4]Ibid.
[5]"Welfare Bureau in Archdiocese Meets," *Alamo Register* Collection, July 10, 1942, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, Texas.

in Mexican American civil and labor rights. The Catholic Welfare Bureau based in the chancery in San Antonio would not only be responsible for social and economic assistance for that region, but under Lucey's leadership its work and activities would cover "a wide strip of territory from the Gulf of Mexico on the coast to the Texas-Mexico border."[6] In 1942 we are able to see a first glimpse into Lucey's concern for the Mexican-Americans of the lower South Texas region known as the Rio Grande Valley. However, archdiocesan excursions into Rio Grande Valley affairs would not bring greater involvement until two decades later.

The Archdiocese of San Antonio without question had significant economic and political clout, but in a secular society an alliance of institutions is needed to promote shared goals. Lucey found one such an ally in the Industrial Relations Club of St. Gerald's Parish.[7] While the Industrial Club was not a religious organization, it was based in a Catholic parish, and largely made-up of Catholic men. Therefore, we can see the influence of decades-old Catholic teaching on social and labor justice dating back to Rerum Novarum (1890). The purpose of the club as stated by its founding members "was to study the Papal Encyclicals on social justice, *Rerum Novarum* and *Quadragenismo Anno*," and advise the archdiocese on how to help alleviate social and labor problems affecting the working-classes of San Antonio.[8]

One of the major conclusions that the Industrial Relations Club in conjunction with the Archdiocese of San Antonio found was the issue of immigrant labor. The Second World Warand the manpower shortage that resulted from the conflict prompted the start of the Bracero program.[9] The Bracero program was from the start controversial in both the United Statesand

[6]Ibid.
[7]"Club to Study Social Problems," *Alamo Register* Collection, July 31, 1942, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, Texas.
[8]Ibid.
[9]Monica M. Martinez, *The Injustice Never Leaves You: Anti-Mexican Violence in Texas* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2018), 291.

Mexico. The program was a particularly contentious issue in the state of Texas, because at first Mexico did not permit the Bracero program to include Texas.[10] The reason for that refusal was because of the long-history of anti-Mexican discrimination and lynchings at the hands of Anglo-Texans most infamously, the Texas Rangers.[11]

Nevertheless, bracero workers, and other immigrant labor posed a problem to the Mexican-American working-class of San Antonio, and nationwide, from the perspective of both the Archdiocese of San Antonio and the Industrial Relations Club.[12] Monsignor Thomas O' Dwyer, Director of Catholic Charities (San Antonio) argued that "there should be no further influx of Mexican labor into the United States from Mexico until all Mexicans now in this country are employed.[13] The prevailing view among archdiocesan officials in San Antonio, and likely other Catholic leaders, too, especially in the Southwest, was that there was no need for additional Mexican laborers. From their perspective the importation of cheap Mexican labor reduced the number of jobs available for Mexican Americans, and for those able to keep their jobs despite the influx of the new laborers, wages stagnated or were even reduced.

Despite the growth of jobs because of wartime productivity, many Mexican Americans were being left behind. The small middle-classes already in existence during the early-to-mid 1940s were doing well, and were asserting their educational and citizenships rights under the U.S. Constitution, but the voiceless majority were unable to reap any of the early benefits of that struggle.[14] With that in mind, Archbishop Lucey's Catholic Welfare Bureau was one of the

[10]Kelly L. Hernandez, *Migra: A History of the U.S. Border Patrol* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010), 115.
[11]Nicolas Villanueva, Jr., *The Lynching of Mexicans in the Texas Borderlands* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2017), 11.
[12]"Prelate Scores Plan to Import Mexican Labor," *Alamo Register* Collection, July 10, 1942, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, Texas.
[13]Ibid.
[14]Richard A. Garcia, *Rise of the Mexican American Middle Class: San Antonio, 1929-1941* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1991), 5.

major sources of social and economic assistance available to those living in San Antonio's west side. Knowing that the average American wages had increased since the end of the Great Depression allowed Lucey to call for generosity among Catholics across the Archdiocese in giving to assist the less fortunate.[15]

The argument he presented to his priests, who were to spread the message to the laity was based on his commitment to the principle that "charity is a badge of the followers of Christ," and while some Catholics may not have had the financial means to undertake charitable donations, it was a Catholic duty to give if finances permitted.[16] Additionally, Lucey contended that giving money directly to families was a better solution than removing children from the home. A somewhat common idea since the beginning of the twentieth century, especially among Protestant social workers, was to "Americanize" children, even at the expense of taking them from their families. Lucey argued against that approach drawing on the Catholic emphasis on the "sacred" family as a core institution of everyday life. However, Lucey did agree that if the parents were drunkards, or were prone to domestic violence then removal of children from the home should be a priority.

After Lucey delivered a passionate speech on September 13, 1942, the Catholic Welfare Bureau prepared its campaign to raise funds. To counteract the view that people should not need assistance during an era of economic growth, the bureau started by stating that even though the economy was booming, "this world is full of contradictions," meaning that many people were being passed over by the economic growth and resulting prosperity.[17] Archdiocesan officials

[15]"Archbishop Stresses Tremendous Task that Faces Welfare Bureau," *Alamo Register* Collection, September 15, 1942, Louis J. Blume Library, San Antonio, Texas.
[16]Ibid.
[17]"Campaign is Planned to Raise Funds for Welfare Bureau Work," *Alamo Register* Collection, September 22, 1942, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, Texas.

were keen observers of the normal functioning of capitalism. They acknowledged that even when business is booming poverty can intensify. This intensification of poverty among Mexican Americans was two-fold. First, when new industries are booming new skills need to be obtained through training programs, something few Mexican Americans had access to. This was a problem that the archdiocese in conjunction with St. Mary's University was attempting to address. Second, discrimination against Mexican Americans and other minorities was rampant across the United States, leading to a lack of governmental efforts to improve their conditions.[18]

Despite lack of positive government intervention on behalf of Mexican-Americans, the Archdiocese of San Antonio made efforts to involve local and regional political officers in alleviating the conditions of the Mexican-American community.[19] For example, the archdiocesan officials led by Lucey, and alongside the Texas Social Welfare Association, met with local and state officials for a regional meeting in San Antonio on December 8.[20] Although that regional meeting was designed for welfare work in general, it did include a focus on the fields of family and child protection. A main theme for consideration was that lower-income people, including Mexican Americans and African Americans facing discrimination, desperately needed day-to-day assistance; however, that would not be enough. The reason given was that while in the short-term that daily assistance was important, nevertheless, in order for the poor and their children to succeed on their own, government needed to protect the individual rights and freedoms of all members of society, Anglo and non-Anglo alike.

Knowing that government functions slowly Archbishop Lucey, Monsignor O' Dwyer, and other high-and-mid level functionaries in the Archdiocese of San Antonio looked at their

[18]Ibid.
[19]"Welfare Problems will be Studied in Regional Parley," *Alamo Register* Collection, November 20, 1942, *Louis* J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, Texas.
[20]Ibid.

own resources to meet some of the needs of the impoverished residents of the greater San Antonio region, with a special focus on Mexican-Americans.[21] Lucey's message to affluent Anglo-Catholics in his archdiocese emphasized the importance of giving in Christ's name. He stressed "particularly the spiritual benefits," that are gained by Catholics who carry God's message in both temporal and spiritual ways.[22]

The Mexican-Americans of San Antonio's west side faced many difficulties; one of the most pressing was the lack of adequate healthcare.[23] Without governmental funding for healthcare, the needs of all the people could not be met, but that did not stop the Church from attempting to do what it could to alleviate the lack of healthcare in their communities. Under the careful guidance of Rev. Eustace Struckoff, OFM pastor of St. Joseph's, and Dr. S.T. Lowry, a clinic for Mexican Americans was established with the former serving as administrator and the latter as physician of the clinic. They employed a full-time nurse Mrs. Mary Son, a graduate of Santa Rosa School of Nursing.[24] Among the services provided by the clinic were preventive care, maternal care, and child and youth pediatric care.

As healthcare expanded through Archdiocesan efforts which placed a special emphasis on mothers, children, and youth, other areas of social welfare expanded simultaneously. Rev. Cullen F. Deckart sought the inclusion of Mexican-American youth into mainstream American society and to that end he led the development of a youth center on San Antonio's west side.[25] The Catholic Youth Center of San Antonio originally founded in 1940, after years of interest

[21]"Archbishop Speaks to De Paul Society," *Alamo Register* Collection, November 20, 1942, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio.
[22]Ibid.
[23]"St. Joseph's New Clinic is Opened," *Alamo Register* Collection, April 12, 1942, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, Texas.
[24]Ibid.
[25]Rev. Cullen F. Deckart, "Work of West Youth Center is told by Priest." *Alamo Register* Collection, April 27, 1943, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, Texas.

among Catholic businessmen, students, and other interested persons, assisted Mexican-American youth by forming them into clubs, both athletic and civic.[26] The Athletics component served to integrate Mexican-American youth into Anglo-American sports teams. The civics component of the youth center was designed to teach English language skills and citizenship rights among formerly uneducated Mexican American youth. Furthermore, both activities helped channel the energies of youth into productive and healthy endeavors for those who might otherwise might have joined gangs.

While LULAC sponsored similar activities among the Mexican American youth, I contend that the Church's activities and organizations were more beneficial to those with the greatest need. LULAC as a largely middle-class organization sometimes excluded the impoverished Mexican American youth; therefore, the Church's efforts to support that segment of the community were beneficial to society at large. Lucey slowly but surely was becoming one-of-the most important Catholic leaders in the social welfare movement directed towards Mexican Americans. Not only were his efforts recognized by clergy and political officers in Texas, but he was becoming recognized nationwide.[27]

In the mid-summer of 1943, Lucey was one of the leaders of discussions on the problems and practical solutions facing the Mexican-American community, who the Social Action Department of the National Catholic Welfare Conference referred to as Spanish-speaking Americans.[28] That identification corresponded with Lucey's labeling of the Mexican-American community. One of the major conclusions that Catholic leaders nationwide accepted at the July

[26]Ibid.
[27]"Outstanding Members of Clergy to Attend Welfare Conference," *Alamo Register* Collection, July 30, 1943, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, Texas.
[28]Ibid.

1943 conference was the idea of the "false economy" clear and the reality that Mexican Americans were widely treated with injustice.[29]

By false economy, Catholic leaders made it clear that even though the American economy was booming, an unrestrained capitalist economy always "holds a large segment of our population in poverty."[30] Particular blame was placed on business leaders, but was also extended to elected officials. Lucey argued that business leaders were driving countless thousands of people into starvation. Meanwhile, elected officials were blamed for cowering before the wealth of businessmen. For example, while Texas and other Southwestern states have laws that, in theory, should force Mexican American children to attend public school, those laws were almost never enforced. In San Antonio alone there were approximately 10,000 Mexican American grammar age children who were not enrolled in school.[31]

Although many Anglo-Americans directly blamed Mexican American parents for failing to enroll their children in school, Lucey and other Catholic leaders countered that position. Lucey was keen enough to understand that some Mexican-American parents disliked education, and would not change their minds when it came to sending their children, especially girls, to school; nevertheless, many parents discouraged school enrollment because of discrimination, and even violence that they feared would affect their children. Therefore, an important reform which Lucey sought among the Catholic Church and its treatment of Mexican-Americans was the establishment of labor schools and an increase in funding to study labor problems.[32] The

[29]"Latin Americans treated with Injustice and Disdain," *Alamo Register* Collection, July 30, 1943, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, Texas.
[30]Ibid.
[31]Ibid.
[32]"Conference Calls for Reforms in Treatment of Spanish Americans," *Alamo Register* Collection, July 30, 1943, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, Texas.

reasoning behind those reforms was that if parents were educated they would be better able to fight for their citizenship rights and seek opportunities for their children.

Other reforms proposed by Archbishops and Bishops in the San Antonio conference included the strengthening of child labor laws and "the extension of land ownership."[33] The last of these reforms was particularly radical for two reasons. First, Church leaders did not explicitly state how the extension of land ownership was to be accomplished, which to many Americans sounded socialist in nature. Second, the message sounded similar to one issued a mere two months earlier by Archbishop Lucey which itself was based on ideas coming out of the Vatican.[34] The message was irritating to many Americans principally because it called for a "world government," a concept disliked by Americans and one that also seemed socialist in nature. As a result, Lucey and other Catholic leaders were viewed with suspicion.[35]

This was not the first or last time Catholic clergy would be accused of harboring socialist/communist sympathies. Despite critiques by conservative opponents, especially those who opposed labor unions, Church officials kept their focus on improving the lives of Mexican Americans. "The five-point program," whose primary goal was "the betterment of labor conditions among Latin Americans in the Southwest," was part of the comprehensive program promoted and developed by the Catholic Welfare Conference whose leadership included Archbishop Lucey.[36] While similar programs had been proposed before in various Archdioceses, starting in San Antonio, this five-point program was agreed to by the archdioceses of the Southwest including the Archdioceses of Los Angeles and Santa Fe. Furthermore, it included a

[33]Ibid.
[34]"Only World Government Can Save Humanity from Chaos," *Alamo Register* Collection, May 14, 1943, Louis J. Blume Library. St. Mary's University, San Antonio, Texas.
[35]Ibid.
[36]"Five-Point Program Urged to Assist Latin Americans," *Alamo Register* Collection, July 30, 1943, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, Texas.

step-by-step plan which the archdioceses agreed to follow until a new or better solution was found.

The plan's first proposal stated that Mexican Americans should be more involved in religious affairs, because this would reduce domestic problems such as heavy drinking on the part of some males. The following two proposals were more in line with temporal welfare and labor assistance for Mexican Americans. These included support for labor organizations which were not discriminatory toward Mexican-origin people and to lobby both the federal and state legislatures to "further the position of the workingman."[37]

Lucey's efforts, and those of other Catholic clergy in San Antonio did not go unnoticed in other parts of the country with large and impoverished Mexican American populations. The Archdiocese of Los Angeles is a prime example of the influence Lucey and the San Antonio Archdiocese had far beyond its own boundaries. [38] Most Rev. Joseph T. McGucken, Auxiliary Bishop of Los Angeles, wrote to Lucey in an effort to learn about how to set-up and coordinate Catholic organizations and parishes to deal with some of the problems faced by the Mexican-American community of the greater Los Angeles area.[39] One of the first organizations the Los Angeles archdiocese adopted was the establishment of a Catholic Welfare Bureau directly housed in the chancery, the main offices of the Archbishop and Auxiliary Bishop.

The organization and day-to-day running of that particular Catholic Welfare Bureau was conducted based on the advice provided by Archbishop Lucey. The organization included the number of staff responsible for administering Catholic programs including the welfare bureau

[37]Ibid.
[38]"Auxiliary Bishop Joseph T. McGucken to Archbishop Robert E. Lucey," January 18, 1943, Robert E. Lucey Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio, Folder 1.
[39]Ibid.

and the Catholic Action program[40]. Lucey argued that while in San Antonio only one full-time moderator was needed, Los Angeles might need a minimum of two or three because the population of Mexican-Americans was larger, as was the overall population of the region.[41] As in San Antonio, the Church leadership's first concern focused on mothers, pre-natal care, and youth. With that in mind, Auxiliary Bishop McGucken cleared the path for the establishment ofa youth center and athletic program modeled on its predecessor in San Antonio.[42]

McGucken had similar ideas in mind based on a letter addressed to Lucey dated January 29, 1943, in which he stated that the Los Angeles Catholic-based social welfare services already included one-full time priest charged with the programs' overall administration.[43] Further, there were three others working full-time in the Catholic Action House.[44] In this sense, McGucken sought Lucey's advice, because of the latter's success in San Antonio; however, McGucken already had started formulating his own plans. Throughout 1943, McGucken led the implementation and creation of a Catholic Welfare Bureau in Los Angeles, an organization based on some of his own ideas, yet with significant advice from and similarities to the program which the Archdiocese of San Antonio had successfully created earlier.[45]

Meanwhile back in San Antonio, archdiocesan initiatives were being implemented to help meet both the temporal and spiritual needs of the Mexican American community. Many of the programs and solutions that were floated were top-down solutions, and paternalist in nature;

[40]Although there were numerous Catholic Action groups in Latin American countries with large Catholic populations; San Antonio area newspapers such as the *Alamo Messenger* do not specify if the Catholic Action group in the city was part of the larger movement.
[41]"Archbishop Robert E. Lucey to Bishop McGucken," January 25, 1943, Robert E. Lucey Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio, Folder 1.
[42]Ibid.
[43]"Joseph T. McGucken to Robert E. Lucey," January 29, 1943, Robert E. Lucey Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio, BCSS, Folder 1.
[44]Ibid.
[45]"Joseph T. McGucken to Robert E. Lucey, July 15, 1943, Robert E. Lucey Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio, BCSS, Folder 1.

however, not all Catholic clergy supported these top-down methods. Fr. Rabago of St. Joseph's Parish in the Southside of San Antonio, for example, called a meeting of his Mexican American parishioners, to discuss their problems and any ideas they might have to help resolve them.[46]

Lucey's compassion and friendliness toward Mexican Americans and otherlower-income and working-class residents of San Antonio started to directly influence Catholic youth by the middle of the 1940s, regardless of their racial or ethnic background. Youth from various private Catholic schools started to form "Inter-Racial" clubs on their campuses. The exact goals are difficult to define, nevertheless, the overall purpose was to start the slow integration and acceptance of Mexican Americans into mainstream American society.[47] For example, the youth of St. Peter Claver and Blessed Sacrament Academy held an interracial school Valentine Party, in which all students from both schools participated, and which was welcoming of Anglo-Americans and Mexican-Americans.[48] It is not known how many students from either racial background participated; however, it was a good and as it found its way into the pages of the *Alamo Register*. Additionally, the term "interracial" likely implies that African-America youth were included as well, however, not many African Americans in San Antonio were Catholic.

Even though the Valentine's Day party was a time for celebration for Catholic youth, when asked the reasons why they decided to integrate the celebration, youth leaders responded that they stood against discrimination.[49] Their stance was based on Christian teachings, which the youth argued clearly stated that people were equal in the eyes of God. The problem was that many people preferred to follow this world's teachings and did not apply Christian teachings to

[46]"Fr. Rabago will Give Mission in South San Antonio," *Alamo Register* Collection, March 19, 1944, Louis J. Blume Library, San Antonio, Texas.
[47]"Interracial Club," *Alamo Register* Collection, February 15, 1944, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, Texas.
[48]Ibid.
[49]"Interracial Bias Scorned by Catholic Student Group." *Alamo Register* Collection, February 15, 1944, *Louis* J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, Texas.

their lives. [50] While most students sided with similar ideas, and held that discrimination and segregation were un-Christian, and, specifically un-Catholic, there were always some outliers. Carrie Sommers of St. Peter Clavers was one such contrary voice. She argued that segregation should be allowed if "colored people do not object to a separate place in Catholic Churches."[51] Sommers's statement affected only Catholic Churches; yet, it still pushed back among the growing consensus among Catholic clergy and youth in San Antonio that segregation should not exist in Churches or anywhere else in society.

A further conclusion that Catholic youth found regarding the substandard economic conditions of Mexican-Americans, as well as, working-class Anglos, was low wages.[52] Why more people didn't connect poverty with low-wages is astounding, although it is likely that they bought into the prevalent system which argued that low-incomes were necessary for some people, especially non-White groups, because they needed less nutrition and healthcare than Anglo-Americans. With that in mind, Catholic students from around the San Antonio region called on employers to increase wages so that Mexican-Americans, among others, could work their way up the ladder.[53] Their own belief and practice of Catholicism made them call on Catholic employers first-and-foremost, so that they could be an example to American society in general.

Lucey's influence was greater than the Valentine's Day party, because some of the youth from St. Peter Clavers and Blessed Sacrament, joined by Incarnate Word high school, decided to

[50]Ibid.
[51]Ibid.
[52]"Minority Group Rights Are Upheld by Students at Joint Interracial Meeting," *Alamo Register* Collection, March 31, 1944, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, Texas.
[53]"Minority Group Rights Are Upheld by Students at Joint Interracial Meeting," Alamo *Register* Collection, March 31, 1944, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, Texas.

play their part in studying the problems of racism in American society.[54] Although it is unlikely, that high school youth had as much effect as Catholic leaders, or adult organizations their efforts nonetheless raised awareness, and the members of these schools would become the future leaders of Catholic support for Mexican-American civil and labor rights. Furthermore, the youth's activism affected other members of the Catholic community, including their parents. Some adults may have become more favorably disposed toward Mexican Americans and other minorities thanks to the genuine interest and questions posed by their children. For example, when the students contended that refusing "Negroes" the right to sit on a jury was unconstitutional, that was something which caught the attention of many adults, Catholic and non-Catholic alike, especially among the more educated members of the community.[55]

Archbishop Lucey showed his appreciation for student activism by acknowledging their efforts at an interracial meeting held on April 28, 1944. Over 300 Catholic junior and senior high school students attended the interracial meeting, from approximately 14 different Catholic high schools. Lucey's speech to them was titled "justice for minority groups," and his main goal was to highlight the effects Anglo-American discrimination had on Mexican-Americans and African-Americans in the United States.[56] One of Lucey's goals was to create awareness of Catholic shortcomings regarding treatment of African-Americans. Lucey told the high school attendees that it was his belief that non-Catholic groups including Episcopalians and Methodists had done more for the Negro than Catholics, and Catholics needed to step up their efforts.[57]

---

[54]"Inter-Racial Problem to be Meeting Topic," *Alamo Register* Collection, February 25, 1944, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, Texas.
[55]Ibid.
[56]"Interracial Meeting is Scheduled for April 28," *Alamo Register* Collection, March 31, 1944, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, Texas.
[57]Ibid.

At a meeting held later that spring that drew over 350 leading Catholic citizens of San Antonio, Lucey stressed the same points he had made to the students on April 28. In this follow-up meeting with non-students Lucey contended that in both temporal and spiritual matters. Catholics were falling behind Protestant organizations, this time mentioning the Baptists in addition to the Episcopalians and Methodists.[58] As the Archbishop of San Antonio, Lucey's focus was mainly Mexican-Americans and working-class whites; however, he thought that the Catholic Church in regions with larger African-American populations should do more for them; if they did not do so then other Christian Churches would take-up that role.[59] Lucey in his speech did not mention specifics concerning what the Catholic Church should do on behalf of African-Americans, but based on his preoccupation with women's health, child care, and family well-being, it is likely that he thought that churches with large African-American populations in their vicinity should establish such programs.

Lucey's jurisdiction, while only expanding to archdiocesan institutions, also influenced other Catholic communities. Those communities did not necessarily need any influence, but Lucey was definitely the best-known and most outspoken Catholic prelate favoring Mexican American civil and labor rights, therefore, in many ways Catholic communities such as Jesuit and Franciscan priests residing in San Antonio, followed his lead. Brother Gerald J. Schnepp, S.M., was one of those most influenced by both Lucey's ideas, and whose own understanding of scripture and Catholic teaching led him to participate in movements to assist Mexican-Americans and minorities in general. While as a "brother" (meaning Schnepp was a member of a religious order, and not a diocesan priest) he held the position of Chairman of the Archdiocesan

[58]"Inter-Racial Meeting in See City Draws over 350." *Alamo Register* Collection, May 5, 1944, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, Texas.
[59]"Episcopal Bishop Urges Rights of Latin Americans," *Alamo Register* Collection, January 26, 1945, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, Texas.

Committee on Interracial Relations, a position which allowed him great influence on the implementation of programs.[60]

Brother Schnepp in his position as chairman argued that Mexican Americans and African-Americans were becoming "more and more conscious of their rights" as Americans.[61] Therefore, both groups needed to be included in any of the solutions the Catholic Church sought and promoted. Gone was the era in which minority groups could be entirely led without their input. Schnepp was an early example of the anti-paternalist backlash that would be seen in the 1960s and 1970s from organizations such as PADRES, and from priests such as Fr. Sherrill Smith.

As the Catholic community in San Antonio played its role in the archdiocesan efforts to combat discrimination within their school community, Archbishop Lucey, along with Catholic leaders from across the nation, were converging on Oklahoma City for a meeting regarding the Spanish-speaking people of the Southwest.[62] The meeting was similar to that held a year before in San Antonio, in that it discussed cooperation among several Catholic agencies including the Social Action Department and the offices of "Inter-American Affairs."[63] The ideas coming forth from those conferences were meant to promote the programs already prevalent in San Antonio and Los Angeles, and to help them gain wider acceptance and implementation.[64]

At a second conference held in Denver, Colorado, also in 1944, some of the main protagonists in addition to Archbishop's Lucey and McGucken, were the Revs. Timothy

[60]"Interracial Question is Analyzed by Brother Schnepp," *Alamo Register* Collection, May 19, 1944, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, Texas.
[61]Ibid.
[62]"Joseph T. McGucken to Robert E. Lucey," January 3, 1944, Robert E. Lucey Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio, BCSS, Folder 1.
[63]"Robert E. Lucey to Most Rev. John J. Cantwell," November 6, 1944, Robert E. Lucey Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio, BCSS, Folder 1.
[64]"Robert E. Lucey to Most Rev. John J. Cantwell, D.D." December 15, 1944, Robert E. Lucey Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio.

Manning and Augustine O'Dea, both of whom would become active in the Bishop's Committee for the Spanish-Speaking (BCSS).[65] These men were well-known to participants of the Catholic Welfare Conference of 1944 because they were the main authors of the direction the BCSS would take throughout the second-half of the 1940s. Even though their ideas and solutions were not ground-breaking, or novel, because they had been presented by other Catholic clergy beforehand, they did help to formalize them.

First, a paternalist ethos can still be seen in the thinking of 1940s Catholic clergy, because they wanted most solutions and ideas to be top-down initiatives from an Anglo dominated Church toward Mexican Americans. Second, they sought an increase in Church funding for children's and women's healthcare and facilities for youth, which was nothing new for the Archdiocese of San Antonio, but it definitely was important because Catholic archdioceses from across the Southwest were now seeking the same goals through the same methods.[66] Third, the conference came to the conclusion that Mexican-Americans needed to have better religious education.[67] The thinking behind this last conclusion was that the Mexican Catholics accepted superstitious concepts not generally approved by the Europeanized/American Catholic Church. Some of the superstitious ideas Manning, O'Dea, and others believed prevented the advancement of Mexican Americans in the United States. For example, secular education for both boys and girls (although primary emphasis was placed on boys) was important, but Mexican parents did not want their children to get American ideas that might harm the traditional nuclear family.[68] Parental lack of support for education was at least partially

[65]"Timothy Manning to Rev. Augustine O' Dea," November 8, 1944, Robert E. Lucey Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio.
[66]"Bishops' Committee for the Spanish-Speaking," November 15, 1944, Robert E. Lucey Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio, November 15, 1944.
[67]"Analysis of Program as Planned by Social Action," November 15, 1944, Robert E. Lucey Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio.
[68]Ibid.

blamed on a very traditional Catholicism which was not as enlightened as the more modern variant of Catholicism found in more developed regions of Europe and the United States.

At the conclusion of the meetings held during November 1944, the archbishops of Los Angeles, San Antonio, Santa Fe, and Denver all agreed to come together again from January 10th 1to 3th 1945 to see how each of their regions were putting the findings into practice.[69] That meeting was scheduled barely two months after their concluding statements, therefore, it is not likely that much would be accomplished on the ground, but at least it would be useful for them to see, critique, and improve each other's plans. Even though the meetings were called by the archbishops of the four southwestern archdioceses, this was done so in the name of Archbishop Lucey.[70] Additionally, other archdioceses and dioceses were invited to participate as well, even though their Spanish-speaking populations were much smaller, both in total number and as a percentage of the larger population.

The original four-day meeting which the Catholic prelates had called for from January 10-13, actually became an almost 10-day-long conference, the most lasting legacy of which was the creation of the Bishop's Committee for the Spanish-Speaking, which would be based in San Antonio.[71] The conference was held in Oklahoma City, the see city of the Diocese of Oklahoma, where Bishop Francis Kelly had been active in providing social welfare assistance to the Mexican-American community since the establishment of the Little Flower Church in Oklahoma City. Furthermore, as the Bishops set-up that committee directly under their control, they acknowledged the efforts made at the local parish level by individual priests in the struggle for

[69]"N.C.W.C. News Service to Southwest Courier," December 28, 1944, Robert E. Lucey Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio.
[70]Ibid.
[71]"Spanish-Speaking Group Formed," *Alamo Register* Collection, January 19, 1945, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, Texas.

Mexican American social welfare and labor rights. With that in mind, the prelates also gave permission for the founding of a region-wide committee of priests, who had already "been devoting themselves to the religious and social welfare of the Spanish-speaking people."[72] The primary benefit in having that organization was that now they could officially ask for donations as permitted by the Catholic hierarchy, and they could also benefit from logistical support by having various parishes cooperate.

The resulting BCSS was also entrusted by the prelates to provide regional coordination for pre-existing and expanding clinical facilities across Southern California, New Mexico, Arizona, and the border regions of Texas.[73] Even though clinics around the region depended on local funding sources, including contributions from laity and local government, by organizing at the national level contributions could possibly be made from wealthier archdioceses in other parts of the country. Furthermore, by having a national system there could be special collections across the country.[74] Those types of collections were announced a week or two prior to their actual dates, and the laity were encouraged to contribute as much as their budget and faith allowed them to, and then those contributions were distributed to their intended beneficiaries.

Although Lucey believed that the Catholic Church, both in San Antonio, and nationwide could achieve great things in both spiritual and temporal work among Mexican Americans and other working-class citizens, he realized that in modern society government largess and support were needed. If government did not provide assistance to its most vulnerable citizens, then that government was not particularly Christian. Therefore, it was the duty of the Catholic Church not only to provide social welfare assistance themselves, it was also their duty to pressure

[72]Ibid.
[73]"Resolutions of the Bishops' Conference-Oklahoma City," January 12, 1945, Robert E. Lucey Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio.
[74]Ibid.

government officials at all levels.[75] Nevertheless, pressure from an archdiocesan viewpoint worked better if it was done at a local level. In a democratic society, such as the United States, the easiest way to lobby government was through the voting booth.

Summer 1945 was important in terms of archdiocesan efforts for greater public funding for healthcare. Technically, this funding was not for any new buildings or new programs, instead it was for the continued maintenance of a pre-existing facility: The Robert B. Green Hospital, which was falling into disrepair because of a lack of city and county funding.[76] Lucey instructed all parish priests in the Archdiocese, especially those in Bexar County to influence their parishioners to vote in favor of new tax levies for the hospital. The overall message was that many "worthy citizens are constantly refused assistance" because of the lack of money.[77] Local government leaders were not doing their duty in supporting such an important institution, therefore, it was up to the people to make officials aware that they cared about their less fortunate brethren.

Though financial problems would continue to plague the Robert B. Green Hospital for years to come, city leaders, county officials, and religious leaders primarily Catholics and Episcopalians argued for more hospitals of that type. While religious organizations argued that the hospital and any new affiliates should be operated 50-50 by the city and county, they were willing to assist in raising funds for them; therefore, forming an alliance between the Archdiocese and local government.[78]

---

[75]"Archbishop Appeals to Voters to Approve Tax Levy," *Alamo Register* Collection, July 20, 1945, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, Texas.
[76]Ibid.
[77]Ibid.
[78]"R.B. Green Hospital Situation is Discussed," *Alamo Register* Collection, July 30, 1948, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, Texas.

As in other cases where archdiocesan ideals were promoted within the greater community, the ideals were not solely based on Lucey's understanding of Catholic theology. The basis of the greater push for government involvement was evident in papal speeches and letters to the worldwide Church.[79] For example, in a speech on August 10, 1945, Pope Pius XII argued that a new world order must rise from the ashes of the Second World War. The new order must include the "true" values of Christianity, as based on the Bible and Catechism of the Church, which included absolute equality among the races and a guarantee of "salvation, welfare, and peace for all."[80] In addition, Pope Pius XII contended that future projects for world reconstruction should focus on the laboring classes.[81]

Among the laboring classes in the United States, including the greater South Texas region, agricultural farm workers were the most depressed group. Although Mexican Americans have been present in the United States since the day the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo was signed in 1848, a great number of new immigrants had arrived throughout the 1910s and 1920s because of the Mexican Revolution. The number of immigrants dropped significantly during the years of the Great Depression years, only to pick-up again during World War II. The oversupply of agricultural laborers, both domestic and foreign, ensured impoverished conditions. Several counties within the Archdiocese of San Antonio included the large agricultural sector. Furthermore, the Rio Grande Valley a region that would become important for Archbishop Lucey and other San Antonio clergy in later decades had a huge agricultural sector and impoverished population.[82]

---

[79]"Pope Says Social Work Can Save World," *Alamo Register* Collection, August 10, 1945, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, Texas.
[80]Ibid.
[81]Ibid.
[82]"Farm Migrants Most Depressed Groups in Labor," *Alamo Register* Collection, December 14, 1945, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, Texas.

Catholic prelates including Archbishop Lucey, and Monsignor Luigi G. Ligutti, executive secretary of the National Catholic Rural Life Committee, urged Texas and national legislators that "the legal guarantees of the Fair Labor Standards Act" (passed in 1938) be extended to farm laborers regardless of their racial or national background. Additionally, this Catholic statement was signed and supported by both Protestant and Jewish leaders from across the country. The overall argument was that without adequate legal protection, farmworkers would never achieve a decent standard of living. The lack of laws to regulate their labor showed two things. First, was the lack of attention in American society for the less fortunate. Second, the fact that Mexican Americans and African Americans were largely farm workers also underscored the racism of American society.[83]

Support for the laboring classes was varied and included educational efforts, charitable efforts, clinics, and included "Latin American girls," which most likely meant Mexican Americans, in homemaking courses offered in various parishes across San Antonio including San Jose Parish and Missions. Although homemaking courses appear to be preparing girls to be housewives' and mothers,' which is very traditionalist, the point here is that girls of Latin ancestry were being included alongside Anglo-American girls. Further, even if by modern standards those archdiocesan initiatives seem traditional, the Catholic Church in many ways was, in fact, traditional, as were the majority of Mexican Americans around the country.[84]

Throughout this era many Mexican Americans were being included more and more in mainstream (Anglo) archdiocesan programs and festivals. Simultaneously Mexican traditions were becoming better known and supported by the archdiocese. While the Catholic Church

[83] Ibid.

[84] "Latin American Girls Given Unique Homemaking Course," *Alamo Register* Collection, August 17, 1945, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, Texas.

supported Mexican Americans in keeping their traditions, they had, in most cases, been separate from Anglo festivities, and now they were joining. Of course, there was push back from conservatives on both sides, but greater efforts at inclusion meant greater understanding and working relationships for the future. Among the best-known Catholic feast days in Mexico, and by Mexican Americans, were those dedicated to the Virgin of Guadalupe. With that in mind, Archbishop Lucey made sure those celebrations were well-funded, and he spoke about the important relationship Mexican-origin people had with the Church through Our Lady of Guadalupe.[85]

The longstanding animosity between what historian Richard Garcia identifies as *Mexicanos de Afuera* and *Mexicanos de Adentro* started to decline during the mid-1940s.[86] Prior to the foundation of LULAC in 1929, most Mexican-origin people identified as Mexicans; however, after the 1930s an upwardly mobile sector of native-born Mexican-Americans chose to identify as Americans, and they started to encourage that identification among all classes of Mexicans. Archbishop Lucey and other prelates were keen observers to see those changes, and in line with the growth of the Mexican-American Generation, the archdiocese started taking over clinics and other centers formerly run by wealthy Mexican nationals, a process that would continue for several future decades.[87]

One of the first major institutions taken over by the Archdiocese was the *Clinica Mexicana* that had been funded and financed by wealthy Mexican ladies known collectively as the *Beneficienza Mexicana.*[88] The archdiocese from that point on developed the clinic from what

[85]"Archbishop Lucey is Speaker for Guadalupe Jubilee," *Alamo Register* Collection, October 12, 1945, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio.
[86]Garcia, *Rise of the Mexican American Middle Class,* 222.
[87]"Robert E. Lucey to the Most Rev. Samuel A. Stritch, D.D.," August 30, 1945, Robert E. Lucey Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio.
[88]Ibid.

had been a declining facility into one of the premier charity centers in San Antonio. Not only did the archdiocese refurbish the existing facilities, within the first couple of months they spent $15,000 installing a new dental department and provided additional funding for a children's clinic.[89]

In 1946, the National Catholic Conference of Catholic Bishops (NCCB) called for the third regional seminar for the subject of the Spanish-Speaking to take place in Santa Fe, New Mexico on the dates of July 9-11. The conference was sponsored by Archbishop Lucey and the Bishops' Committee for the Spanish-Speaking regional office located in San Antonio.[90] Bishops, priests, and secular administrators from twelve dioceses participated at thisconference, all with the strategic goal to organize resources more effectively to evangelize and minister to Mexican Americans across the Southwest. Additionally, the continuation of lobbying efforts on local and state governments was to continue in conjunction with LULAC, although the latter was still focusing on educational opportunity, citizenship rights, and the Mexican American middle class, while the Catholic Church continued its emphasis on the most impoverished members of that community, including the working-class.[91]

The Church based its concept of working-class rights not on Marxist philosophy as some conservative critics claimed, but on the natural rights of all humans, which was itself based not on science, but on the Bible and Catholic belief that humankind is created in the image of God.[92] In fact, the Church contended that science had proven itself incapable of securing equality of all men, because Fascists, especially the Nazis, who the United States had helped defeat used

[89]Samuel A. Stritch to Robert E. Lucey, August 31,1945, Robert E. Lucey Collection, Archdiocese ofSanAntonio.
[90]3rd Regional Seminar for Spanish-Speaking Planned in Santa Fe, April 26, 1946, *Alamo Register* Collection, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, Texas.
[91]Ibid.
[92]"Church Called True Friend of Working Man," *Alamo Register* Collection, June 1946, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, Texas.

scientific racism to justify their atrocities. Catholic bishops argued that the equality of man was itself enshrined in the American Declaration of Independence, and that leaving behind Mexican Americans and African Americans the country was failing to live up to the expectations of a free and democratic society.[93]

According to Bishop Francis J. Haas, Catholics were ahead of the game because their view of racial equality went much deeper than the Declaration of Independence, it went all the way to the Bible, understood by all Christians to be the Word of God.[94] Bishop Haas argued that for the Catholic Church there was no such thing as "races, minority, or otherwise," that was a creation of a world that was becoming distant from true Christianity, Catholic or otherwise.[95]

While the Catholic Conference of Bishops formulated their national ideological identity and goals, the Archdiocese of San Antonio continued their ground campaign against poverty in their hometown. In the summer of 1945, the archdiocese had taken over the *Clinica Mexicana* and increased its financial endowment. Further, the archdiocese started to open other clinics on San Antonio's West Side including a new clinic for Mexican-Americans, located on 207 San Fernando Street.[96] Although the clinic was owned and funded by the archdiocese it was under the presidency of a laywoman, Mrs. P. Sanchez Navarro. The clinic also housed the Santa Maria Maternity Hospital which had been built with an estimated $18,000 dollars funded through donations from wealthy Catholics throughout the archdiocese.[97]

The expansion of healthcare to San Antonio's West Side by 1946 had been an important and lasting concern for the Church; however, archdiocesan officials knew that charity would not

[93]Ibid.
[94]"No Division into Race in Catholic Thinking, Assets Bishop Haas," *Alamo Register* Collection, July 19, 1946, *Louis* J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, Texas.
[95]Ibid.
[96]"Clinic to be Dedicated Sunday," *Alamo Register* Collection, June 28, 1946, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, Texas.
[97]Ibid.

solve the problems faced by Mexican Americans. Charity and social welfare assistance are a positive good because they alleviate the immediate problems faced by the poor, but people need to be self-sufficient. In the 1940s Mexican Americans faced harsh discrimination and limited opportunities for employment in American society; therefore, by the summer of 1946 the Bishops' Committee for the Spanish-Speaking concluded that they needed to set-up an employment agency. The founding director was Luis E. Gomez and the agency's purpose was to assist Mexican American boys and girls in finding employment.[98] In order to do so the archdiocese was involved in providing job training. Boys were to be taught construction, plumbing, and other trades, while girls were trained for basic secretarial skills. These were jobs that were primarily held by working-class Anglo Americans, but for which the Church was pushing for an opening for Mexican Americans. The biggest problem faced by this Church agency was limited funding. While the Church has a significant source of revenue from its members, the goal was to lobby government for funding.[99]

At roughly the same time that the new clinic and employment agency were being inaugurated by the archdiocese, a new facility, the St. Alphonsus Parish Center was also opened on Rosillo and San Carlos streets on June 30, 1946.[100] This new hall was the first one to be opened in San Antonio that was completely administered by the Bishops' Committee for the Spanish-Speaking. Funding for the hall came from the American Board of Catholic Missions at a cost of approximately $15,000 and was to be administered by the Rev. John J. Birch, the executive secretary of the BCSS.[101] Archbishop Lucey was at the dedication of the center along

[98]"Bishops' Committee for Spanish-Speaking to Aid in Employment," *Alamo Register* Collection, July 05, 1946, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, Texas.
[99]Ibid.
[100]"Pastoral Center Dedicated," *Alamo Register* Collection, July 05, 1946, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, Texas.
[101]Ibid.

with prelates from other archdioceses including bishop William D. O'Brian of Chicago, who served as the president of the Catholic Extension Society, an umbrella organization that provided funding to charities that focused on marginalized communities. The parish center had dual purposes because it was to serve as a spiritual center for young Catholics, providing Catechism classes, and also for adults to meet and formulate labor plans, with an emphasis on interracial justice.

Simultaneously, Our Lady of the Lake College was promoting interracial justice among its students. Rev. John M. Haynes, Professor of Religion at Incarnate Word College was vocally supportive of all archdiocesan efforts on behalf of Mexican Americans. Rev. Haynes was himself not a priest under the spiritual direction of Archbishop Lucey, nevertheless, he believed in the same ideals. As a professor, Haynes had the opportunity to influence a significant number of young Anglo-Catholics, and encourage them to become involved in local efforts undertaken by the Archdiocese of San Antonio.[102] The course Rev. Haynes offered was open to anyone willing to learn about past racial injustices and of the teachings of the Catholic Church promoting racial justice, and was known as the "summer school of Catholic Action," and held from July 29 to August 3, 1946.[103]

Interracial progress and measures initiated by the Archdiocese of San Antonio continued over the next several years. While Mexican Americans constituted the majority of San Antonio's racial minority, African-Americans did reside in the city too, and Church efforts, while not directed at them specifically, were benefiting from the transformation then taking place within the Catholic Church in the city. Things that appear rather simple had important repercussions for

[102]"Interracial Justice will be Discussed in Catholic Action School," *Alamo Register* Collection, July 5, 1946, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, Texas.
[103]Ibid.

the future including the graduation of six African-American students from parish schools.[104] The graduation of these students was not in itself momentous – African American students had graduated from the school previously – the most important development was that they stood and received their diplomas alongside Anglo American and Mexican American students.[105]

By 1948, when the interracial graduations were taking place, "civics clubs" were being established in hundreds of Catholic elementary schools around the country. These clubs were designed to integrate children from as young an age as possible to counter stereotypes of racial inequality. The existence of more than 1,000 of those small clubs including several in San Antonio, likely influenced greater acceptance of African American and Mexican American participation in graduation ceremonies.[106]

Since the establishment of the BCSS it was much easier to raise funds to assist Mexican Americans across the Southwest. As previously mentioned, it was easier to organize at a national level than it had previously been. Further, the increase in awareness of Mexican Americans as an impoverished underclass as the 1940s progressed made other national Catholic organizations more willing to finance projects that directly benefited that group of people. The fact that a majority of Mexican Americans were Catholics heavily influenced the charitable consciousness of Catholic leaders nationwide. For example, the Catholic Mission Board in early July 1946 awarded a $225,000 grant to the Archdiocese of San Antonio to assist athletic leagues, and recreational and family centers scattered throughout the West Side and other poor areas of the archdiocese.[107]

---

[104]"Rev. J.M. Haynes Sees Progress in Church Toward Racial Integration," *Alamo Register* Collection, July 16, 1948, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, Texas.
[105]Ibid.
[106]"Civics Club," *Alamo Register* Collection, August 13, 1948, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, Texas.
[107]"First General Report of Regional Office Reveals Big Progress," *Alamo Register* Collection, July 19, 1946, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, Texas.

Additionally, the Catholic clergy in San Antonio were actively seeking a Boy Scout troop for Mexican American boys. The idea was to engage teenagers in productive and healthy endeavors, in order to reverse the increase in Mexican American youth joining gangs. The grant would pay the fees and any materials, that Mexican American parents could not afford for their children. Although the Church acknowledged that some Mexican Americans were poor because of their own failings, most were impoverished because of the prevailing economic system.[108]

Creating opportunities for self-improvement among Mexican American boys was something promoted by the BCSS, because government could not be counted on to provide them. The Church had to equip Mexican-American youth so they would fight their own battles in later years, while simultaneously distributing supplies to the needy in the present-day.[109] With that in mind, the archdiocese wanted Mexican-American youth to learn the same skills and habits learned by Anglo-American youth who were members of the Boy Scouts. The $225,000 grant, in addition to the already stated goals, was earmarked to assist "outstanding students of Latin American decent" by providing them college scholarships.[110] The scholarships were granted under the direction of the Rev. John J. Bircher, executive secretary of the Bishops' Committee, and had an average of $850 contributed within the first couple of days of it being implemented. It is unknown what school individual Mexican American men and women attended; however, a goal of Rev. Bircher, and most other clergy, including Archbishop Lucey was for those scholarships to be utilized in Catholic institutions.

[108]"Minutes of the Meeting of Bishops," November 13, 1946, Robert E. Lucey Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio.
[109]"We Must Give Our Utmost to Aid Hungry People, Archbishop Says," *Alamo Register* Collection, November 14, 1947, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, Texas.
[110]"18 Boys, Girls Study under Plan Launched by Bishops' Committee," *Alamo Register* Collection, September 28, 1946, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, Texas.

While LULAC was fighting its battles in the American Court System and was building greater momentum in its struggle for citizenship rights; the Archdiocese of San Antonio was teaching those rights to those left behind by LULAC's initiatives. The Archdiocese of San Antonio in January 1947 started a series of "practical courses" designed to teach Mexican Americans from the West Side their "citizenship rights, labor relations, parliamentary law, and general leadership" skills.[111] The classes were taught by faculty from Incarnate Word College under the auspices of the San Antonio Labor Institute.[112] At this point we are able to see a major difference between LULAC and archdiocesan activism. LULAC was not pro-labor primarily because they were a middle-class organization, but the Church was pro-labor, at least within the Archdiocese of San Antonio because its preoccupation was with the working-class and poor.

San Antonio was not the only Catholic archdiocese seeking more labor involvement on behalf of Mexican Americans, and Americans in general, there were national, state, and local Catholic Labor organizations coordinating events and rallies to promote the cause of the working-man.[113] One such organization was the Detroit Association of Catholic Trade Unionists which shared similar goals in informing and teaching citizenship rights and labor organizing to workers. However, while in San Antonio the working-class was Anglo American and Mexican American, in Detroit it was the former alongside African Americans.

Labor organizers and their supporters within the larger society, like the Catholic Church understood that many economic conservative critics blamed labor unions for social failings.[114] Labor unions were often referred to as Marxist institutions, and while there were Marxists within

[111]60 Men and Women Enrolled at Present for Weekly Classes, *Alamo Register* Collection, February 07, 1947, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, Texas.
[112]Ibid.
[113]"Catholic Trade Unionists Object to Open Shop Move," Alamo *Register* Collection, January 31, 1947, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, Texas.
[114]Rev. J.M. Haynes, "Why do People Consider Unions Questionable," *Alamo Register* Collection, July 23, 1948, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, Texas.

labor unions, they were only a minority among a much larger membership. In addition to being labeled as Marxist organizations, labor unions regardless of their racial make-up were critiqued for general price increases in consumer goods which adversely affected the American middle-class, which was largely white in composition.[115] The fact that unions were an agglomeration of races was used by union detractors to claim that labor unions, especially those connected with Mexican Americans and African Americans, were affiliated with Marxist organizations like the Communist Party of the United States (CPUSA), which itself was viewed as a tool of Moscow.

By 1947 the cost of living in urban centers across the United States was almost double what it had been in 1939. The strides made by workers in earning higher wages were directly condemned as the reason for higher prices. However, various Catholic Church figures including Archbishop Lucey through the pages of the *Alamo Register,* called those accusations false. Instead, Church officials contended that "the real gains in the race have been made in profit to businesses and farmers," while unionized workers only received a fraction of the new wealth being created in the country.[116] Consequently, the Church argued that workers, nor unions, should be accused of creating higher prices for the average American household, instead, it was businesses with its insatiable desire for greater profits, who were to blame.[117] Nevertheless, Church officials recognized that unions did assist workers in gaining wage increases, and therefore, encouraged Mexican Americans to join unions whenever possible; for example,

[115]"Labor is Not to be Blamed for Big Price Increases," *Alamo Register* Collection, June 27, 1947, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, Texas.
[116]Rev. J.M. Hayes, "Battle of Statistics: Show Some Labor Gains," *Alamo Register* Collection, July 30, 1948, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, Texas.
[117]"The Real Trouble-Maker: Monopolistic Greed," *Alamo Register* Collection, June 27, 1947, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, Texas.

members of local 93 in San Antonio which was made-up of several hundred Spanish-speaking citizens, won an hourly increase from ninety cents to $1.43 in January 1948.[118]

Moreover, the drive for greater profits by businesses further prevented the development of decent housing for lower-class citizens, including the vast majority of Mexican Americans in San Antonio's West Side.[119] Archbishop Lucey in a letter to Senator Robert F. Wagner, New York Democrat and member of the joint committee of the Senate and House of Representatives on federal aid to housing, painted a "bleak future" for San Antonio's poverty stricken inhabitants.[120] Lucey argued that private industry would be unable to solve the housing needs of Mexican-Americans in San Antonio, or of other poor people across the nation, hence government-financed housing was necessary. Additionally, Lucey wanted federal government intervention, not local government, because in San Antonio the city administration had proven itself incapable or unwilling to fight against slum conditions.

Lucey did give credit to previous efforts made by city officials in his letter for contributions to better living conditions on the West Side; yet, those few housing projects were too little, and only came about because of heavy pressure from the community itself, including the Catholic Church. Among activists was Fr. Carmelo Tranchese who had been working in the West Side since the 1930s, before Lucey was even appointed as Archbishop for the region.[121] In fact, Fr. Tranchese was known in San Antonio, and within, the wider Catholic Church as the

[118]"Spanish-Speaking Laborers are Given Wage Increase," *Alamo Register* Collection, January 09, 1948, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, Texas.
[119]"San Antonio's Housing Failure," *Alamo Register* Collection, December 7, 1947, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, Texas.
[120]Ibid.
[121]"Fr. Tranchese to be Honored on Radio Hour," *Alamo Register* Collection, January 24, 1947, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, Texas.

"father of public housing," because his lobbying pressure forced the city to begin the construction of public housing units in the city.[122]

In conjunction with archdiocesan labor classes designed with lower-class Mexican-Americans in mind, Archbishop Lucey called on wealthy Catholics around the nation to contribute to the less fortunate in society, particularly those suffering from racial injustices.[123] Although poverty affected Americans of all racial backgrounds, the local emphasis was and would remain on Mexican-Americans. Lucey contended that many Catholics, and other American Christians, did contribute to charity; however, they were like the rich man in the Bible who gave out of their surplus wealth, which will "not satisfy Christian charity."[124] Lucey was not calling for the redistribution of wealth; instead, he wanted Catholics to actually think about what they were giving. If they could afford to give more, while not hurting their own finances and savings, then they should.[125] By the same token Lucey, and other clergy for that matter, understood that not all Catholics could contribute to Catholic campaigns to raise funds for charity, and they should not feel obligated to do so.

Archbishop Lucey told his readers across the archdiocese about the praise Catholic institutions were receiving from mainstream society, especially local government, and Mexican Americans themselves.[126] His purpose in doing so was to show major donors of all the good they were doing. Not only was their money giving daily support to impoverished families, they were contributing to a better future in which Mexican Americans would not need that type of

[122]"Priest held high posts: Now Works Amid Poverty," August 20, 1948, *Alamo Register* Collection, August 20, 1948, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, Texas.
[123]"National Campaign Beginning March 16 Has $5,000,000 Goal," *Alamo Register* Collection, March 07, 1947, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, Texas.
[124]Ibid.
[125]"Archbishop Lucey Urges Generosity to Charity Appeal," *Alamo Register* Collection, September 24, 1948, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, Texas.
[126]"De Paul Men Give Material Assistance to 115 families," *Alamo Register* Collection, November 28, 1948, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, Texas.

assistance, a time when they would be entirely independent.[127] In the same letter published in the *Alamo Register,* Lucey especially thanked the contributions and volunteer efforts at two health centers. Those centers were the department of social service at Santa Rosa Community Center, and the health center of Guadalupe Community Center. Even though he acknowledged all volunteers and donors, the aforementioned two centers provided services to the poorest of the poor.[128]

Healthcare is among the most important provisions humans need to live, and the lack of it an obstacle that needed to be overcome and still does in contemporary America. In early 1949, there was a movement for a new health insurance bill in the United States Senate introduced by Senator James E. Murray from Montana.[129] Murray was supported in introducing the bill by Senator Robert E. Wagner, both of whom were Catholic. Church leadership was divided on the issue, because they viewed the possible governmental takeover of healthcare as akin to the system of government in the Soviet Union. Nonetheless, the Church agreed that the cost of insurance was too high and that hospitals in the United States were run on a business basis, something that should not be the case with a service that was so vital.[130]

Although the "compulsory" health insurance bill introduced by Murray and pushed by the Truman Administration was defeated, it garnered some support among Catholic clergy, especially those who worked closely with Mexican Americans, including Archbishop Lucey. Concurrently, other Catholic clergy and organizations were adamantly against it. Monsignor George L. Smith, president of the Catholic Hospital Association was among the most vocal

[127]"Health, Welfare, Social Program for Spanish-Speaking Wins Praise," *Alamo Register* Collection*,* March 07, 1947, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, Texas.
[128]Ibid.
[129]Rev. J.M. Hayes, "Better Health Facilities Needed," *Alamo Register* Collection, February 04, 1949, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, Texas.
[130]Ibid.

opponents of government administered healthcare. Instead, he reasoned that people should be encouraged to buy their own health insurance, and that the federal government should give a tax incentive to those earning less than $5,000 per year.[131]

Individuals like Rev. Smith in many ways did not have contact with those affected by racial injustice, or he did not particularly care about them. For example, he presumed everybody could make coherent decisions about health insurance; yet, how would people prevented from earning an adequate education be able to make such decisions for themselves or their children. Lucey's view of government administered healthcare was not as negative as that of individuals such as Smith. Lucey and others like him did want Mexican Americans to make their own decisions in the future, but in the present, they should be given aid, including healthcare. It was a step-by-step process that would make Mexican Americans independent. In the short-term, government should not necessarily administer all healthcare, but should increase funding for it, while people are becoming educated, especially the younger generations.[132] Lucey called for a special collection to be held around all Catholic parishes in the archdiocese to raise money for the rest of 1950 and for the new year to come. Donations from that special collection would be utilized for employment training, health care, and scholarship initiatives sponsored by Catholic institutions such as the Guadalupe Community Center.[133]

By 1950, Robert E. Lucey had been Archbishop of San Antonio for eight years and his views on social and labor justice toward Mexican Americans had become well-known among the Catholic Church, as well as Mexican American civil rights organizations. The Archdiocese of

---

[131]"Senators Hear Catholic Plan for Aid to Health, *"Alamo Register* Collection, June 17, 1949, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, Texas.
[132]"Archbishop Announces Appeal for Needy Missions," *Alamo Register* Collection, September 15, 1950, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, Texas.
[133]"Guadalupe Community Center Marks Decade of Help to Spanish-Speaking," September 29, 1950, *Alamo Register* Collection, September 29, 1950, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, Texas.

San Antonio had become increasingly involved on behalf of Mexican Americans, and civil and labor rights in general during those years. This transformation occurred in San Antonio because of Archbishop Lucey; however, his influence would eventually grow out of his control, especially during the turbulent 1960s when radical priests would emerge and become even more outspoken and active on behalf of Mexican Americans.

Chapter 4: Catholicism and Social Justice, 1942-1960

Catholic Church involvement in the affairs and struggles of Mexican-origin people in both the San Antonio and Oklahoma City region in the 1940s and 1950s appear to take different routes when combing through the pages of their respective archdiocesan newspapers: the *Alamo Register* and the *Southwest Courier*. These two decades might well be called the "in-between years" before Mexican-origin people became a major political force in San Antonio, and before, their numbers started significantly climbing in Oklahoma City. The Mexican-origin population in the latter see city, according to historian Michael Smith, was very small by the late 1930s and would remain so. Taking that into consideration helps in understanding the lack of mention of Mexican-origin people in the *Southwest Courier*.

Henceforth, the Diocese of Oklahoma City, which I argue in previous chapters was at the forefront of Church-Mexican American relationship, would become comparatively passive. Simultaneously, the Archdiocese of San Antonio, under the leadership of Archbishop Robert E. Lucey who took the leadership mantle of the Church-Mexican American relationship in the 1940s, would continue to increase its involvement during the 1950s. Nonetheless, both the Archdiocese of San Antonio and Diocese of Oklahoma City continued to be involved in social justice and charitable efforts, but in Oklahoma City the full impact on Mexican-origin people is difficult to determine. However, since the Church in Oklahoma had already proven itself in aiding the Mexican community, it is likely that the group remained a beneficiary of Church aid efforts.

This chapter examines Church social justice and labor efforts at both the national and local levels in San Antonio and Oklahoma City in the 1940s and 1950s, while also taking into consideration the outside factors including governmental actions that affected Church social

justice and labor programs and proposals. The chapter also portrays a larger picture of how the Catholic Church was involved in other struggles or aspects of daily life, including health assistance, parochial versus public education, and charitable efforts that not only addressed the needs of one ethnic group, but of society as a whole. The focus on issues of national relevance helps set the stage to examine the actions and policies of the Archdiocese of San Antonio and the Diocese of Oklahoma and Tulsa.

Even though the economy of the United States was left unscathed by the Second World War that left Europe and Asia decimated in the 1940s, that did not translate into economic benefits for all Americans and foreign residents. The fact was that while major strides were made by the country as a whole regarding the transformation of the American economy as it went through what economists argue is the normal functioning of the market economy: not everyone benefited from the expansion and peak that came after the end of World War II.[1] Some White Americans and larger percentages of Mexican Americans and African Americans were left behind the economic upswing during and after the war to such a degree that the need for charity assistance and prevalence of labor problems appeared to consume many of the pages of archdiocesan newspapers.[2]

Americans, of all ethnic backgrounds, were no strangers to economic problems; most adults of the 1940s and 1950s had lived through the Great Depression that had decimated the national economy. Joblessness and a lack of living wages were major problems before American entry into the war, and in the transformation from a war economy to the peace economy that would follow these same types of issues would arise. The Church by this point had become an

[1]Jeffrey M. Stupak and Mark P. Keighteley. Introduction *to U.S. Economy: GDP and Economic Growth* (Washington, D.C., Congressional Research Service, 2019), 1.
[2]Rev. James A. Garvey, "Associated Catholic Charities," *Southwest Courier,* January 6, 1940, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma Historical Center – Research Division.

outspoken advocate for the "proper distribution" of real income to benefit the working-class and middle-class segments of the population.[3] The Church view was that if market forces were left to their own devices with little governmental interference on behalf of average Americans, there could be no industrial peace because the owners of productive resources held most of the power. Rev. Msgr. Francis J. Haas, Dean of the School of Social Sciences at the Catholic University of America, contended that industrial problems could be solved only when the federal government created a committee that included representatives of industry, labor, and agriculture together, but not only the owners and managers, but employee representatives as well.[4]

If all players from the lowest rank employee through the largest shareholder of a corporation had a voice in the company, and that voice mattered, and the federal government enforced the fair recommendations of such deliberations, then the industrial problems of strikes and unemployment could slowly be chiseled away. Moreover, Msgr. John A. Ryan among others including Rev. James A. Garvey, director of Associated Catholic Charities of Oklahoma argued that a distribution of income so that purchasing power would be transferred downward would also aid in resolving conflicts among socioeconomic classes in the United States. The Church's view was based on the belief that the transfer of income would benefit residents, namely farmers and wage earners, "who would actually spend it on the consumption of goods and might use it to start small businesses. Savings and investments on the part of the upper classes were necessary, but there was only so much a person could actually use; the rest would be locked up, to the detriment of those whose consumption habits would boost the economy by their spending. The

[3]"Joint Pastoral will be Issued on the Church," *Southwest Courier,* January 20, 1940, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma History Center – Research Division.
[4]"Unemployment is Big Problem Facing the U.S.," *Southwest Courier,* January 13, 1940, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma City History Center – Research Division.

"consumption classes" who spent their earnings would therefore be able to create more jobs, because if spending went up so would production, thereby leading to higher employment.[5]

While the Catholic Church did not oppose the wealth of individual members of society, and in fact, supported some forms of concentrated wealth, because some of these affluent members of society were very charitable, the problem with such concentrations of wealth arose when it became so acute as to destroy the individual initiative of large segments of the population. Additionally, when wealth is too narrowly concentrated, it also leads to unemployment, because it prevents a greater distribution of resources, as well as prevents certain sectors of society, including youth from becoming independent and successful. The Church spokesmen contended that it was from these discouraged and abandoned members of society that the world's evils such as communism, grew. Although it was the working-classes and poor who gave a voice to communism, the Church contended that ultimately those to blame were the ones who hoarded the wealth of the world.[6]

To combat the rise of communism and other evils affecting society, the Church contended that its members would play a pivotal role because their numbers across the United States kept growing at a much faster rate than that of the Protestant population, although they admitted it was unlikely that their numbers would reach parity with Protestant numbers in the near future. For example, by the middle of 1945, the Catholic Church was the "largest group" among churchgoers in the United States. Official Catholic Church statistics published annually by P.J. Kenedy & Sons, a New York based-firm, revealed that 72, 492, 669 Americans were members of various churches, but the single largest group was the Roman Catholic Church, at

[5]Msgr. John A. Ryan, "Employment is Tied with Money Holdings," *Southwest Courier*, April 13, 1940, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma History Center – Research Division.
[6]Rev. John J. Walde, "Library Gleans," *Southwest Courier*, January 20, 1940, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma City History Center – Research Division.

23,419,701; however, in total numbers Protestants still heavily outnumbered the Catholic Church, but those numbers were divided up into multiple denominations.[7] Nonetheless, Church leadership believed that their lobbying efforts with the financial, spiritual, and vocal support of a unified Church would transform "the principles for the distribution of income of industry."[8]

Among the goals of various Church leaders in the United States other than labor-government-industry committees and the transfer of income downward, was the actual ownership of various industries. Msgr. Fulton J. Sheen, generally a major conservative on social issues, was among the proponents of giving a share of ownership of businesses to the laboring classes.[9] Msgr. Sheen argued that the Church's support for giving partial ownership of industry to the working-classes was based on "moral law" which was superior to man-made laws promoted by some as sacred. The Church's stance was that while the stockholders were important in providing the financing and machinery to make a product, it was the inventor and the employees who actually created the wealth of society, therefore, they needed a share of the profits that was comparable to their true value of their labor, a value much higher than that granted by the owners of capital.[10]

Msgr. Sheen was not alone in his call for a working-class ownership of industry but was only one voice among many. The Social Action Department of the National Catholic Welfare Conference (NCWA), an organization whose reach in Catholic social justice aid and lobbying efforts went almost unmatched, was one such organization that echoed Sheen's view of society. Their authority in calling for such changes again was based on the large population of Roman

[7]"Catholics the Largest Group Among 72,492,669 Members of U.S. Catholic Churches," *Southwest Courier*, October 6, 1945, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma History Center – Research Division.
[8]"The Church and the Social Order," *Southwest Courier*, February 24, 1940, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma History Center – Research Division.
[9]"Capital-Labor Partnership is Told by Priests," *Southwest Courier*, January 29, 1944, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma History Center – Research Division.
[10]Ibid.

Catholics, and an even greater authority, from their viewpoint, that given to them by God to represent him on this earth. The distribution of income and partial worker-ownership of industry which they claimed would resolve some of the many socioeconomic problems the United States faced, was based on the idea of creating a new and better society which could only come about in a "Christian Social Order," which likely meant a Christianity leaning heavily, or entirely, toward the Catholic version.[11] Catholic Church idealism in reshaping American society, based as it was on the self-view as representatives of God, was not solely an American phenomenon. These ideas dated back since at least *Rerum Novarum* (1891), and most recently, Pope Pius XI's 1931 encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno* which called for a then radical departure from the way society functioned.[12]

Papal social encyclicals played an important role in the formation of policy statements by the NCWC and regional Catholic leaders. Their study by the Catholic laity was viewed as of upmost importance, because if both clergy and laity wished to be more Christlike, then they should seek a reconstruction of the industrial social order which had existed in one form or another for the last 150 years. The Catholic Labor Alliance, whose main ranks, not surprisingly, consisted of Catholics, had an open membership strategy to seek allies from among Protestant groups in achieving the objectives of social encyclicals. By attracting like-minded Protestants into the labor alliance, they could have a greater effect on government policies through their joint lobbying efforts by showing a united and significantly larger front than just members of the Catholic Church.[13]

[11]"Better Social Order Need of Capital-Labor," *Southwest Courier*, August 31, 1946, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma History Center – Research Division.
[12]"NCWC Explains Encyclicals," *Alamo Register* Collection, June 29, 1951, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, TX.
[13]"Labor Alliance," *Alamo Register* Collection, August 3, 1951, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, TX.

Furthermore, Social Action Department publications in this era claimed that the idea of collective bargaining, as important as it was, was no longer enough to solve economic problems that affected all ethnic groups in the country. Collective bargaining, therefore, would remain a major tool, but if income was distributed downward or partial ownership granted to the workers that would allow Catholics to insert Christianity into the market-place, which would consequently make it much more humane and charitable than the existing system that focused exclusively on accumulation of wealth.

Although members of the Church leadership in America were idealistic in their desire to transform the capitalist market economy into a Christian market economy, they realized that would be a long struggle. While making that transformation their long-term goal, the Catholic Church, nationally and locally, did play a more coherent and realistic role in the betterment of society, which in the Archdiocese of San Antonio and the Diocese of Oklahoma included Mexican-origin people. The support for increasing the established minimum wages, overturning detrimental labor legislation, settling strikes in various states and providing charitable support would greatly help those in lower-socioeconomic groups, which included most Mexican-origin people in the 1940s-1950s.[14]

Among the more realistic and concrete challenges which national Church leadership was involved in was the struggle against labor legislation deemed hurtful to the working-classes. The Taft-Hartley Act was one of those harmful pieces of anti-labor legislation proposed, and eventually, enacted by Congress in 1947, which the Church sought to garner support against. Bishop James A. Griffin of the Diocese of Springfield in Illinois contended that the Taft-Hartley Act was a reactionary law that hindered and wound back the progress the labor movement had

[14]Rev. Eugene J. McGuiness, "Mission Collection: For Minority Groups – Indians, Colored," *Southwest Courier*, February 26, 1949, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma History Center – Research Division.

made in the 1930s. Americans, Bishop Griffin argued, were forgetting the "inherent nobility of manual labor," be it agricultural or industrial. Americans needed to realize that every free man was an important part of the system and that no man should ever be a slave to a machine, or to a system that treated him like a machine and not a person.[15]

Archbishop Lucey, while not clear on collective bargaining as a stand-alone issue, made his views known to all who would hear, both government officials and business leaders, that labor unions were a positive good for society. Lucey contended that labor organizing fit with the idea of Catholic social justice. His major gripe in the early 1950s related to unionizing was the anti-labor legislation being floated at the state capitol in Austin. According to Lucey the right to organize and form labor unions was a "national right" supported by the Wagner Act of 1935; however, pro-business Texas legislators were keen on dismantling as many of the rights of unions as possible within the state's boundaries. While not directly referring to anyone in either San Antonio, or Texas at large, Lucey did argue that certain people in San Antonio were trying not only to assist in the destruction of union organizing, but in blocking any publicly funded city welfare organization. In 1951, there was a movement in San Antonio to establish a City Public Welfare Bureau which would direct financial development to the communities that needed the most support, however, that would have necessitated higher taxes or borrowing, which aggravated local and regional business owners in the city. Disregarding a beneficial asset to those most in need without giving it a try was the preferred course of the anti-social justice residents who benefited from the status quo.[16]

[15]"Taft-Hartley Bill Impetuous Says Bishop James Griffin," *Southwest Courier*, September 6, 1947, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma History Center – Research Division.
[16]"Archbishop Asks Social Justice Now from State, City, Citizens," *Alamo Register*, June 29, 1951. Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, TX.

Right-to-Work laws aimed at destroying the progress of the labor movement in the United States were detrimental to the working-classes and posed a problem to unionizing workers who yet had to be brought into the fold, such as Mexican-origin people employed in agriculture. The Catholic Church since 1891 had supported the idea of unionization and remained committed to labor, both internationally and in America. Nonetheless, there was disagreement within the ranks of the Church as to how much support to give labor movements. Fr. Edward Keller, C.S.C of the University of Notre Dame was among the dissenters, especially regarding right-to-work laws. Fr. Keller, author of *The Case for Right-to-Work Laws,* which received the backing of such institutions as the Heritage Foundation, argued that such laws were important for the proper functioning of society. He viewed "compulsory unionism" as detrimental and immoral, however, others disagreed with the Fr. Keller's arguments. Rev. R.A. McGowan countered that the idea of "compulsory unionization" as claimed by Fr. Keller was false and that "only some unions need the so-called union shop." Rev. McGowan did believe in voluntary unionization, as did the Church, even so they generally promoted increased unionization among industrial and agricultural workers.[17]

Also, that was not the only "bad bill" that was in the Texas legislature during the mid-1950s. Church leadership in Texas took the stance that an labor bill introduced by Senator George M. Parkhouse of Dallas was "ironical" and detrimental to the cause of the working-classes. Additionally, since the bill went against the gains already made by the industrial working classes, it painted a dark prospect for the future of any attempts to organize agricultural workers, because instead of moving forward labor union progress appeared to be retreating. The Parkhouse bill as designed made it harder for labor unions to gain recognition. However, itonly

[17]Rev. R.A. McGowan, "Right to Work Laws," *Alamo Register*, July 13, 1956, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, TX.

made it more difficult for the guild-style American Federation of Labor (AFL) unions, not the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) types of union.[18]

The Rev. R. A. McGowan argued that the bill did not at first glance appear to be a bad bill, because its purpose was, in theory, to make sure that every employee in a factory, warehouse, or other business was in agreement to call a strike before it went forward. Agreement among labor union leaders and members is a strong tool at their disposal. The problem was that in many cases the different employees of a business, especially if a larger enterprise, did not agree or did not have the same goals. For example, highly skilled employees might not agree with the custodians of a factory, because they viewed their own labor as much more significant and deserving of higher pay. This made the AFL style unions effective, because they were designed to meet the demands of a certain group of employees within the organization. The Parkhouse bill, however, sought to destroy craft unions if they called strikes by fining and jailing their leaders for up to six months.[19]

"Labor priests" within the ranks of the Catholic Church in the United States were relatively abundant throughout the twentieth century. A few them would come out of Texas including Fr. Sherill Smith, who would become well-known in labor and Church circles in the 1960s. Coverage of his exploits and efforts on behalf of workers, particularly Mexican-origin farm laborers, will be a prevalent part of later chapters. However, by the time Fr. Smith became a major figure in the movement, he would be following in the footsteps of luminaries such as Rev. Dennis J. Comey, S.J., who was well-known for negotiating disputes between labor and management in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Rev. Comey's influence over the majority Irish

[18]Rev. R.A. McGowan, "Bad Labor Bill in Texas Senate," *Alamo Register,* February 11, 1955, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, TX.
[19]Ibid.

waterfront workers in Pennsylvania can be compared to the influence Fr. Smith would later have with the majority Mexican-origin workers; both groups were largely Roman Catholic in their make-up.[20]

Bishop Bernard J. Shell, Auxiliary of Chicago, in 1947, presented to the House Education and Labor Subcommittee a proposal sponsored by the Social Action Department of the NCWC, which appealed for an "immediate establishment of a 65-cent minimum hourly wage." The battle for a federal guaranteed wage was an old struggle for the Church in America since 1906, when Msgr. John A. Ryan published *A Living Wage: Its Ethical and Economic Aspects*.[21] Nearly five decades later, Bishop Shell contended that an adequate minimum wage would help democracy thrive in the United States. Otherwise, destitution and poverty as enemies of a democratic society were as "great a menace as remote dictators," a reference to Joseph Stalin the leader of the Soviet Union and communist ideologues within the United States. Democracy, it was argued would not bloom in a society where economic injustices existed for such a large sector of the population, especially given the grave injustices faced by minority groups.[22]

The efforts at increasing the federal minimum wages in the late 1940s did eventually bear fruit as by the early 1950s that bar stood at seventy-cents per hour. However, the Church contended that that hourly wage was nowhere near a true living wage, and in fact, the United States, whether at the federal or state-level, had never had a living wage that provided sufficient income for a male head of household to support his family in dignity.

---

[20]"Labor Priest Settles Wildcat Strike," *Alamo Register,* March 6, 1952, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, TX.
[21]Rev. R.A. McGowan, "Fallacies in Minimum Wage Report," *Alamo Register*, February 12, 1954. Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, TX.
[22] "65-Cent Minimum wage Law Urged," *Southwest Courier*, July 26, 1947, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma History Center – Research Division.

Another day-to-day issue in which Church leadership and laity were involved was the fight to increase funding for public housing, or at least maintain it at existing levels. Paul J. Kilday, a Texas Democratic state representative argued in the 1950s that public housing cost too much for the American people, therefore, funding needed to be cut back. Further, and perhaps more irritating to the Catholic leadership of the Archdiocese of San Antonio, was that Kilday practiced what he preached and voted to "reduce federal public housing units" to a mere five-thousand, down from the fifty-thousand that existed in the city in 1951.The proposal waspopular among various business circles and fiscal conservatives within San Antonio and Texas, especially those who viewed Mexican-origin people and African Americans as the primary recipients of government handouts. Archbishop Lucey, with the backing of the Catholic Labor Alliance of San Antonio, which included an unspecified number of Protestant participants, argued that Kilday's initiatives and vote in support for gutting public housing were "inconsistent with the need for housing in San Antonio," because forcing people out into the streets went against Catholic social justice ideals.[23]

*****

Mexican-origin people, most of whom worked in agricultural pursuits throughout most of the twentieth-century, were one of the minority groups who faced greater injustices even when compared to the many working-class White Americans who faced the harsh realities of the market economic system that the Church hoped to transform. While most Catholic statements in the 1940s and 1950s addressed industrial problems at the national level, at the regional level, strides were made in Church efforts to directly and indirectly aid farm workers, migratory and

[23]"Labor Alliance Scores Congressman's Action," *Alamo Register*, August 31, 1951, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, TX.

otherwise, as well as small non-corporate farms.[24] Direct efforts made by dioceses or archdioceses, including San Antonio under Archbishop Robert E. Lucey, were primarily aimed at the workers because they needed food aid or other charitable assistance. Indirect efforts were primarily made through lobbying efforts and were on a wider scale.[25]

Archbishop Robert E. Lucey argued that while industrial problems were of primary importance, it was necessary not to forget the farmers and farm workers. Despite continuing industrial problems between capital and labor great social progress had been made in those areas since the 1930s, while that progress was entirely lacking for farm workers. The lack of attention toward farm worker issues on the part of many lawmakers was attributable to the reality that those employed in farms were Mexican-origin people or African Americans. For example, migratory labor was viewed as entirely composed of Mexican-origin people. The idea that only minority groups migrated for farm work was detrimental to the improvement of their lot because of the latent racism that existed in American society in the 1940s and 1950s.[26] Archbishop Lucey contended that farm workers deserved more assistance from authorities, and that more vigorous enforcement of existing laws, such as the 1940 Child Labor Amendment to the Fair Labor Standards Act, was necessary. Lucey, in keeping with his advocacy for industrial workers wanted the Church to try and help ensure that agricultural workers received the same attention and dignity.

Archbishop Lucey denounced the hiring of Mexican immigrant and contract labor in the agricultural work of South Texas and other southwestern areas of the country, because those

[24]"Farms Need Better Homes," *Alamo Register*, August 20, 1954, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, TX.
[25]"Presidents' Commission Exposes Deplorable Farm Labor Conditions," *Alamo Register*, May 25, 1951, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, TX.
[26]"NCWC Social Action Department: Asks all to Examine Consciousness," *Alamo Register*, August 15, 1952, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, TX.

"wetbacks" were invading the nation and displacing the Mexican Americans who were attempting to build their lives, families, and communities in the United States. Even though Lucey did call Mexican immigrants an invading army of wetbacks, he did so only because of his disgust with the way migratory workers were treated. Farmers, and government officials thought that Mexican contract or undocumented workers were not staying in the country, therefore, they could be paid less, a view that was detrimental to Mexican Americans. Migrating Mexican American workers had to travel thousands of miles with their families to attempt to seek out a living, but that would not be the case if Mexican Americans were hired to complete the work where they already resided, instead of those jobs going to foreigners.[27]

Although the plight of farm workers was evident in most of the country, the Church stance was that it was worse in the American Southwest. Furthermore, conditions in the 1950s did not appear to be improving at all, and part of the reason for this was the immigrant and contract labor that flowed across the Rio Grande River. The Rev. R.A. McGowan, writing forthe *Alamo Register*, argued that enough work existed for the Mexican Americans of South Texas to keep them close to home and busy yearlong, yet they had to move north in search of work opportunities.[28] The reason they had to travel more than a thousand miles to find employment was that farmers in the regions stretching from the Rio Grande Valley north to San Antonio preferred cheaper labor provided by Mexican contract workers, or Mexican illegal immigrants. This was the case even though there existed no federal minimum wage for farm workers. However, the Mexican Americans of the Rio Grande Valley and other regions of south Texas if provided full-employment would have likely unionized and demanded higher wages, therefore,

[27]"Injustice to Migratory Workers Called Blot on Honor of Nation," *Alamo Register,* April 22, 1955, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, TX.
[28]Rev. R.A. McGowan, "Slave Labor – 1956," *Alamo Register*, July 20, 1956, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, TX.

by hiring Mexican workers over Mexican American workers, the white farmers of the area kept both groups separate and unorganized.[29]

African Americans, especially those residing in the southern states faced many of the same harsh realities and living conditions that Mexican-origin people did in Texas and across the Southwest. The concept of giving both groups a higher minimum wage, along with political rights, while important to long-term success of those minority groups in the country, required immediate developmental aid that would ensure adequate social supports. Fr. John (J.M.) Haynes asserted that past and on-going injustices to those African Americans and Mexican-origin people necessitated an increasing share of "public-welfare projects," including funding for housing.[30]

Notwithstanding the level of activity with which Church leadership was engaged in lobbying federal, state, and local officials to garner support for greater public spending on welfare and social justice projects, those leaders also knew they needed to do much more than just lobby and persuade officials.[31] Both the Archdiocese of San Antonio and Diocese of Oklahoma were also actively engaged in charitable efforts, providing food, clothing, and other donations to the poor in their communities, which in both included most of their Mexican-origin populations.[32] That funding largely came from what each parish gave the local archdiocesan development fund as well as through special collections which occurred several times per year,

[29] Rev. R.A. McGowan, "Plight of Farm Labor in the Southwest," *Alamo Register*, January 29, 1954. Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, TX.
[30] J.M. Haynes, "Hard to Forget Elections," *Alamo Register*, October 10, 1952, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, TX.
[31] "Pope Thanks Diocese for $7,000 Donation," *Alamo Register*, December 12, 1952, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, TX.
[32] "Pope Expresses Gratitude for Peter's Pence, $7,015," *Alamo Register*, January 5, 1951, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, TX.

in which wealthier Catholics were requested to donate more than their middle-income level brethren.[33]

San Antonio's Catholic Charities were centralized starting in 1928 under Archbishop Arthur (A.J.) Drossaerts into the Catholic Charity Board, however, Lucey revamped the system which he felt was too out of touch with the people, in addition to needing more oversight from himself or those he would appoint. Lucey, shortly after his installation in 1941, created the Catholic Welfare Bureau, which was inspired by his visit to San Antonio's slums where a great percentage of Mexican-origin people resided. A difference between Drossaerts' creation and Lucey's reorganization of Catholic charity was that the former was more of a top-down organization which provided aid to the less fortunate. There is nothing wrong with those types of assistance if people are in need; yet Lucey imagined a new type of initiative to combat poverty within the archdiocese. His new Catholic Welfare Bureau, which his contemporaries referred as one of his greatest initiatives, would not only provide charity assistance, but would also work with Mexican origin people, working-class people, and provide them with the tools to help them uplift -themselves, although they realized that would take time, therefore, short-term Church organizations maintained direct charity aid.[34]

Besides Church leaders and clergy being active in charitable endeavors which was part of their calling as men and women of God, Catholic laity in both San Antonio and Oklahoma City played a pivotal role in providing a sense of dignity and hope for the many impoverished members of their communities.[35] The Knights of Columbus (K. of C.) and the St. Vincent de

[33]"St. Mary's in Victoria is Leader in Collection for Poor Parishes," *Alamo Register*, November 21, 1952, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, TX.
[34]"Catholic Welfare Bureau Work is Among Archbishop's Greatest," *Alamo Register*, April 13, 1951, Louis J. Blume Library, San Antonio, TX.
[35]"Honors are Bestowed for Generous Aid to Religion and Charity," *Alamo Register,* June 18, 1954, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, TX.

Paul Society in those areas were among the organizations providing social uplift as best they could. For example, San Antonio's K. of C. council 786 was engaged with Mexican-origin children several times a year. The most noticeable events which the council sponsored were around the thanksgiving and Christmas holidays. They provided meals, which in many cases were much better than what the children were used to, and additionally they provided gifts to the children who attended their events.[36]

Entire San Antonio families, not only Children, benefited from the social justice policies of the Church, lay organizations, and the benevolence of Catholic businessmen. During Christmas seasons several Church organizations were concerned with raising money and serving non-monetary donations so they could spread the joy of the season to lower income working class people, regardless of their religious affiliation or ethnic background. As in the previous case the K. of C., but council 3345, was heavily involved in providing Christmas baskets, which included food and toys, to many working-class families, including those of Mexican origin. It appears that Mexican-origin people were always designated as major beneficiaries of Catholic benevolence. Archbishop Lucey throughout his 28 years as prelate of the Archdiocese of San Antonio was a consistent and major advocate for them.[37]

Although the holiday seasons, Christmas and Thanksgiving, were periods when Church organizations, in addition to Protestant charities, were active in providing meals and gifts to children, for many in the Church it was not only the holiday seasons when this important task was conducted. The Franciscan Fathers, who were charged with overseeing St. Boniface's Church, were self-tasked with providing warm meals for as many people as they could afford to

[36]"350 Needy Tots Feted by K. of C." *Alamo Register,* January 1, 1954, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, TX.
[37]"Distribute 100 Baskets," *Alamo Register*, January 5, 1951, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, TX.

help on every weekday. This group of Franciscan Fathers fed an average of 1,400 people per week "without regard for race, color, or creed," though it is likely that most beneficiaries were Catholic families because St. Boniface and its "dining room" were located in an area with a high percentage of Catholics."[38]

The St. Vincent De Paul society was another Catholic organization involved in the betterment of their local communities.[39] The society, which remains a pivotal part of Catholic charity in the present, is a sort of predecessor to the modern-day Goodwill Industries, as much of its funding came from non-monetary donations from Catholic laity. Those non-monetary donations were either then given to families and individuals in need or sold at De Paul salvage stores that existed in most major cities of the United States, including San Antonio and Oklahoma City.[40] However, the De Paul society through the functioning of its salvage stores received criticism from some in the community, including Catholic donors of material. The main criticism toward the society and its stores was that some donors were not content with the society selling their donations. The laity's view of the purpose of the non-monetary donations was that the society should give them to those in need, not sell them. Archbishop Lucey and society leaders including William C. Zoeller, President of the Archdiocesan Central Council of the Society of St. Vincent De Paul in San Antonio, argued that the society needed to sell some of the goods they received both to cover overhead expenses as well as to provide monetary gifts to families who needed the support.[41]

[38]"Feeding Thousands," *Alamo Register,* January 12, 1951, Louis, J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, TX.
[39]"Vincent de Paul Store Welcomes Every Donation," *Alamo Register*, February 20, 1953, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, TX.
[40]"De Paul Salvage Store to Be Dedicated," *Alamo Register*, June 29, 1951, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, TX.
[41]"De Paul Society Policy on Selling is Explained," *Alamo Register*, July 2, 1954, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, TX.

Just as Catholic charities in San Antonio were centralized, so were the charities in the Diocese of Oklahoma City and Tulsa. The Rev. James A. Garvey was the longtime director, of the Associated Catholic Charities of Oklahoma which was involved in many of the same activities as their counterparts in the Archdiocese of San Antonio.[42] A major difference, of course, were the beneficiaries of those charitable efforts.[43] San Antonio had a greater Mexican-origin population than Oklahoma City, largely because it was historically a city where Mexicans and subsequently Mexican-origin people resided, and therefore, received a greater percentage of aid than Mexican-origin people in Oklahoma City. Additionally, the Catholic population of San Antonio was also larger than that of Oklahoma City and Tulsa.[44]

The Associated Catholic Charities of Oklahoma during the 1940s consisted of five different departments all aimed at improving the lives of families, children, and individuals of Oklahoma regardless of race, ethnicity, and religion. The first department was the orphanage known as the St. Joseph's Children's home, the second was for care for the aged, the third a maternity home for underprivileged women, fourth was nursery work, and fifth was educational outreach including the Little Flower School for Mexican-origin children.[45]

Although the Associated Catholic Charities were involved in several activities and organizations, perhaps one of their greatest contributions was the administration of the St. Joseph's Children's Home. The home was founded in 1912 and continued providing hope, faith, education, and health care to thousands of Oklahoma children from its location in Bethany until

[42]"Associated Catholic Charities," *Southwest Courier*, January 20, 1940, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma History Center – Research Division.
[43]"Collection for Minority Groups," *Southwest Courier*, February 22, 1947, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma History Center – Research Division.
[44]"Archdiocesan Catholic Census Shows 11,426 Increase in 1950," *Alamo Register*, March 2, 1951, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, TX.
[45] Rev. James A. Garvey, "Gratitude to All Expressed by Director of Catholic Charities," *Southwest Courier*, March 2, 1940, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma History Center – Research Division.

1965 when it moved locations to northeastern Oklahoma, and thus would eventually find its way to the broken off Diocese of Tulsa, after the Diocese of Oklahoma and Tulsa were separated into the former and the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City in 1972.[46] The exact number of children who resided at the home in the 1940s and 1950s is unknown, but by 1942 Rev. Garvey estimated that the home oversaw the cases of 75-100 children yearly, which meant between 2,250 and 3,000 children passed through the home in its first thirty years of existence.[47] Funding for the children's home came for quarterly special collections throughout Catholic Church as in Oklahoma, private donations, the St. Vincent De Paul Society, and public financing.[48] St. Joseph's Children Home, in addition to providing for the needs of the children who resided there provided fun and religious activities from them as well. Among the activities were yearly retreats that had a spiritual aspect to them but also featured games and various educational activities.[49]

Care for children was not solely for those who had no parents, or those whose parents could not care for them, but extended to pre-natal care. The Associated Catholic Charities of Oklahoma maintained the Our Lady of Victory Maternity which was conducted by the *Felician Sisters* and provided low-cost or free care to pregnant women who had nowhere else to turn. Closely associated to the Maternity was the Day Nursey that at the time was much less costly than other such institutions available in the state. Furthermore, while the Church did raise funding for those centers it is important to note that state and local welfare programs provided financial backing, without which the organizations would likely not have flourished. As with the

[46]Rev. James A. Garvey, "Tulsa Contributes More Than $10,000 to Catholic Charities of Oklahoma," *Southwest Courier*, March 6, 1940, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma History Center – Research Division.
[47]Rev. James A. Garvey, "Catholic Charities," *Southwest Courier*, August 15, 1942, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma History Center – Research Division.
[48]Rev. John F. Lynch, "St. Vincent de Paul Society," *Southwest Courier*, November 8, 1941, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma History Center – Research Division.
[49]Rev. James A. Garvey, "Catholic Charities," *Southwest Courier,* January 10, 1942, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma History Center – Research Division.

case of Catholic-run hospitals, orphanages, and homes for the elderly, the lower overhead provided by having the Church administer and staff them was a motivator for the Church – State alliance in providing many activities under the social justice and welfare umbrella.[50]

The elderly of the United States and the world were another area of focus for the Catholic Church. Prior to the advent of Social Security pensions in the United States, the elderly, unless they were economically independent, or had a large or wealthy enough family to care for them, had a harsh existence. Church leadership, nationally and locally, was active in establishing homes for them, in order to at a minimum provide food and shelter for those elderly people who might otherwise have ended-up on the streets. The financing of those institutions came through charitable donations by the constantly increasing Catholic population, especially Catholic businessmen, public financing in many instances, as well as charging small fees to those who could afford to pay, but had nowhere else to live, because anywhere else would have been too expensive for them.[51] The Church in Oklahoma, in conjunction with the *Brothers of Mercy,* was responsible for the administration and maintenance of the St. Vincent's Home for the aged. The Brothers, who were originally from Buffalo, New York, and led by Brother Werner, were registered nurses, therefore, they could provide quality care with a much lower overhead than secular nurses, as they all had taken a vow of poverty upon taking their habits, and lived communally.[52]

Female-led organizations especially nuns of various religious orders were involved in providing charity, non-profit, and spiritual work among the working-classes. Their work

[50]"Catholic Charities," *Southwest Courier*, September 14, 1946, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma History Center – Research Division.
[51]"Residential Home for Elderly People Will Benefit from Mardi Grass Ball," *Southwest Courier*, January 29, 1944, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma History Center – Research Division.
[52]"Brothers Open Home for Aged," *Southwest Courier*, September 14, 1946, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma History Center – Research Division.

included healthcare, education, soup-kitchens, and orphanages for girls across the United States. The Sisters of Our Lady of Charity, an order connected to Mount St. Michael's in Dallas, Texas was active in the greater South Texas region. Both San Antonio and Corpus Christi were hoststo two Catholic homes for underprivileged and unprotected girls administered by the Sisters. These Catholic homes had multiple purposes as they acted as living quarters, school, and basic medical facilities for the girls who resided there, who were from the ages of six to high school.[53] The Catholic Daughters of Oklahoma was among the lay-led organizations which aimed to help parishes in beautifying their grounds, in addition to charity work. The group, through its one-thousand-dollar donation, was the initial sponsor for a perpetual burse led by State Chaplain, Reg. John J. Welde, in addition to providing another thousand-dollar donation to the construction of a new home for the aged in the Oklahoma City area.[54]

Education was another long-standing priority for both the Archdiocese of San Antonio and Diocese of Oklahoma, as well as to the Church at large. The Catholic Church's involvement in education can be divided into three interrelated endeavors. First, providing education to those who could afford to pay for private non-profit education; second, charity education, as was the case with the Little Flower Church school for Mexican-origin people and the Okmulgee School for Negroes; and third, lobbying federal, state, and local governments on educational issues and funding.[55] The Church experienced various levels of success on these issues over the course of the 1940s and 1950s.[56] However, at the national-level the Church was more successful in

[53]"Sisters of Charity of Refugee Establish New Home for Girls in Diocese of Corpus Christi," *Alamo Messenger*, January 16, 1958, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, TX.
[54]"Catholic Daughters Initiate Burse for Diocese with Check of $1,000.00," *Southwest Courier*, April 30, 1949, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma History Center – Research Division.
[55]"Okmulgee School for Negroes Has Fine Record," *Southwest Courier*, June 5, 1943, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma History Center – Research Division.
[56]"Discrimination Shown in Bill Aiding Schools," *Southwest Courier,* August 29, 1945, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma History Center – Research Division.

providing education at private institutions given the number of people enrolled in Catholic schools from the primary to university-level. At the local level in Oklahoma City, the Church was successful in funding schools and seminaries for Mexican-origin people and schools for African Americans.[57]

At the national level, one of the main education-related conflicts the Church became involved with was the debate in Congress over education funding. The Church in this era attempted to influence government officials to provide financing to private non-profit schoolsfor some education-related expenses, that would have included Catholic parish schools. The financing which the Church sought for private non-profit schools was primarily to cover two sources of expenditures. They wanted to participate in federal lunch programs and school buses so that students could more easily attend these schools.[58] Church leaders were disturbed by the disregard given to the nation's parochial and other non-profit schools by Congress. They contended that as the United States provided billions in aid to foreign countries, Congress refused to seriously support vital aspects of the education of children who attended parochial non-profit schools. Fr., Dr. John A. O'Brian, a professor of religion at the University of Notre Dame argued that federal funding for those aspects of parochial schools including Catholic schools, saved the nation hundreds of millions of dollars, because Catholic taxpayers still contributed their fair share and received none of the benefits.[59] Rev. William E. McManus, assistant director of the Department of Education of the National Catholic Welfare Conference (NCWC), while running a teachers' institute for Catholic school teachers in Oklahoma,echoed

[57]James E. Cummings, L.H.D., "2,621,000 Students Expected in Catholic Schools of Nation in Coming Term," *Southwest Courier*, August 11, 1945, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma History Center – Research Division.
[58]"Church Pupils Need Aid Too, Says N.C.W.C.," *Southwest Courier*, June 11, 1949, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma History Center – Research Division.
[59]"Catholic School Systems Not Costing Taxpayers Money, Priest Points Out," *Southwest Courier*, June 14, 1947, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma History Center – Research Division.

Fr. O'Brian's views by stating that the yearly savings for taxpayers provided by Church schools was over four hundred million dollars in 1948 alone.[60]

Student enrollment at the nation's Catholic colleges, universities, seminaries, secondary, and primary schools expanded throughout the 1940s and 1950s, largely paralleling the growth of the nation's Catholic population, which had reached 22, 293, 101 by the end of 1940 (according to P.J. Kenedy & Sons the premier publisher of Catholic statistics throughout most of the twentieth century).[61] That number would increase to 26,075,697 by the end of 1947, which itself was an increase of 807,524 over the previous year.[62] Total enrollment of students at Catholic schools by the end of the 1940s stood at approximately 3,292,500, of whom, 2,469,000 were in elementary, 498,000 in secondary, 230,000 in colleges and universities, 8,400 in seminaries, and over 70,000 in other schools including women's colleges and diocesan teacher's colleges.[63] This number would further increase by 1956 when total enrollment in Catholic schools across the nation stood at 4,423,000.[64]

The education of Mexican origin people by the Church in Oklahoma began as early as the mid-1920s with the establishment of the Little Flower Church, with all its various subfunctions, including the Little Flower Clinic and School for the recently arrived Mexican- origin population, many of whom settled in the Oklahoma City area. While the Mexican-origin population in Oklahoma City was never as large as that of San Antonio, Bishop Francis C.

[60]"Taxpayers Saved 400 Million by Catholic Schools," *Southwest Courier*, January 22, 1949, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma History Center – Research Division.
[61]"1941 Directory Lists Increase in Population," *Southwest Courier,* April 19, 1941, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma History Center – Research Division.
[62]"Church Shows 807,524 Gain in Population," *Southwest Courier,* July 3, 1948, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma History Center – Research Division.
[63]James E. Cummings, L.H.D., "Largest Enrollment Ever Predicted in Catholic Schools," *Southwest Courier*, August 6, 1949, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma History Center – Research Division.
[64]"4,423,000 are Enrolled in U.S. Catholic Schools," *Alamo Register*, March 30, 1956, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, TX.

Kelley and his successor, in 1948, Eugene J. McGuiness, were keen on keeping and supporting the Carmelite Fathers in their administration of the Little Flower institutions.[65] Coverage of Mexican-origin people in the Southwest Courier is more limited during this period, though there is a sprinkling of articles from the 1940s and 1950s.

That sprinkling of stories on Mexican origin people were almost always connected to the Little Flower Church and its charity functions by appealing to the wider Oklahoma City Catholic community to participate in fundraising efforts to benefit that group. The *Southwest Courier* every June and July carried the news of a festival intended to raise money for the Little Flower. The festival, or carnival as some stories refer to it, was an annual event that had being ongoing since around 1926 when the complex of buildings was originally constructed.[66] The carnival followed a similar pattern year to year, which was essentially one in which there were games for families, activities for children, an array of Mexican foods, as well as American barbecue, thereby catering to the American Catholic population of Oklahoma City, whose attendance helped fund many Little Flower functions.[67]

Among the many Mexican dishes that were served at the annual Little Flower carnival were mountains of tamales and enchiladas, which were very popular among the Mexican-origin community. Additionally, white Catholics were highly encouraged by the Carmelite priests and Associated Charities to partake in the consumption of those ethnic of foods, which was a way to bring the American and Mexican Catholic population closer together.[68] Moreover, the inclusion

[65]"Senioritas invite Patrons to City Carnival," *Southwest Courier*, July 26, 1947, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma History Center – Research Division.
[66]"Carmelite Fathers Plan Big Carnival," *Southwest Courier*, September 18, 1948, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma History Center – Research Division.
[67]"Carnival to Offer Mexican Dishes," *Southwest Courier*, July 18, 1942, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma History Center – Research Division.
[68]"350 Pounds of Tamales at Fiesta," Southwest Courier, July 25, 1942, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma History Center – Research Division.

of Mexican "costumes" at the annual Little Flower, the Carmelite fathers hoped, would help end discrimination toward Mexican-origin people by educating the region's white Catholic community. The Carmelite idea was that it would be the white Catholics of the city who would pave the way for the eventual full inclusion of Mexican-origin people into Oklahoma society.[69]

Education endeavors aimed at Mexican-origin people by the Archdiocese of San Antonio were different from those practiced in the Diocese of Oklahoma City and Tulsa because Mexican-origin people had long lived in that region and in one form or another had attended public schools in San Antonio for some time already. Nonetheless, the education received by Mexican-origin people, like that of African Americans, was clearly inferior to that provided to most white Americans. Attempting to level the playing field, the Catholic Action committee of San Antonio would throughout this period fund after school programs which helped Spanish-speaking children adapt to English-language learning so that they would at least learn some basics which otherwise would be out of reach.[70]

****

The dignity of the working-class had long been a concern for the Catholic Church in the United States as evidenced in church support for health initiatives throughout the country. The Catholic Hospital Association of the United States and Canada, while not directly administering the hundreds and eventually more than a thousand Catholic hospitals in both countries, did play an important role in Catholic health programs.[71] Its primary purpose was to approve the existence of hospitals and to lobby the federal government on behalf of Catholic health

[69]"Mexican Costumers Will Add Color to Annual Mt. Carmel Carnival," *Southwest Courier,* July 20, 1946, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma History Center – Research Division.
[70]"Catholic Action After School Programs," *Alamo Register*, March 15, 1957, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, TX.
[71]"Catholic Hospital Number Double in Only 25 Years," *Alamo Register,* April 16, 1954. Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, TX.

initiatives, as well as against certain secular health proposals. While not all Catholic hospitals were charity hospitals, they were non-profits, whose administrators were largely religious groups such as the Sisters Adorers of the Most Precious Blood and the Sisters of Saint Joseph, whose overhead was significantly less than that of other hospitals in the country.[72] In addition, there were hospitals administered by religious groups that were not owned by them, but conducted by them, largely because of their efficiency, training, and lower overhead costs.[73]

Catholic administration of hospitals across the nation, including Oklahoma City and San Antonio, proved beneficial to all those in the community, not only Catholics or the impoverished Mexican-origin community. While conservative Catholics might have viewed Protestants as having a wrong religious affiliation that affected their chances of eternal salvation, religious groups such as the Sisters Adorers of the Most Precious Blood, who conducted a municipal hospital in Stillwater, Oklahoma, then known as the Stillwater Municipal Hospital, one of seven Catholic conducted hospitals in the Diocese of Oklahoma, were not biased by the religious views of their patients.[74] Furthermore, the Stillwater Municipal Hospital offers a case in point of the relationship between the Church and the influence it had over some aspects of government policy at the regional and local levels. Stillwater Municipal Hospital was not funded or constructed by the Catholic Church, it was publicly financed through a grant from the Public Works Administration and the city of Stillwater in the late 1930s, opening its doors in 1939. Soon

[72]"Church Adds 23 New Hospitals to Growing List," *Southwest Courier*, November 13, 1948, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma History Center – Research Division.
[73]"Hospitals Forced to Make Changes for Nation's Need," *Southwest Courier,* July 18, 1942, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma History Center – Research Division.
[74]"New Annex Gives St. Mary's Many More Facilities," *Southwest Courier,* January 3, 1942, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma History Center – Research Division.

thereafter, the hospital was leased to the Sisters because they were viewed as influential and cost-effective in their niche of caring for the sick, the elderly, and children.[75]

Sisters M. Leona and M. Georgiana were the first two superintendents of the Stillwater Municipal Hospital and guided it through a rough first several years of existence. The Sisters turned the Catholic-conducted hospital into a bastion of compassion in an era which was just moving beyond the very worst suffering of the Great Depression. Poverty in 1940s Oklahoma was rampant even though the larger U.S economy was in recovery mode, which made the entire working-class population of Stillwater supportive of the hospital, even though the population of the region, like that of the state, was largely Protestant. The familiar relationship between the Sisters and the residents gave the hospital several needed influxes of cash over the course of the following decade because when bonds were proposed to upgrade the hospital, the people voted in favor of them meanwhile, the Stillwater City Commissioners largely followed recommendations set by the Sisters on issues related to the hospital.[76]

The Sisters Adorers of the Most Precious Blood held administrative duties over several other hospitals across the United States, including St. Mary's in Enid, Oklahoma. St. Mary's, like the Stillwater Municipal Hospital was not, in its original form, constructed by that Catholic sisterhood; nevertheless, it was different from the former because St. Mary's was owned by the sisters after 1937 when they purchased it from the original owner, Dr. G.A. Boyle. Moreover, this hospital in the 1940s and 1950s did receive greater funding from the sisterhood, while also receiving charitable collections sponsored in the Diocese of Oklahoma by Bishop Francis C. Kelley and his eventual successor, after 1948, Eugene J. McGuiness. However, the hospitalalso

[75]Aubrey McAllister, "New Stillwater Hospital," *Southwest Courier*, February 3, 1940, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma History Center – Research Division.
[76]"Stillwater Municipal Hospital Treats 1,200 Patients During 1940, *Southwest Courier*, July 5, 1941, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma History Center – Research Division.

received public financing because, as in other cases, it was the Catholic hospital that served the most vulnerable in society who had the least ability to pay for the services rendered, and thus needed a greater influx of financing, of which the Church could only provide so much.[77]

Moreover, true to their calling of caring for everyone as brothers and sisters in Christ, the Sisters Adorers of the Most Precious Blood made provisions to care for minority groups in Oklahoma, such as African Americans and Mexican-origin people, despite the discrimination faced by those groups even at the hands of the white Catholic laity. While non-Catholic hospitals might have shied away from serving African Americans and Mexican-origin people because of their race, or because they knew that most of them could not pay for their services, the Sisters gladly welcomed them into St. Mary's. Thirty-one sisters made-up most of St. Mary's staff by 1943 and they personally led every department except for the laboratory and x-ray facilities. This was important for several reasons, including lower-overhead expenses which translated into less-expensive services, and acceptance of minority groups.[78]

The Felician Sisters, O.S.F., of the Immaculate Conception was another such sisterhood who made their mark in Oklahoma social justice by running a charity hospital in Blackwell, Oklahoma. The Blackwell General Hospital was a thirty-five-bed institution which by 1946 was experiencing severe financial problems, which would allow the Felician Sisters to "assume management and operation" of the institution to better resolve the financial woes that affected it, while continuing to provide adequate charitable and low-cost care to the Blackwell community. The lower-overhead costs associated with Catholic-administered hospitals was the reasoning behind the takeover. Doctors and other high-ranking officials did receive compensation

[77]"Dedication of New St. Mary's Hospital Annex Scheduled for June 3," *Southwest Courier*, May 31, 1941, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma History Center – Research Division.
[78]"Growing Staff of Sisters Care for Patients at Enid," *Southwest Courier*, May 29, 1943, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma History Center – Research Division.

comparable to what they would receive from a secular institution; however, the sisters many of whom were trained as nurses and anesthesiologists, cost less overall than having secular employees perform the same work.[79]

Mother Fidelis of St. Louis, Missouri and the Mercy Sisters were another sisterhood which took to heart the idea of caring for the less fortunate in a non-profit hospital in Oklahoma City. As in previous cases, the hospital was not financed by the sisterhood or the Catholic Church, however, they received the deed to the hospital for similar reasons as the Blackwell Hospital and St. Mary's Hospital. This hospital, like those others, did charge for services if the patient could pay nonetheless, many received charitable aid, while the main idea behind Catholic ownership or administration of hospitals was that they were more cost-effective, and therefore, could offer services much more effectively and at a lower-price.[80]

The Mercy Sisters by the time of their takeover of the Oklahoma City General Hospital, which they renamed the Mercy Hospital Oklahoma City, were already widely known for their effectiveness at conducting charity and non-profit hospitals throughout the country, with the aim of both providing the best possible healthcare, while making it available to those who might otherwise not be able to see a doctor or receive emergency medical care. By 1947, the Mercy Sisters, controlled seventy-eight hospitals across the country including several in the state of Texas. Several Mercy Sisters called Oklahoma home during the period, and many of them were trained and registered as nurses which allowed them to form an important component in the administration of the hospital, primarily in the humane and dignified care of patients.[81]

---

[79]"General Hospital at Blackwell Now Run by Felicians," *Southwest Courier,* August 10, 1946, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma History Center – Research Division.
[80]"Hospital Title Goes to Sisters," *Southwest Courier*, July 5, 1947, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma History Center – Research Division.
[81]Ibid.

St. John's Hospital in Tulsa, Oklahoma conducted by the Sisters the Sorrowful Mother, Members of the Third Order of St. Francis, was another Oklahoma hospital largely financed by public authorities but administered by a Catholic sisterhood. The Tulsa-based hospital was significantly larger than other Catholic hospitals in the state, as it had a capacity of five-hundred patients, while others had capacities as low as thirty-five, as was the case with the Blackwell General Hospital. St. John's Hospital had an excellent reputation in the state and was in the era the largest in the city and one of the best equipped in the state, and its leadership, the Sisters, was respected by secular leaders and the population at large.[82]

The Sisters of Saint Benedict, under the leadership of Sister M. Ursula, O.S.B., administered another such charity hospital, that formed an important component of the health initiatives promoted by the Catholic Church. These Sisters ran the Benedictine Heights Hospital in Guthrie, Oklahoma, which was only fully completed through the generous donations of wealthy non-Catholic patrons, primarily the Lucien B. and K.E. Price Foundation; thereby, showing how much the Church was progressing in being accepted in a largely Protestant region. The acceptance of Church institutions in the state would also play a key role in the comingyears, as Church leadership in Oklahoma made great strides in assisting a large percentage of the Mexican-origin people making them feel welcome in the state. If discrimination against Catholics in general had persisted as in decades past, it would have been more difficult for the Church to aid the immigrant populations who would start increasing in numbers in the latter half of the twentieth century.[83]

[82]"Bishop Dedicates Wing of Hospital; Work is Lauded," *Southwest Courier*, June 26, 1948, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma History Center – Research Division.
[83]"Hospital to be Completed Through Large Gift," *Southwest Courier*, July 5, 1947, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma History Center – Research Division.

The greater South Texas region, as well as Texas as a whole, was also home to various Catholic-run charity or non-profit hospitals in this period. The Church in Texas was pivotal in the establishment of the Holy Cross Hospital in Austin, which was dedicated to the needs of the African American community, Catholic and non-Catholic alike. In this case the financial backing for the original hospital, a total of $700,000, did come primarily from Church coffers, which meant donations from the laity. Additionally, this hospital was not under the control of a religious group, instead it was administered by outside experts under the guidance of Catholic clergy who served as principals. Among the principals of the institution were Bishop Louis J. Reicher, Rev. Francis P. Weber, C.S.C. and Rev. William Lore. The last among these was already heavily involved in aiding the African American residents of Texas as he had founded a school, and much smaller hospital, for African Americans prior to the construction of Holy Cross.[84] Even though the Church in Oklahoma did not conduct a hospital solely for African Americans, it did operate a clinic for them, in the same manner as was done for Mexican-origin people.[85]

The Archdiocese of San Antonio itself was home to the Santa Rosa Hospital, a facility that traced its origins to 1869. Santa Rosa was a non-profit hospital designed to meet the needs of faithful Catholics. Patients of other religious views were accepted; however, non-Catholics in San Antonio had access to other medical providers while Catholics were discriminated against, especially if those Catholics were of Mexican origin. Santa Rosa was administered by the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word. Mother M. Alban, administrator of Santa Rosa, oversaw the renovation and addition of several buildings to the original hospital in 1953 whose funding came

[84]"Hospital for Negros," *Alamo Register*, January 6, 1951, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, TX.
[85]"Priest's New Clinic to Provide Medical Care to Poor Negros," *Southwest Courier,* February 17, 1940, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma History Center – Research Division.

from city authorities, as well as savings the hospital had managed to keep in reserve, and collections from the Archdiocese of San Antonio. This physical expansion transformed the hospital by adding an entire wing which covered 90,000 square feet at a total cost of $2,200,000.[86] The Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word also held control over the Spohn Hospital in Corpus Christi, deeper in South Texas than Santa Rosa.[87]

The Catholic fight against racial injustice intensified throughout the 1940s and 1950s. The Church in both San Antonio and Oklahoma City worked on the betterment of their Mexican-origin and African American populations; nonetheless, that work as well as worship was largely done separately from the white Catholic population. For example, in Oklahoma City, the Little Flower Church and its various institutions were maintained by the Church, but it was an entity reserved for Mexican-origin people separated from English-speaking parishes. That is not to say that Church leadership including the likes of Archbishop Lucey and Bishops Kelley and McGuiness did not argue against segregation and separation of the races, just that they needed to work to convince their co-religionists to accept that all people are equals in the eyes of God, meaning they needed to fight against the injustice of segregation.

****

The Catholic Church at the national and regional levels sponsored interracial councils throughout this period, whose purpose was to study and understand the worldview of White Catholics, in addition to teaching both Mexican-origin people and American Catholics to set aside differences. Fr. John LaFarge, S.J., was the originator of an interracial council within the Catholic Church that was first originally established in New York City on Pentecost Sunday,

[86]"Santa Rosa," *Alamo Register*, March 13, 1953. Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, TX.
[87]"Plan Hospital Wing in Corpus Christi," *Alamo Register*, February 16, 1951. Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, TX.

1934 from where it spread to twenty cities around the country by 1956.[88] In the Archdiocese of San Antonio these interracial conferences were held annually, and almost always started with an integrated mass held at San Fernando Cathedral which had long been the spiritual home to the Mexican-origin people in the city.[89] San Antonio's Catholic Interracial Council argued that true social justice and democracy could not become a reality if large segments of the population faced discrimination at the hands of the majority of the population. These Catholic interracial councils nationally had the same goals for society. Among their most prominent objectives were to promote the idea that all humans' persons were equal, to improve race relations in the United States by clearly living up to papal encyclicals, and to secure "equal social justice."[90]

The Bishop's Committee on the Spanish-Speaking founded by Archbishop Lucey was a major supporter of the Interracial Council in Southwestern states, in addition to conducting its own studies and proposing its own solutions for the problems of the Spanish-speaking in the United States. A major concern for the Committee was the increased proselytizing that Protestant Churches were aiming toward the Mexican-origin people. As that population increased, mainline Protestant Churches began to follow the example set by the Catholic Church. Those Churches established soup-kitchens and welfare bureaus in regions cross the Southwest where Mexican-origin people were concentrated, including with the boundaries of the Archdiocese of San Antonio. The conclusion drawn by the Committee was that those Mexican-origin people who joined Protestant denominations were leaving Catholicism for three reasons. First, there were those in the community who claimed the Church was not doing enough for them; second, there

[88]"Interracial Justice: Equal Dignity for All, *Alamo Messenger*, February 17, 1956. Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, TX.
[89]"Interracial Council Plans Special Mass," *Alamo Messenger*, January 27, 1956. Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, TX.
[90]Ibid.

were too few Mexican-descent priests to satisfy the needs of that population; and third, the idea of Mexican masculinity.[91]

To slow the exodus of Mexican-origin people from the Catholic Church in the Southwest, the Bishops' Committee proposed solutions to address the reasons for their leaving the Church. To combat the view that the Church was not doing enough for Mexican-origin people they needed to not let apathy emerge within the Catholic Charity Bureau and to clearly advertise the actions of the Church in the past and present. The lack of priests, at least for the time being, would be resolved by training American priests in the Spanish-language and in some aspects of Mexican culture. However, the third problem was the most prevalent, in 1956, according to the Bishops' Committee. Mexicans and Mexican-origin men in the United States viewed the Church as the purview of women and children. Both the Bishops' Committee and the Catholic Action groups of San Antonio argued this was detrimental because if the male head of household was not attached to true Church teachings, they might be the weak link in the family, and take them into the Protestant fold, therefore, they needed to educate Mexican-origin men on Catholic teachings so they understood that there was a central place for both men and women.[92]

In the Church's view, one of the first glimpses of the secularization of American society was evident at in the late 1940s. Fr. James A. Garvey was adamantly against proposed adoption bills which would have drastically changed the functioning of Catholic orphanages in Oklahoma at the request of professional civil social workers who were viewed as new on the scene. The "professionals" used the State Child Welfare Group to promote their ideas of orphanages and adoption requirements, which primarily consisted of allowing themselves as professionals to

[91]"For Children of Guadalupe: No Incongruous Doors," *Alamo Messenger*, August 10, 1956, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, TX.
[92]Ibid.

make the rules and regulations as related to the operation of the institutions. Fr. Garvey, who had the backing of Bishop McGuiness, argued that an unelected group of bureaucrats should not have the right to alter policies which had functioned properly for decades. If there were real faults with adoption policies and revisions were needed, then those changes should be placed in the hands of the popularly elected State Charities and Corrections office.[93]

Msgr. John O' Grady, executive secretary of the National Conference of Catholic Charities led the national battle against H.R. 2892, which the Church viewed as detrimental to child welfare. H.R. 2892 was, alongside H.R. 2893, part of a proposed comprehensive Social Security expansion of child welfare services, public assistance, temporary and permanent disability insurance, among other issues, by the federal government. The Church did not stand against all of the proposals, instead it focused its efforts against H.R. 2892, because it would bring the federal government into affairs which had been the prerogative of state and local governments, who in turn gave wide-latitude to religious organizations in child welfare policies. These bills, which would eventually coalesce into H.R. 6000, in 1950, were deemed an overreach of federal authority because it would be bureaucrats who would tell families and religious organizations how to provide for the care of their own children in the case offamilies.[94]

The Catholic Church, as the largest religious organization in the United States, was the preeminent provider of non-profit education, healthcare, and charity, in addition to supporting the labor movement and the anti-segregation movements which were gaining momentum in the 1940 and 1950s. Additionally, through the study of the abundant Church – government partnerships, it becomes clear that Church institutions in areas like Oklahoma and San Antonio

[93]Rev. James A. Garvey, "Head of Charities Hits Adoption Bill," *Southwest Courier*, January 11, 1947, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma History Center – Research Division.
[94]Msgr. O' Grady, "Federal Proposal Seen Endangering Student Welfare," *Southwest Courier*, March 12, 1949, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma History Center – Research Division.

worked in close cooperation with state and local governments, especially in the funding of social welfare programs. For instance, many of the hospitals that were associated with the Catholic Church in Oklahoma were, in fact, administered and staffed by members of Catholic religious orders, yet an unspecified percentage of the funding came from local governments which raised the money through taxation or bonds. Notwithstanding the level of government funding, the relationship was productive and equitable to a large extent, because one of the primary goals of state and local government officials in Oklahoma and Texas was to spend as little as possible, and for the good of society, the men and women of Catholic religious orders with their vows of poverty were the most cost-effective means to securing that goal.

Within these charitable, education, and labor initiatives of the Church we can glimpse the concern Church leadership had toward the working-classes of the United States. included among them were the vast number of Mexican-origin people for whom Archbishop Kelley and Bishop Kelley held special concern. Furthermore, as the twentieth century progressed, we will see an increase in Church activity in benefit of the Mexican-origin community. Even though those activities would induce education, charity, and healthcare as prominent features, we will also see a turn toward a more self-help-oriented policy regarding Mexican-origin people. The Church, especially in the Archdiocese of San Antonio would become drawn to the support of unionization efforts of Mexican-origin people across South Texas including the Rio Grande Valley. Meanwhile, the Church in Oklahoma would continue its lower-key efforts to promote social justice for Mexican-origin people and other immigrants who made their way into the state. The following chapter focuses solely on San Antonio and seen largely through the lenses of labor reform, and through the eyes of Fr. Sherrill Smith, a forgotten hero of the Mexican American labor movement of South Texas.

Chapter 5: Reformism or Radicalism? The Varied Voices of Fr. Sherrill Smith and Archbishop Robert E. Lucey, 1960-1970

Scholars have referred to the 1960s as a decade of reform.[1] That reform extended to all levels and institutions of American society, including several bastions of conservatism such as the Roman Catholic Church. The Church had become reformist, or radical, depending on definitions and perspectives, beginning in the 1890s with *Rerum Novarum,* the encyclical issued by Pope Leo XIII. However, the reform movement was slow and uneven because Church Patriarchs in different regions took different meanings from the various encyclicals issued by subsequent Popes.

In the Southwestern United States, the Catholic Diocese of Oklahoma City was among the most reformist in the 1920s regarding treatment of Mexican-origin people. The Church in Oklahoma was favorable toward social justice and inclusion of Mexican-origin people because of the reformist tendencies of its leader, Bishop Francis C. Kelley. In subsequent decades archdioceses around the country started to follow the example set by Bishop Kelly and the Church in Oklahoma. Among the most reformist was the Archdiocese of San Antonio under the leadership of Archbishop Robert E. Lucey. However, those who benefited from the status quo viewed Lucey's efforts as radical and not reformist. These people recalled the 1940s and 1950s as an era of reform when compared to the radical 1960s. This era brought new Catholic clergy to the forefront who were not quite content with reformism or paternalism, instead they wanted faster change and for Mexican-origin people to take more leadership roles within the Church and in their own lives. Fr. Sherrill Smith, the main protagonist of this chapter stands out the greatest

[1]Craig J. Jenkins, *The Politics of Insurgency: The Farm Worker Movement in the 1960s* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985), 12

symbol of change in the Archdiocese of San Antonio, and a major reason why it stood out when compared to the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City.

Fr. Sherill Smith, the forgotten hero of the Mexican American labor movement in South Texas, was born on in August 20, 1921 in Chicago, Illinois. Smith earned an undergraduate degree in Business Administration at Northwestern University in 1943. He then served in the U.S. Navy from 1943 to 1947. Soon, thereafter, Smith enrolled in San Antonio's assumption seminary and was ordained a priest in 1955 at the age of thirty-one. He served in many parishes throughout the Archdiocese of San Antonio, including St. Peter Prince of the Apostles (1955), St. Cecilia (1956), and St. Joseph's Downtown (1959). Within a couple of years Fr. Smith would be assigned to serve in the Bishop's Committee for the Spanish-Speaking (1965) and as the Director of the Social Action Department of the San Antonio Archdiocese (1965-1967). Later in life he would be assigned to parishes outside San Antonio proper including Sacred Heart Church in Crystal City (1972), eventually ascending to the position of Archdiocesan Director of Pro-Life Activities (1984) and retuning to San Antonio.[2] Fr. Smith retired from priestly duties in 1997 and moved to Casa de Padres, where he lived until his death on October 9, 2012.[3]

This chapter examines the divisions of the Catholic Church in Texas over acceptance of Mexican Americans as equal members of their organization, and the struggle that the Church and Mexican Americans in general faced to achieve social justice for the underrepresented and impoverished Mexican American population. Further, as we observe the efforts by the Archdiocese of San Antonio in favor of Mexican Americans, we can see the dramatic changes in Catholic Church policy. The Catholic Church in Texas throughout the 1920s, 1930s and into the

[2] "Fr. Sherill Smith: His Curriculum and Chronology," Sherrill Smith Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio Archives, Box 1, Folder 7 (accessed June 2017).
[3] "Sherrill Smith." Legacy.com, https://www.legacy.com/obituaries/sanantonio/obituary.aspx?n=sherrill-smith&pid=160398074&fhid=8911 (accessed October 2, 2020).

1940s was not openly or strongly supportive of Mexican American labor rights. This was quite contrary to the policies and statements of the Diocese of Oklahoma. The Church in Oklahoma had begun to establish social institutions for Mexican Americans starting in the 1920s, while in Texas it was secular organizations that were doing the same work throughout the 1920s and 1930.

The Archdiocese of San Antonio and the Diocese of Brownsville provide different perspectives on issues regarding labor and social justice. Contrasting the two provides a good measure of the prevalence of reform in San Antonio compared to the Brownsville archdiocese that remained conservative. With Bishop Francis C. Kelley as their inspiration, the Catholic Church in Oklahoma had been a leader in social welfare programs for Mexican Americans since the 1920s; however, that leadership passed to the San Antonio archdiocese with the installation of Robert E. Lucey as Archbishop in 1941. Archbishop Lucey only had religious jurisdiction over 32 counties across south-central Texas, but despite that he did not limit his, or his archdioceses' involvement to that geographical region. The Diocese of Brownsville, created in 1965, was given jurisdiction over the four southernmost counties of South Texas – Starr, Willacy, Hidalgo, and Cameron – an area known as the Rio Grande Valley. The Brownsville archdiocese was a battlefield for workers' rights that stretched across the four counties but centered particularly on Starr County.

Although the term "radicalism" in the chapter might suggest the orientation of the Church's position vis-à-vis labor and civil rights for Mexican Americans in San Antonio, the term "radicalism" here actually refers to Catholic standards. Furthermore, while radical change was taking place in San Antonio, that does not mean the same issues were as important in other regions of the country. The Archdiocese of San Antonio, reformist as it was in the 1940s and

1950s under Lucey, largely became radical because the "people" themselves became more assertive thanks to the inspired leadership of Fr. Sherrill Smith. Fr. Smith, therefore, exemplifies the radicalization and transition that the Archdiocese of San Antonio experienced during the 1960s.

The radicalization efforts of Fr. Smith and Archbishop Lucey appear to have subsided from 1967 to 1970. During those years, the Church was active in labor strikes and labor organizing, and some clergy even appeared to favor communist ideologies according to some observers. However, in the context of historic Papal Encyclicals, San Antonio clergy were by no means inspired by communist doctrine but based their ideas on such writings as Rerum Novarum.[4] Lucey himself was more paternalist when we compare the archdiocese in the 1960s to previous decades as the younger clergy took the reins of social and labor justice on behalf of Mexican Americans.

The Robert E. Lucey era would start its final period in 1967, the year that marks the political break between Archbishop Robert E. Lucey and Fr. Sherrill Smith, among others, including Fr. Henry Casso and Fr. William Killian. The Archdiocese of San Antonio for a while became much more radical than its Oklahoma counterpart; however, that period subsided with the silencing and removing from positions of power of Frs. Smith, Casso, and Killian. The Archdiocese of Oklahoma never became as outspoken as the San Antonio archdiocese; instead, it remained a steady supporter of social justice for Mexican Americans as it had before and would remained thereafter.

Archbishop Lucey, under Catholic law, had no power over the Diocese of Brownsville, as the latter was subordinate to the Archdiocese of Houston-Galveston. However, that bureaucratic

[4]Pope Leo XIII, "Rerum Novarum: Encyclical of Pope Leo XIII on Capital and Labor," 1891 The Dorothy Day Center, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma: www.thedorothydaycenter.com/Resources/Rerum_Novarum.htm.

hurdle did not halt the social justice crusade led by Lucey and his clergy, including among them Father Sherrill Smith. However, while the Rio Grande Valley lies outside the parameters of San Antonio, it nevertheless fits into our overall narrative because Archbishop Lucey viewed the struggle for social justice as a borderless cause with regard to archdiocesan lines. Furthermore, as we might remember, it was Lucey who in 1945 founded the Bishops' Committee for the Spanish-Speaking (BCSS) in San Antonio. Although the BCSS's base was in the aforementioned city, Lucey had state and national aspirations in the struggle for Mexican American social, civil, and labor rights. This chapter focuses on two Catholic geographical regions: the Archdiocese of San Antonio, and the Diocese of Brownsville.

By 1960, the Mexican American population of Texas and other Southwestern states was expanding out of this region, and becoming more prevalent in other areas throughout the country.[5] These Mexican-origin people were still largely impoverished and uneducated when compared to their Anglo American peers, though it is perhaps fair to say that they were not as oppressed as African Americans in the southern United States.[6] Nonetheless, they were a downtrodden minority group and their struggle for social, civil, and labor rights continued from previous decades.[7] An important change, however, was a new focus on Mexican American civil rights. The League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) had been the primary civil rights organization before the 1940s, when Hector P. Garcia founded the American G.I. Forum (1948). Both were largely pro-assimilation and middle-class oriented, which meant that labor rights for the average migrant worker did not concern them as much.[8]

[5]"Most Rev. Robert E. Lucey, "Archbishop of San Antonio to the Executive Board of the Bishops Committee for the Spanish Speaking," January 16, 1963, Robert E. Lucey Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio, BCSS, Folder 6.
[6]Fr. John A. Wagner-Executive Secretary BCSS, "Voluntary Slavery," October 30, 1964, Robert E. Lucey Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio, Folder 6.
[7]Robert E. Lucey, "Preamble," July 31, 1966, Robert E. Lucey Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio, Folder 7.
[8]"Archbishop Robert E. Lucey to Father Wagner, March 3, 1960, Robert E. Lucey Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio, BCSS, Folder 5.

Filling this advocacy gap, the Catholic Church, specifically the Archdiocese of San Antonio, found its niche in the farmworkers' struggle. This was not the Catholic Church that had existed in pre-1950 Texas where the highest echelons of the Church sided with the growers and agribusiness. This was a new Church in which the poor and forgotten members of society received increasing attention. Even so, it is unfair to say that the Church was unanimous in its supportive position toward farm workers. The Archdioceses of San Antonio represented the new Church in Texas, while the Diocese of Brownsville represented the old pro-growers' Church. The Archdiocese of Oklahoma City in this period (1960s) still followed the path set by Bishop Kelley. However, the Mexican American population was much more urban in the Oklahoma City metro, so while San Antonio clergy focused on the needs of farm laborers, the Oklahoma clergy focused on social assistance, bilingual education, and lobbying efforts, much of which still centered on the Little Flower Church.[9]

Mexican American farm labor in Texas, as in the rest of the country, was exploited, however, few news outlets, legislators, or churches paid any attention.[10] The problem lay in the power of farm organizations, which were increasingly becoming agri-businesses and with whom many of the small family farmers sided in an effort to keep to keep workers' pay low. The issue of Braceros was an important one for all parties involved, be it growers, church leaders, or Mexican American workers. The Bracero labor system kept wages low, because their presence created a labor surplus. This meant that Mexican American workers in Texas and elsewhere had to accept marginal wages well below what anyone would consider a living wage.[11]

[9]Timothy A. Zwink, Ed., "The Latino Impress in Oklahoma City," *The Chronicles of Oklahoma,* Vol. LXXXIX, No. 1 (Spring 2011), 25.
[10]Robert E. Lucey, "Condition of Farm Worker," July 21, 1960, Robert E. Lucey Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio, BCSS, Folder 5.
[11]"Archbishop Robert E. Lucey to Father Wagner," April 25, 1960, Robert E. Lucey Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio, BCSS, Folder 5.

Bracero workers posed a serious threat to the working conditions of native-born Mexican Americans, especially as the guest worker program kept being extended. As originally planned, the guest-worker program between the American and Mexican governments was to provide much needed labor to the agricultural Southwest as many Americans of all ethnicities were drafted into military service during the Second World War. Although that system of labor was supposed to be in place for a relatively short period of time, at the request of agriculturalinterests it was extended until 1964.[12]

Furthermore, as historian David A. Badillo contends in *Latinos and the New Immigrant Church*, braceros also posed a problem for the Catholic Church at levels other than the relationship between Mexican American poverty and low wages. Badillo states that "the Church defined the Mexican bracero workers as a religiously deprived group coming into already understaffed regions."[13] The problem at this point was not economics per say; rather, it was a problem that caused panic in the hierarchy of the Church, because without an adequate number of clergy, bracero workers might be influenced by Protestant missionaries.

The Bracero labor system also brought to the forefront the always present divisions between Mexicans and Mexican Americans, especially the Mexican American middle-class. David G. Gutierrez argues that "the program also helped reopen the old debates among ethnic Mexicans of both nationalities over immigration policy… and their children's future in American society."[14] The divisions between the aforementioned groups were present beginning in the mid-1910s and continuing through the 1930s when many upper-class Mexicans returned to Mexico

[12]David A. Badillo, *Latinos and the New Immigrant Church* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 2006), 69.
[13]Ibid, 70.
[14]David G. Gutierrez, *Walls and Mirrors: Mexican-Americans, Mexican Immigrants, and the Politics of Ethnicity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 118.

after the tumultuous years of the Mexican Revolution and religious wars of the late 1920s. The dividing line was primarily between those who wished to be "American" and those who still held "Mexican" values and sought to remain Mexican, either with the goal of returning to Mexico in the future or retaining their culture in the United States.[15]

Archbishop Lucey and other clergy in San Antonio and other parts of the Southwest had to contend with all those divisions when promoting social and labor welfare for Mexican Americans. Overall, the Archdiocese of San Antonio, during the Lucey era appeared to have favored Mexican Americans over Mexican nationals, and supported the working-class, because the middle-classes already had their own advocacy organizations. Nevertheless, while the Church focused on the working-classes, its finances for both operational and social welfare purposes depended on the Mexican American middle classes.

Mexican Americans, especially those in the rural regions south of San Antonio lived in widespread poverty, and according to the Bishop's Committee for the Spanish-Speaking, earned an estimated "1.50 per hundred weight" of cotton picked. Archbishop Lucey contended that although the availability of Bracero workers led to lower-wages, it was not their presence alone but the system that itself caused the problems. In theory, in a "free-market" society people should be able to sell their labor for as a high a wage as possible; however, this was made impossible because of the bracero program whose continuation was the result of lobbying financed by growers. Lucey and the executive committee of the BCSS argued the program should be phased out by 1964.[16]

[15]Richard A. Garcia, *Rise of the Mexican American Middle Class* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1995), 305.
[16]"Fay Bennett, Executive Committee-BCSS to Willard W. Writs, Secretary of Labor," February 23, 1963, Robert E. Lucey Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio, Folder 6.

The BCSS in a constant barrage of letters and other lobbying efforts called on elected officials to bring to an end the detrimental bracero program. Although, they knew that Mexican nationals likely earned higher wages as a result of their employment in the United States because of Public Law 78, Lucey, other clergy, and the BCSS felt the need to protect domestic workers first. Furthermore, the bracero program by the early 1960s was in sharp decline. For example, by 1962 less than one percent of American farms in the Southwest utilized bracero labor.[17] However, a likely reason why only one percent of American farms in the region used bracero labor was because a small number of large agricultural conglomerates hired most of the braceros.

Archbishop Lucey and the BCSS stated that the second reason why wages for cotton pickers, melon pickers, and other farm work were so low was the greed of the growers themselves. Lucey, Fr. John A. Wagner, Executive Secretary of the BCSS, and others argued that many of the growers were Protestant, and therefore, did not have the same paternalistic ethos that Catholics had demonstrated in previous decades and even centuries.[18] Wagner contended that Protestant denominations were middle-class in orientation, and looked down on the poor, especially when those poor were Mexican Americans, even though this was beginning to change by the middle of the twentieth century.

Wagner, nevertheless, admitted that as Mexican Americans made progress in demanding their rights for higher wages, and slowly ascended into the middle-class, Protestants started evangelism programs to attract them. Wagner specifically identified the Baptist General Convention, a Texas affiliate of the Southern Baptist Convention, whose members, at their annual convention in 1962, discussed efforts to convert Mexicans Americans to the Baptist

[17]Ibid.
[18]Father John A. Wagner, "Spanish-Speaking Work," January 2, 1963, Robert E. Lucey Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio, Folder 6.

Church. Wagner, Lucey, and other Catholic leaders disliked these efforts for two reasons. First, the Catholic Church wanted Mexican Americans to remain Catholic. Second, the Catholic leadership viewed the Baptist evangelism campaign as an attempt to gain greater financial contributions.[19] An important distinction that needs to be made it that when Wagner or Lucey referred to Baptists in this case, they were not referring to mainline Baptists, but to evangelical Baptists. Furthermore, Catholic clergy in San Antonio and Oklahoma were not attacking Baptist spiritual beliefs, but rather anti-labor and anti-social welfare policies. The Catholic Church recognized that Baptists had charity organizations, but the Catholic Church more so than Protestant denominations, believed in harnessing the power of government to help the less fortunate, therefore, divisiveness arose between these religious groups.

By the 1960s, the Catholic Church started to criticize other religious organizations for their conservatism, even though the Archdiocese of San Antonio had been a middle-class institution prior to the arrival of Archbishop Lucey. Nevertheless, under Lucey's leadership, the Church in San Antonio, was now struggling side-by-side with farm workers. The minimum wage, the Church argued was not a living wage anywhere in the Southwest, but it was even lower in Texas than in other states. For example, New Mexico had a minimum wage of 75 cents, while Texas only had a minimum wage of 70 cents. Both rates were grossly inadequate for single-men, much more for men with families, nonetheless the Archdiocese of San Antonio argued that the Texas wage should at least rise to that of New Mexico.[20]

Ridding the country of the Bracero program was the most pressing issue, and it was also likely the easiest to address. Not only did the Catholic Church as a national entity oppose the

[19]Ibid.
[20]"Robert E. Lucey to Father John A. Wagner," February 15, 1962, Robert E. Lucey Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio, Folder 6.

program, so did the Episcopal and Methodist Churches who joined efforts to lobby legislators to let it phase out.[21] In addition, the United Farm Workers, whose main base was in California, under the leadership of Cesar Chavez, also supported phasing out the program. Therefore, the Archdiocese of San Antonio, the BCSS, and other organizations joined farm workers in their protests and "invasions" of San Antonio City Council and Bexar County Commission meetings.[22]

The protests initiated by Mexican American workers themselves, and supported by the Church, had two purposes which were prioritized differently by the aforementioned groups. First was the demand for an end to the Bracero program which was the main priority for the Church, because they had a long-term horizon in mind. Second and the primary priority for the Mexican American families of San Antonio, was the demand for relief money for dependent and neglected children.[23]

Starting in 1960, Archbishop Lucey initiated a brand-new program of leadership to better be able to organize assistance for Spanish-speaking people across south-central Texas in the area stretching from San Antonio to the southern border with Mexico, an area that covers the Rio Grande Valley and Winter Garden region, just north of the former. The new organizers were priests who were loyal to Lucey and held the same pro-worker/pro-civil rights views. In Bexar County itself, Lucey appointed a quadrant of chairman, while in the rural counties, he appointed a "priest-chairman."[24] The purpose of both the quadrant chairman and priest-chairman was to assist and lead protests, and other efforts by Mexican Americans in their struggle for higher-

[21]"Interracial Progress Moves Well in San Antonio," June 14, 1963, Sherrill Smith Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio, Box 1, Folder 8.
[22]Robert E. Lucey to Father John A. Wagner," May 16, 1963, Robert E. Lucey Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio, Folder 6.
[23]Ibid.
[24]"Robert E. Lucey to Fr. John A. Wagner-Executive Secretary, BCSS", February 17, 1964, Robert E. Lucey Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio, Folder 6.

wages, better working conditions, and educational opportunities. Although San Antonio itself was urbanized, the rest of the region was rural, so while the goals were the same, the methods varied.[25]

In addition, while the Archdiocese of San Antonio was a powerful institution because of the economic clout it wielded, Catholic leadership was aware that working alone was not beneficial. Throughout the rural counties, the Church worked with farm labor organizations, and in Bexar County it worked with Texas AFl-CIO, and the Political Association of Spanish-Speaking Organization (PASSO) affiliates.[26] While the archdiocese set up their rural-priest chairman and quadrant chairman, the Texas AFL-CIO established its Department of Equal Opportunity. The purpose of the department was to work with like-minded institutions including the BCSS in such fields as the "war on poverty, manpower retraining, juvenile employment, and economic rights."[27] Archbishop Lucey sided the Archdiocese of San Antonio with such organizations, because they could be much more active in protests and marches without prompting the ire of the many conservative elements within the Catholic Church.

Charles Arbitress, Jr., PASSO organizer for Bexar County, was another close ally of the Archbishop.[28] Arbitress, Lucey, Fr. Sherrill Smith, and other PASSO leaders, including Renato Cuellar of Weslaco, TX, joined forces to lobby Texas legislators to support the passage of HB 178 and 179.[29] Cuellar, among these men, was the only one not from Bexar County. He was a resident and civic leader from Hidalgo County in the Rio Grande Valley of South Texas, an area we will come to know more about in later pages. For now, it is necessary to mention that the

[25]Ibid.
[26]"For Use Sunday, October 11, 1964 and Thereafter," October 8, 1964, Robert E. Lucey Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio, Folder 6.
[27]Ibid.
[28]Support Heard for Employment Act, Wage Bills," February 20, 1963, Sherrill Smith Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio, Box 1, Folder 8.
[29]Ibid.

Catholic Church in that region was not as social justice and pro-labor oriented as the Archdiocese of San Antonio.[30]

Catholic leadership in San Antonio backed both HB 178 and 179, while less is known about how the Church in the Rio Grande Valley viewed this issue. Bishop Mariano Simon Garriga of the Diocese of Corpus Christi was the leader of the Catholic Church in Brownsville because the Diocese of Brownsville was not formed until 1965, two years after HB 178 and 179 were presented to the state legislature, both of which were unsuccessful. While the Diocese of Brownsville would become home to one of the largest and most rural Mexican American Catholic populations in the nation, clergymen in the area were pro-grower and conservative in their view of labor. [31]

HB 178 and 179 were thoroughly incompatible with the conservative views of South Texas clergy. HB 178 and 179, respectively, sought to create a Texas Fair Employment Practices Commission, and establish a statewide minimum wage equal to that of New Mexico which at that point stood at 75 cents per hour compared to Texas's 70 cents per hour[32] Representative John Alaniz from San Antonio, a friend to both Archbishop Lucey and Fr. Smith, introduced both bills in the House of Representatives. While support for the bills in the legislature and among businessmen was low, efforts like this helped the national push for similar legislation that came to fruition with the Civil Rights Act of 1964.[33]

Geographically, the Archdiocese of San Antonio only covered 32 counties surrounding San Antonio; however, as mentioned earlier, the boundaries established by the National Catholic

[30]"Fair Employment, Wage Bills Presented," February 20, 1963, Sherrill Smith Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio, Box 1, Folder 8.
[31]Robert E. Lucey to Rev. Msgr. George C. Higgins," September 19, 1966, Robert E. Lucey Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio, Folder 7.
[32]"Fair Employment, Wage Bills Presented," February 20, 1963, Sherrill Smith Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio, Box 1, Folder 8.
[33]Ibid.

Church, did not halt Lucey, Wagner, or Sherrill in their efforts for social and labor justice. As HB 178 and 179 were placed before the legislature, and Archbishop Lucey was establishing his priest-chairman, he was responsible for sending Sherrill Smith among others to participate in African American civil rights events, including the March in Selma, Alabama.[34]

The fact that priests from such a far-away diocese were present in the Selma march prompted the ire of conservative Catholics in both Alabama and San Antonio. From Alabama came a series of letters to Archbishop Lucey calling him "unkind" and un-Christian because he sent Sherrill Smith to "bring civilization" to Catholic southerners.[35] Neither Smith nor Lucey were bothered by such accusations because they knew in their hearts that they were doing the right thing in supporting oppressed laborers and their families. Furthermore, Lucey based part of his ideology on the Gospel message presented by Pope Paul VI.[36] Paul VI argued that the central message of Catholicism in regard to social justice was "to shatter the selfishness of individuals and groups."[37]

Fr. Smith's frontiers for social justice participation not only stretched to Alabama and the Rio Grande Valley. He participated in the grape strikes and marches led by Cesar Chavez and the United Farm Workers in California.[38] It is uncertain whether Lucey, Smith's superior, asked him to participate in the California strikes and marches, including the Delano march.[39] However, it is likely that even if Lucey did not give official sanction, he nonetheless supported Smith's active participation. By this point small but important breaks were starting to emerge among the clergy

[34]Ed Foster, "Priests Plan Return to Selma," 1965, Sherrill Smith Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio, Box 1, Folder 8.
[35]"Robert E. Lucey to Rev. Msgr. William J. Quinn," August 33, 1965, Robert E. Lucey Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio, Folder 6.
[36]Ibid.
[37]Ibid.
[38]"Father Smith to Participate in Protest March from Delano," 1966, Sherrill Smith Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio, Box 1, Folder 8.
[39]Relevant sources, including letters and newspapers, are not conclusive on this matter.

in the Archdiocese of San Antonio. Therefore, Lucey as the chief prelate was unlikely to give full and open formed support to Fr. Smith's active participation in California, so far away from his home base, but would quietly go along with Smith's actions, even though the latter would have preferred Lucey's official support.

Although Fr. Smith, and perhaps other Texas clergy, participated in the Delano march and financially and spiritually supported Mexican American workers, it would be an exaggeration to argue that they organized it in any way. Archbishop Lucey, and Smith himself acknowledged that they were mere participants in that part of the struggle. Their real contribution was getting Mexican Americans, the Archdiocese of San Antonio, and labor organizations in Texas to become vocal supporters of the United Farm Workers' efforts.[40]

Fr. Smith recognized that the Church needed to support workers' struggles nationwide, because they were all interconnected. Further, the Mexican American laborers regardless of their place of birth, or if they were from urban or rural areas, the majority were Roman Catholic, and for all intents and purposes appeared proud of their religiosity.[41] In protests and marches from California to Alabama to San Antonio and to the Rio Grande Valley the most obvious Catholic symbol at the forefront was the Virgin of Guadalupe.[42] Even though Smith, Lucey, and Fr. John A. Wagner came from a slightly different Catholic background (Euro-American), theyrealized that not only did Mexican Americans expect the Catholic clergy to pray for them, but to join them as the Catholic Church often says as brothers and sisters in Christ.[43]

[40]"Robert E. Lucey to Rev. Msgr., George C. Higgins," March 21, 1966, Robert E. Lucey Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio, Folder 7.
[41]Ibid.
[42]Marty Harrison, "Fr. Smith leads March by Steven's Strikers," December 22, 1966, Sherrill Smith Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio, Box 1, Folder 8.
[43]Ibid.

Lucey and his social justice-oriented clergy faced the pressure of influential politicians and businessmen because of their message regarding education. The Archdiocesan view toward educational opportunities in San Antonio held that the Mexican American was "not a dropout; he is pushed-out" by the system that had led to the "ghettoization" of that community.[44] The great American melting pot, was not a melting pot at all, because if Mexican Americans were isolated, how could they possibly be acculturated into mainstream U.S. society. Even that was out of the question for the Archdiocese of San Antonio. The era of assimilationist tendencies was over by the 1960s; by this time the archdiocese, like organizations such as PASSO argued for the acceptance of Mexican American culture into American society, as well as into the Church. This is not to say that Archdiocese did not support English training programs, adult education, and job training, because they did, and in fact, they pushed San Antonio ISD to give Mexican Americans the same opportunities that were provided for Anglo Americans.[45]

Mexican Americans, organized by different groups, including the Church, PASSO, LULAC, the American G.I. Forum, and others fought for educational rights at the local level and did so with great success. By the 1960s, the Catholic Church and Mexican Americans knew that the Supreme Court had struck down laws that afforded them, and African Americans, with a substandard education; therefore, the issue was to pressure local governments to make changes as quickly as possible. Fr. Smith, among the Catholic clergy, was most involved alongside Mexican American families in demanding equal education. This did not go unnoticed by those in positions of power as, they verbally, and in print, condemned the activism of Fr. Smith.[46]

[44]"The Problem," 1966, Robert E. Lucey Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio, Folder 7.
[45]"Father McCarthy to Father Casso," October 4, 1966, Robert E. Lucey Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio, Folder 7.
[46]Sam Kindrick, "S.A. School Chief Answers Criticism by Father Smith," November 3, 1965, Sherrill Smith Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio, Folder 8.

Senator William Dickinson from Alabama viewed Fr. Smith's actions in support of civil rights marches and labor rights as detrimental to the Church's image as an apolitical force. Smith's support for those types of movements was so strident that Dickinson and conservative Catholics and Protestants claimed smith was responsible for promoting "communism and immorality."[47] Journalists and researchers were never able to prove the veracity of Dickinson's allegations against Fr. Smith. Fr. Smith did welcome communist support in social justice and labor issues, because communists held ideas similar to his own regarding the uplift of the poor.

Samuel Snell, a wealthy politician and businessman, who happened to be a large financial contributor to the Archdiocese of San Antonio, was among the many critics Fr. Smith accumulated due to his views. Snell sided with San Antonio ISD in efforts to keep Mexican Americans and other minority students in substandard educational facilities, or at a minimum, provide them with less funding than Anglo students. Snell actually provided money to many Catholic charities that benefited low-income Mexican Americans.[48] Snell, however, thought that things were changing to drastically, and that he did not want Catholic viewpoints imposed on Protestants or Jewish people in San Antonio. Snell argued that "the Catholic Church in San Antonio today has brandished an economic blackjack to force its will on Protestants and members of all faiths as well as Catholics."[49]

Most irritating to Snell and to other businessmen was the Archdiocese of San Antonio's acceptance and implementation of "Project Equality." Project Equality did not originate with Lucey or Smith, but with the National Conference of Catholic Bishops (NCCB). Project Equality was a Catholic program to use the wealth and prestige of the Church and its various institutions

[47]"Nun, Priests Defend March Participants," April 2, 1963, Sherrill Smith Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio, Folder 8.
[48]"Economic Boycott Opposed by Snell," 1965, Sherrill Smith Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio, Folder 8.
[49]Ibid.

to force employers to hire a certain number of minorities, and to pay all workers union wages.[50] The NCCB under the auspices of Project Equality, encouraged Catholic dioceses and archdioceses to buy and hire only from firms that paid union wages. This meant that many businesses which refused to commit themselves to higher wages lost their accounts with the Catholic Church. The Archdiocese of San Antonio was not the first body to implement the program, it was the third. The first and second archdioceses to do so were the Archdioceses of Detroit and St. Louis, under the direction of John F. Dearden and Joseph Cardinal Ritter respectively.[51]

When Lucey was looking for an administrator for the archdiocesan implementation of Project Equality, his first and likely only choice was Fr. Sherrill Smith. Fr. Smith by 1965 had been involved in marches, protests, and organizing efforts in support of Mexican American civil and labor rights. Therefore, Lucey knew that Smith would be a faithful administrator of the project. With this appointment, Smith, in addition to being assistant pastor of St. Joseph's Catholic Church in San Antonio, was now also the head of the newly formed Social Action Department in the Chancery Office of the Archbishop.[52]

Project Equality was from the start successful within the Archdiocese of San Antonio. It was a success, because of the way the program was managed and implemented. Smith's office, the Social Action Department sent out two letters to firms with which the archdiocese conducted business. The first letter was a pledge form that businesses would meet the requirements set forth by the Archdiocese of San Antonio, which they had to send back to Smith within thirty days of

[50]Dick Meskill, "Archbishop Marshals Buying Power to Promote Employment Equality," August 13, 1965, Sherrill Smith Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio, Box 1, Folder 8.
[51]Ibid.
[52]"Robert E. Lucey to Thomas Gibbons, Jr.," August 11, 1965, Sherrill Smith Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio, Box 1, Folder 8.

receiving it. Second, was a survey sent out several months after the project was announced. The survey asked businesses to identify if they met the minority and salary requirements as specified by Project Equality, which as might be remembered, was designed by the NCCB and implemented by local clergy.[53] Once those surveys were ratified by Fr. Smith and his staff, all those businesses would be placed in a Catholic directory sent to all parishes and other institutions under Archdiocesan control.

It was the economic power of the Church that made all this possible. Catholic Churches and Catholic institutions in San Antonio alone did business with 1,200 companies, which employed tens of thousands of people. These companies did not want to lose their business with the Church to competitors. Some of the companies already hired a sufficiently high percentage of Mexican American and African American workers, and paid union wages as well, but those that did not were quick to make the necessary changes.[54] The economic power of the Church went unmatched during the twentieth century by any Protestant or Mexican American Civil Rights organizations; therefore, many initiatives or goals that the Church started or supported had a much greater impact than if the church had stayed on the sidelines.

Catholic Archdioceses from across the nation soon followed the lead of Detroit, St. Louis, and San Antonio and established their own Project Equality programs. The enormous financial clout of the American Catholic Church by early 1966 affected over 7,000 firms who were threatened with the loss of business if they maintained their discriminatory practices toward Mexican Americans and African Americans.[55] Moreover, it is necessary to remember that firms

[53]"Ask Breakdown of Labor Force for Project Equality Program," April 1, 1966, Sherrill Smith Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio Archives, Box 1, Folder 8.
[54]"Catholic Economic Weight Put Behind Job Equality." August 13, 1965, Sherrill Smith Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio, Box 1, Folder 8.
[55]E.B. Duarte, "Equality Plan seen Changing Attitudes," July 1, 1966, Sherrill Smith Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio, Box 1, Folder 8.

were also required to have union-scale wages across the board, which meant that Anglo American employees also benefited from the Catholic initiative.[56]

Smith's Social Action Department and Lucey himself knew they did not hold sway over all Catholic institutions within the archdiocesan boundaries. The Catholic Church, although it might appear a monolithic and highly structured institution, in reality is not, regardless of the fact that all clergy swear obedience to the Pope, as he is viewed by them as the Vicar of Christ. With that in mind, the Archdiocese of San Antonio, and by extension the Social Action Department, did not have control over key institutions such as religious orders, including the Sisters of Charity or Society of Jesus (Jesuits), and any institutions they controlled.[57]

These semi-independent religious orders had their own chain of command, whose policies and expectations were different from the diocesan clergy and lay Catholics. For example, diocesan priests do not take a vow of poverty, as religious priests do. This was a point of contention between the archdiocesan Social Action Department and the Sisters of Charity of Incarnate Word.[58] Religious orders such as theirs had much less income and wealth than the "mainstream" Catholic Archdiocese or its institutions; therefore, some religious orders disliked Lucey's and Smith's idea of hiring only firms that provided union-scale wages. Religious orders supported hiring more minority workers but they viewed higher wages for employees as detrimental to their own finances because they had to pay more for products and services. Lucey contended that members of religious orders took a vow of poverty of their own free will, and further; they had no families to support, meaning that their own poverty-level incomes should

[56]Kemper Diehl, "Catholics Wield $$." August 12, 1965, Sherrill Smith Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio, Box 1, Folder 8.
[57]"Robert E. Lucey to Religious: Pay Union-Scale Wages," 1965, Sherrill Smith Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio, Box 1, Folder 8.
[58]"William C. Wiedehold, Guadalupe Community Center-President to Archbishop Robert E. Lucey," April 27, 1966, Sherrill Smith Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio, Box 1, Folder 8.

not interfere with the idea of higher wages for the average worker.[59] Further, Lucey also argued that workers who provided services to religious orders deserved living wages not "starvation wages."[60]

Archbishop Lucey was certainly blunt; however, his criticisms were moderate when compared to Fr. Smith's position. In Smith's view, the entire Catholic Church, Catholics and believers in Christ, should all worked together to break down all barriers whether racial or socioeconomic. In early October 1965 Smith declared "I don't see how the Church can be silent and be witness to injustice. Necessarily, it must speak through persons…bishops, priests…."[61] Smith criticized the conservatism of Catholics throughout the country.

A problem did arise as Archbishop Lucey placed pressure on Catholic religious orders and as Fr. Smith attempted to implement Project Equality. Fr. Smith was not criticized in this situation, because he had no power over hiring in the Archdiocese of San Antonio, but Lucey was subjected to criticism. Religious orders and businesses from across San Antonio and the Rio Grande Valley argued that Lucey had failed to live up to his own expectation regarding both union organization and in the hiring of minorities.[62] Attempts made by chancery employees under Lucey's direct control, to unionize, failed on a number of occasions.

Samuel Snell, an old foe to both Lucey, and especially Fr. Smith, again took to critiquing archdiocesan policies. Supporting Snell was Robert Munguia, Jr., whose combined criticisms at this point centered on the fact that the Archdiocese of San Antonio's administrative positions were held almost entirely by Anglo clergy. Snell fell short of calling Fr. Smith and Lucey

[59]"Robert E. Lucey to Religious: Pay Union-Scale Wages," 1965, Sherrill Smith Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio Archives, Box 1, Folder 8.
[60]Ibid.
[61]Lloyd Larrabee, "S.A. Priest Gets Involved for Justice," October 3, 1965, Sherrill Smith Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio Archives, Box 1, Folder 8.
[62]"Unions Seeking Contracts with Catholic Church." 1967, Sherrill Smith Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio Archives, Box 1, Folder 8.

hypocritical in their social justice activism in his condemnations; however, the overall tone ofhis letters toward the prelate and priest gave that impression. Fr. Smith's response to their allegations was that the Archdiocese of San Antonio as well as the Catholic Church appointed clergy to administrative positions, and not lay Catholics. That meant that the lack of Mexican Americans in managerial positions was "not a question of discrimination but of vocation" there were not enough Mexican American clergy available in San Antonio.[63]

As the Archdiocese of San Antonio placed pressure on its own clergy, Catholic religious orders and firms they associated with, along with Lucey, Wagner, and Smith did not stop lobbying government officials or society more broadly The poverty level for MexicanAmericans in San Antonio was acute. Archdiocesan officials knew that the power of the Church could play a vital role in alleviating poverty but understood that ultimately it would require a governmental solution.

In their efforts to lobby government, at the local, state, and federal levels, Smith's Social Action Department sought to bring the voices of as many Mexican Americans and their sympathizers together. Smith likely wanted to let the world know of the injustices committed against an impoverished and marginalized population. He argued that while the poverty level as "defined by the Anti-Poverty Act" was anyone making $3,000 or less annually that only applied to single people.[64] The reality was much worse, because many Mexican-American couples in the 1960s had an average of five or six children, and some had as many as eight or nine, meaning

[63]Lloyd Larrabbe, "Cleric Castigates Charges of Bias." 1967, Sherrill Smith Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio, Box 1, Folder 8.
[64]Sam Kindrick, "East Side Poverty War Panels," 1965, Sherrill Smith Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio, Box 1, Folder 8, 1965.

that even if they made $4,500 annually, they might be much poorer than the governmentactually acknowledged.[65]

Smith and the Catholic Church at large knew that poverty and oppression levels were much more acute in developing countries, but there was little they could do regarding that situation. The United States as an advanced and wealthy country could do much more forthose left behind due to past injustices, including the segregation of both African Americans and Mexican Americans. Church officials including Fr. Smith, Lucey, and Fr. Wagner certainly played their part; nevertheless, only by organizing the poor themselves in large numbers could they exert pressure on government to increase wages and provide funding for education and public housing.[66]

Fr. Smith in committee after committee, some with local officials, some with state officials, let the elected representatives of the people know the demands made by those people who they in theory worked for. Fr. Smith believed strongly that elected officials were obligated to listen to the crying voices of those most impoverished because those officials are paid through taxes, meaning they take their entire salary from the people, while the poor only receive part of their subsistence from taxes. Moreover, Fr. Smith insisted that Christian leaders and officials needed to live up to their Christian ideals.[67]

Between 1963, and the end of 1966, Mexican Americans and African Americans in San Antonio landed a significant number of government jobs. While the funding for those jobs came from the federal government, the implementation and hiring were at the local level. This allowed

[65]Ibid.
[66]Ed Foster, "Poor Turn out in Hopes of Saving War on Poverty," 1965, Sherrill Smith Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio, Box 1, Folder 8.
[67]Ibid.

the Archdiocese to be involved in the process by exerting pressure on federal employers, and by acting as overseers to make sure federal laws were not violated.[68]

Through efforts in which Fr. Smith and other archdiocesan leaders were involved, Francis B. Roser, Executive Officer of the Board of U.S. Civil Service Examiners for San Antonio and South Texas, announced that out of 4,352 additional jobs created by government 1,988 went to Mexican Americans and 457 to "Negroes".[69] While the Catholic Church had no say over the hiring, and neither did institutions like LULAC or the G.I. Forum, nonetheless together they did effectively channel prospective minority employees to fill those government positions.

The Rio Grande Valley of South Texas, outside the geographical boundaries of the Archdiocese of San Antonio, became a battleground for Fr. Sherrill Smith, where he again took a leading position regarding Mexican American civil and labor rights. Smith, throughout his involvement in the farm workers' movement in that region of Texas, remained the director of the Social Action Department. The Rio Grande Valley and the Diocese of Brownsville (established in 1965) were impacted by measures and legislation being pushed across the state.

One of the earliest involvements of the Archdiocese of San Antonio with Rio Grande Valley workers was its support for an increase in the minimum wage.[70] This was different from the 75-cent minimum wage discussed earlier. The new push for a minimum wage, part of SB 1866 for farm workers, was to significantly raise the rate it to $1.25 per hour. Additionally, the push for higher agricultural wages included SB 1864 that would extend collective bargaining rights to farm workers.[71] Fr. John A. Wagner, Executive Secretary of the National Council for

[68]Sam Kindrick, "S.A. Mexican-Americans, Negroes Gain in Filling," December 20, 1966, Sherrill Smith Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio Archives, Box 1, Folder 8.
[69]Ibid.
[70]Vicki Brandenberger, "Rev. Smith Advocates Migratory Labor Legislation," April 13, 1966, Sherrill Smith Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio Archives, Box 1, Folder 8.
[71]Ibid.

the Spanish-Speaking, and other clergy argued that farm workers' lack of collective-bargaining rights made it impossible for them to attain livable wages.[72] Wagner in his deliberations with legislators went as far as calling agriculture a "sacred cow" that few dare touch.[73]

Opposing Wagner and other supporters of both SB 1864 and SB 1866 was the Texas Farm Bureau. C.H. DeVaney, president of that organization, and a farmer from Waco, TX, argued that it would be economically unfeasible to raise the minimum wage for farm workers to $1.25 an hour. Additionally, he contended that many farmers would rather mechanize their production, instead of hiring workers at a higher wage. That meant that farm workers would lose even the meager wages they currently earned. Those farmers who were unable to mechanize and pay the higher wages would just hire less employees and make them work more.[74] Unwavering in their commitment toward social justice and labor rights for Mexican Americans, the Archdiocese of San Antonio pushed forward with their moral, vocal, and financial support of the labor movement.

Archbishop Lucey and Fr. Smith in order to gather support for those bills, organized with other faiths to study what could be done to pressure the legislature and other elected officials. Catholics and mainline Protestants on this issue sided together and found several civil rights and labor organizations to assist in the struggle. For example, IMAGE, a Mexican American civics group, under the direction of Tony D. Caderon, utilized church buildings to bring together workers, and asked for a pastoral letter of support from Lucey.

[72]Kemper Diehl, "Lucey Calls Strong Unions Best Solution for Wages," October 7, 1966, Sherrill Smith Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio Archives, Box 1, Folder 8.
[73]Ibid.
[74]E.B. Duarte, "Farm Bureau Head Hits Wage Proposals," September 6, 1966, Sherrill Smith Collection, Box 1, Folder 8.

Although urban unions and organizations played a significant role in the demand for a $1.25 per hour wage and in collective bargaining rights, the most memorable efforts that took place in 1966 were the strikes initiated by Starr County farmers. The strike that eventually became a march toward the state capitol in Austin was designed after the successful events that grape pickers in California had participated in just months earlier.[75] Fr. Smith, as well as Fr. John Wagner, had taken part in the California strikes and marches. Their involvement in California consisted of providing moral support and religious encouragement to the workers, while the United Farm Workers took the lead.[76]

Nevertheless, with that experience under his belt, Fr. Smith was quick to endorse and become a vocal and passionate spokesperson for the Starr County strikes against "La Casita" farms. The strikes in that region were directed by Eugene Nelson, who had been a picket captain in the California movement. Therefore, the people involved with the Rio Grande Valley movement were all experienced in one way or another. While Nelson made sure the organizing went smoothly, Fr. Smith, Fr. Thomas Killian, and other Church leaders from San Antonio called for a Catholic effort to provide funds, food, and other basic necessities for the strikers, without which the strike would have collapsed quickly.[77] The "La Casita" strikes officially started on June 1, 1966 when over 700 farm workers walked off the job. Their demands were connected to the state-wide movement for a $1.25 per hour wage. Farm workers in Starr County and other counties in the Rio Grande Valley earned an average of 40-85 cents per hour.[78]

[75]"Huelguistas Pick Up Momentum," April 1, 1966, Sherrill Smith Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio, Box 1, Folder 8.
[76]Ibid.
[77]"National Farm Workers Association." 1966, Sherrill Smith Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio, Box 1, Folder 8.
[78]Ibid.

The early stages of the strike featured only picketing. However, as local law enforcement and the Texas Rangers arrived to arrest and harass the Mexican-American strikers, the picketing became a march, first to the local seat of government, the county courthouse. The march was organized and led by two separate groups, both of which wanted better wages and social rights for Mexican Americans. The first was the Archdiocese of San Antonio. The archdiocese was not directly involved in events occurring in the Rio Grande Valley, but three of its priests including Fr. Smith and Fr. Thomas Killian were the main spokesmen at the rally at the courthouse. Archbishop Lucey almost certainly knew of those developments and by not castigating his colleagues or calling them off he involved his archdiocese in the struggle. The second of the organizations involved was the newly formed Independent Workers Association (IWA).[79]

The Rio Grande Valley was a completely different place than the urban areas of San Antonio where Fr. Smith felt quite at home. As historian David Montejano has effectively argued in his *Anglos and Mexicans in the Making of Texas, 1836-1986,* breaking down the old power structures was easier in urban areas. Within the boundaries of cities, a new merchant class that started forming in the aftermath of the Second World War helped break down the old racial barriers because they wanted clients for their businesses, regardless of their race.

Fr. Smith knew those urban settings well, but now he was active in another region that stretched out the archdiocesan boundaries all the way to the Rio Grande River, albeit, unofficially. The power structure in the Valley, especially in Starr County, was much as it had been prior to the Second World War.[80] Farmers had control over the county's economic system, and over the decades they refused any attempts by workers to gain better wages, or better

[79]"Priests Lead March in Valley." July 1966, Sherrill Smith Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio, Box 1, Folder 8.
[80]Ernest Morgan, "Ripple Along the Rio," July 1966, Sherrill Smith Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio Archives, Box 1, Folder 8.

education through the public school system. However, Anglo Americans did not control the county entirely it was a place where Mexican Americas political leaders and ranchers had always remained influential.

In the 1960s, Mexican Americans and Mexican nationals comprised an estimated two-thirds of the 390,000 people living in the Rio Grande Valley.[81] Moreover, regarding religion, the Roman Catholic Church dominated the region, and yet the local diocese of Brownsville, which had been formed out of the Diocese of Corpus Christi in 1965, was not supportive of the strikers, or the wider-demands for a higher minimum wage. While Archbishop Lucey was joined by Bishop Thomas Drury and other prelates of the Catholic Church in their vocal support for social justice favoring Mexican Americans, Bishop Humberto Medeiros of Brownsville remained silent.[82]

To make matters worse, when Bishop Medeiros did eventually speak out on the issue, he was critical of the farm workers' movement, even though his "flock" benefited greatly from higher wages. Medeiros appeared to be more interested in the "analysis" of "Starr County ranchers" than that of labor unions or outside priests like Frs. Smith and Killian. The Bishop of Brownsville went so far as using the pejorative term "mojado" in reference to Mexican nationals during the strike.[83]

Archbishop Lucey, Fr. Smith, Fr. Killian, and Fr. Wagner all backed the effort for higher wages and called on the Catholic laity of the Rio Grande Valley to support the poorest among them; however, Valley clergy condemned their efforts. It was not only Bishop Medeiros who did

[81]Ernest Morgan, "Unlikely Place for Strike," July 1966, Sherrill Smith Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio Archives, Box 1, Folder 8.
[82]"Strike Breaks Up Monotony," July 1, 1966, Sherrill Smith Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio Archives, Box 1, Folder 8.
[83]Ibid. It is unclear if he personally used that word in a derogatory manner, nonetheless, it is usually employed in that manner.

not support the new movement, but clergy from across the region who came out against it. The old criticism of Fr. Smith re-emerged. William Dickinson and others from Alabama had labeled Smith a communist agitator in 1963; now in 1965 those attacks were being leveled by members of the Catholic Church from the Rio Grande Valley. The Rt. Rev. Dan Laning, from Harlingen in Cameron County was among the Valley clergy condemning the involvement of outside priests, who he argued had no right to participate because the Diocese of Brownsville was not under the jurisdiction of the Archdiocese of San Antonio.[84] Out of the Valley clergy, only one cleric, Rev. Phillip Bryon of Immaculate Conception Cathedral in Brownsville, went on record as supporting the strikers' demands for a higher wage. In fact, in the Rio Grande Valley, Protestant clergy were more responsive to calls for support from Lucey than his own Catholic brethren.[85]

In addition to the conservative Catholic clergy who condemned Fr. Smith as a communist sympathizer, various other state and national groups made the same attacks. Most prevalent among them was the John Birch Society. At several press conferences, Thomas J. Davis, public relations director of that organization, charged that Fr. Smith was a communist. As previously noted, Fr. Smith agreed that communists and farm workers were in accord, as was he, on the matter of labor rights; nevertheless, he denied that the strikes and marches were dominated by the communist movement.[86]

LULAC, as well as other, middle-class organizations were angered by Fr. Smith's proclamation that the strikers were supported by active communist party members. LULAC, although an important organization in the fight for Mexican American civil and educational

[84]Ernest Morgan, "Priest Active in Strike," July 7, 1966, Sherrill Smith Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio Archives, Box 1, Folder 8.
[85]"Catholic huelga aid hailed," August 1966, Sherrill Smith Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio Archives, Box 1, Folder 8.
[86]"Farm Workers March in Texas," August 1966, Sherrill Smith Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio, Box 1, Folder 8.

rights, was not one that strongly represented the lower-classes, and did not seek to understand why the Valley Farm Workers Association Committee, or the Independent Workers Association (IWA) were striking. As soon as LULAC leaders found out that communists were actively involved in the strike, albeit, not in any leading positions, they cut off funding for the strikers and their families, thus, unintentionally giving more power to agribusiness interests.[87]

Fr. Smith's response to LULAC, the John Birch Society, and to other critics was that"the Church agrees with all men of good will," implying that communists, at least on this occasion were on the right-side of history. Furthermore, he went on to emphasize that communists had historically been active in labor and social activism that improved society. One of the examples, Fr. Smith provided was that communists had openly backed and worked for the creation of Social Security and other New Deal era legislation.[88] Fr. Smith's point was that communist involvement in the strike for higher wages and collective bargaining for farm workers did not mean the goals were subversive. At the same time, he made it clear that he considered himself a revolutionary of sorts.[89]

Gene Nelson, a close ally of Fr. Smith, and Texas organizer for the National Farm Workers Association, unlike Smith, attempted to downplay the fact that communists supported the strike and the accompanying march toward the state capitol. Fr. John A. Wagner, who Archbishop Lucey in one of the first steps in the retreat from social and economic justice advocacy removed from his position as Executive Secretary of the BCSS, also openly denied communist involvement in the farm workers' movement. Nelson and Wagner went on to declare

[87]"LULACS Drop Striker Aid," September 1966, Sherrill Smith Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio Archives, Box 1, Folder 8.
[88]"Smith Views Strike," August 1966, Sherrill Smith Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio Archives, Box 1, Folder 8.
[89]"Fr. Smith, Birchers Clash Over Red Charges," September 1966, Sherrill Smith Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio Archives, Box 1, Folder 8.

their amazement "that anyone should pay attention to the charges of the John Birch Society, the same people who accused President Eisenhower of being a communist.[90] Their goal was to place the burden of proof on the Birchers not on the accused to prove their own innocence.

With LULAC support for Rio Grande Valley strikers evaporating other organizations had to pick-up the slack. Among them was the Archdiocese of San Antonio, which was already heavily involved. Fr. Smith declared that the archdiocese "through the Bishops' Committee for the Spanish-Speaking, will continue channeling aid into the Valley for the striking farm workers."[91] As long as Fr. Smith remained charged with the Social Action Department, striking farm workers had a powerful ally with the Archdiocese of San Antonio. Additionally, even though Fr. John Wagner was no longer Executive Secretary of the BCSS, his successor Fr. Henry Casso, turned out to be just as committed to worker rights.

The final event of the 1966 farm workers' march was their rally at the state capitol,which attracted between 5,000 and 10,000 supporters. Henry B. Gonzalez of San Antonio, Gene Nelson, and clergy from various Catholic archdioceses and dioceses from across Texas were present to lend their voice and support for the farm workers. The Diocese of Brownsville did not send representatives to support the Rio Grande Valley workers. By contrast, not only did the Houston-Galveston archdiocese support the workers, Rev. Antonio Gonzalez from Houston was co-chairman of the march.[92]

Bishop Medeiros, therefore, was not prohibited from being active in supporting workers' rights; it was his decision not to allow the Diocese of Brownsville to participate. The

[90]"No Red Aid in March." August 1966, Sherrill Smith Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio Archives, Box 1, Folder 8.
[91]"March Leaders Plan Meetings," September 7, 1966, Sherrill Smith Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio Archives, Box 1, Folder 8.
[92]Roland Lindsey, "March Climaxes at Capitol Today," September 5, 1966, Sherrill Smith Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio Archives, Box 1, Folder 8.

Archdiocese of Houston-Galveston was aligned with its counterpart in San Antonio. Through the contrast between San Antonio and Brownsville, we can see how far the Catholic Church in the former had transitioned away from its traditional conservatism during a brief period. While the campaign for minimum wage and collective bargaining was a state-wide movement involving Anglo and African American workers, too, Mexican Americans were by far the most involved, especially those from the Rio Grande Valley. However, their participation did not receive support from the Valley's clergy.[93]

While Archbishop Robert E. Lucey appears to have turned his back on the strikers after the peak of support at the Labor Day rally in 1966, Fr. Smith and Fr. Killian maintained their support. Influential politicians, who happened to be Catholic, like Henry B. Gonzalez, also started threatening to break with radicals such as Fr. Smith, and by extension placed pressure on Lucey to silence his radical pro-labor priests. Gonzalez clearly siding with middle-class organizations like LULAC, and a member of the upper-middle class himself, went on to denounce Fr. Smith's efforts as "class warfare."[94] This charge was regularly used by those in positions of power to put a halt to the demands of the poor and working-classes. Fr. Smith was aware that class warfare existed, and was also aware, that the entrenched power structure was winning, but he kept his support with those who he believed Christ would support were he present.

Fr. Smith in keeping with his commitment to the idea of a just society where workers earn enough to support their families decided to lead a San Antonio area strike against Marshall

[93]Jon Ford, "Farm Workers End March at Capitol," 1966, Sherrill Smith Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio Archives, Box 1, Folder 8.
[94]"One Break Looms," March 19, 1967, Sherrill Smith Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio Archives, Box 1, Folder 8.

Stevens, who Archbishop Lucey described as "a prominent citizen of this community."[95] Earlier Lucey, likely played at a hand in removing Fr. Wagner from his Executive Secretary position. Now in another point of retreat from social and economic justice advocacy Lucey castigated Fr. Smith for siding with the workers. In a letter from January 4, 1967, Lucey did credit Smith with being one of the "few priests in Texas who are deeply devoted to the principle of organized labor," however, he went on to say that his participation in the march against Stevens had forced him to reassign Smith to another parish as punishment.[96]

Furthermore, by the time of the Stevens strike, minimum wage laws and other workers' issues were becoming more prevalent on the national scene. Therefore, as national attention was focused on those types of issues, the importance of local priests or religious organizations in support of such rights started to decline. However, other groups had also become involved; the Catholic Church was now just one group among many calling attention to such issues.[97]

By 1967, farm workers were not the only workers demanding higher wages. Members of the professional, skilled, and educated workforce started staging strikes throughout 1966 and into 1967. Among the most heavily covered in the pages of the *Alamo Messenger* were the nurses strikes that occurred throughout the nation, and affected the Catholic health system, especially in lower-income regions, such as San Antonio.[98] Nurses, like farmworkers claimed that they had "inadequate wages and undesirable working conditions," however, leaders of the Santa Rosa health system of San Antonio, a Catholic affiliated institution, argued that this was not true, and that wages were slowly going up. For example, Dr. John Bradley an assistant administrator for

[95]"Robert E. Lucey to Fr. Sherrill Smith," January 4, 1967, Robert E. Lucey Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio Archives, Folder 7.
[96]Ibid.
[97]"Lt. Governor feels Minimum Wage Law Will Pass," January 5, 1967, *Alamo Messenger* Collection, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, Texas.
[98]"Is it ethical for nurses to stage strikes?" January 5, 1967, *Alamo Messenger* Collection, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, Texas.

Santa Rosa contended that wages had gone from $0.60 an hour at the start of 1967 to $1.40 an hour by late 1967, with further increases already in the works.[99] Other strikers or "Huelguistas," as they are known in Spanish, included the machinists' union strike at the U.S. Gypsum plant. The machinists' union strike by October 1967 had been active for six weeks, and many clergymen in both the Protestant and Catholic Churches within and around San Antonio perceived it as another "la casita."[100]

With that in mind, things only kept getting more difficult for the farm workers' movement and proponents of the higher minimum wage at the local level, because the full retreat from radicalism within the Archdiocese of San Antonio only became more prevalent during 1967. The farm workers' movement and strike were still active in the Rio Grande Valley, particularly its place of origin, Starr County, but news outlets and the Church paid only scant attention to those events. To keep the movement alive and gather support, several San Antonio priests traveled to Rio Grande City, the Starr County seat, to take part in strikes and demonstrations against La Casita Farms, other growers, and elected officials.[101]

Fr. Smith and Fr. Killian were among the priests who headed to the Rio Grande Valley. They and the others knew they were in defiance of Archbishop's Lucey's recent recommendations that explicitly told them not to participate in any of the actions there.[102] The results of the strike were dismal because by this point most former supporters had lost interest in the Rio Grande Valley. Fr. Smith and four other priests ended up being arrested for "disturbing

[99]Ibid.
[100]E.B. Duarte, "Another Huelga Growing," October 13, 1967, *Alamo Messenger* Collection, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, TX.
[101]"Priests Not Planning More Visits to Valley," 1967, Sherrill Smith Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio Archives, Box 1, Folder 8.
[102]Dennis Haven, "Only 130 Persons show Up for Minimum Wage Rally," May 7, 1967, Sherrill Smith Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio, Box 1, Folder 8.

the peace" or so declared the county sheriff's department and the Texas Rangers who were present during many of the strikes.[103]

The news headlines from across the state of Texas made mention of the five priests who had been arrested. Here was the chance for Fr. Smith's and Fr. Killian's foes to strike. Pressure on Archbishop Lucey had been mounting throughout late 1966 and into 1967, so he decided to back his middle-class supporters, instead of his radical priests and the impoverished Mexican Americans of South Texas. Bishop Medeiros who had been critical of San Antonio archdiocesan involvement with Rio Grande Valley strikes was further antagonized with the arrest of the five San Antonio priests. Medeiros had already made constant demands to Lucey that Fr. Smith and Fr. Killian should be less outspoken and limit their functions to parochial duties.[104] Lucey in an attempt to placate conservatives within the Church on this occasion decided to send both Fr. Smith and Killian to a spiritual "retreat" in Via Coeli, Jerez, New Mexico, while he decided what to do in the long-term.[105] Ultimately, Fr. Smith lost his position as moderator for the Social Action Department as punishment for opposing Archbishop Lucey.[106] Nevertheless, Fr. Smith remained defiant; he and Fr. Killian announced that they would keep fighting for the cause.[107]

As might be imagined by contemporaries, various labor unions from the Rio Grande Valley and San Antonio, as well as many Mexican Americans were angered by Lucey's position, and labeled him as a betrayer of both Mexican Americans and of Fr. Smith and Fr. Killian.

---

[103]"Farm Union Seeks La Casita Boycott," February 5, 1967, Sherrill Smith Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio Archives, Box 1, Folder 8.
[104]"Robert E. Lucey to Rev. Sherrill Smith," February 7, 1967, Sherrill Smith Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio Archives, Box 1, Folder 8, February 7, 1967.
[105]"Lucey Called Betrayer for Punishing Priests," February 6, 1967, Sherrill Smith Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio Archives, Box 1, Folder 8.
[106]"Father Smith Sees off Valley Caravan." March 1967, Sherrill Smith Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio Archives, Box 1, Folder 8.
[107]M. Ruiz Ibanez, "Banished Priest's Pledge: We'll Be Back," 1967, Sherrill Smith Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio Archives, Box 1, Folder 8.

Members of the Valley Farm Workers Association Committee and IMAGE organized pickets lines in the chancery office and at Archbishop Lucey's home. Archbishop Lucey had conveniently left for Washington, D.C. for a conference. This left Fr. Henry Casso, Executive Secretary of the BCSS, to meet with the picketers. Fr. Casso tried to calm them by telling them he was on their side, as was Archbishop Lucey. Furthermore, he reminded them of all he had done for them including presenting a 15-page report at the President's Commission on Rural Poverty on the working and living conditions in the Rio Grande Valley.[108]

Even though Mexican Americans were thankful for the support received from the Archdiocese of San Antonio and its representatives, Fr. Casso's response was not deemed satisfactory. Here was the tone of paternalism that had existed in previous decades but appeared to have been subsiding with the radicalism of the 1960s. That paternalist ethos was not shared by Fr. Smith, which was one of the reasons why he was so well-liked by Mexican American farm workers. Fr. Smith although officially silenced for the time being, continued his vocal assaults on the established order, contending that "paternalism" was coming to an end because Mexican Americans would no longer accept it silently, since they knew their worth and were willing to fight for it.[109]

In a show of support for Fr. Smith, various Mexican American groups among them IMAGE and the Valley Farm Workers Assistance Committee set up the Father Sherrill Smith Fund, with all proceeds from that organization going toward aiding the still striking farm workers in the Rio Grande Valley. Moreover, Mexican Americans from the Rio Grande Valley,

[108]"Casso Against Pickets: Seeks to Stop Demonstration at Chancery," February 6, 1967, Sherrill Smith Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio Archives, Box 1, Folder 8.
[109]Sam Kindrick, "Fr. Smith Assails Gringos," February 1967, Sherrill Smith Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio Archives, Box 1, Folder 8.

especially Starr County, petitioned Archbishop Lucey to appoint Fr. Smith to their region.[110] However, Lucey paid little attention to this petition because he had no power to appoint priests outside of the Archdiocese of San Antonio.

Meanwhile, perceived Texas Ranger violence in the Rio Grande Valley, especially in Starr County was gaining more attention as the United Farm Workers Organizing Committee (UFWOC) brought charges against Ranger Captain A.Y. Allee, and Homer Garrison, director of the state Department of Public Safety.[111] UFWOC leaders argued that the Texas Rangers were being used by the large-scale melon growers in Starr County as their own private police force and that instead of keeping the peace, while serving and protecting the public, they were illegally breaking-up the farm workers' strikes.[112]

The UFWOC lawsuit against the Texas Rangers especially against Allee, Jack Von Cleve, T.H. Dawson and Jerome Preiss, contended that the Rangers were preventing strikers from exercising their right to picket. A major demand pushed by UFWOC attorneys was for the federal district court to "prevent law enforcement officers involved in the Rio Grande Valley labor-management dispute from interfering," with strikers.[113] While it is true that workers should have the right to petition their employers for better wages and working conditions, UFWOC demands were in some ways unrealistic for the time and doomed to fail. Without law enforcement, strikers could have become violent or prone to the destruction of private property, therefore, law enforcement officers were necessary they just needed to remain neutral.[114]

---

[110]Sylvia Springler, "Fund to Be Set Up in Honor of Fr. Smith," 1967, Sherrill Smith Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio Archives, Box 1, Folder 8.
[111]"Ranger Brutality Charges Echo in Valley," June 8, 1967, *Alamo Messenger* Collection, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, TX.
[112]Ibid.
[113]"UFWOC Files Suit," June 15, 1967, *Alamo Messenger* Collection, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, Texas.
[114]"Canon Defends Ranger Lawsuit," August 31, 1967, *Alamo Messenger* Collection, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, TX.

Even then the plaintiffs found support at least among some state senators including A.R. "Babe" Schwartz of Galveston. Schwartz traveled to the Rio Grande Valley to investigate the conditions of the strike and came to the conclusion that the Texas Rangers were not necessarily needed at that moment. In his report he did not agree with the UFWOC that the Rangers were violent or committed illegal acts, but did state that local officials should make all efforts to resolve their own problems before calling in "a state police force."[115] From a historical perspective it is likely that UFWOC complaints of Ranger violence had some truth to them, because of the long history of Ranger violence toward Mexican Americans, but not many mainstream organizations backed their claim in 1967.[116]

The accused Rangers had their day in court beginning in June 1968 and continuing through October of the same year when several Catholic priests and Protestant clergy testified on behalf of the UFWOC. The case was "heard by a panel of three judges" in Brownsville, TX.[117] One of the Protestant clergy testifying was Rev. Edgar Krueger of Pharr, TX. Krueger had worked in the Rio Grande Valley since the spring of 1967 as a representative of the Texas Council of Churches' Migrant Ministry. Fathers William Killian and Sherrill Smith were among the Catholic priests to join Rev. Krueger. They did not condemn the Rangers as a whole as violent but did petition the court to restrain the Rangers and Starr County law enforcement officers, thereby giving more freedom to striking farmworkers.[118]

---

[115]E.B. Duarte, "Senator Denies Rangers Needed in Valley," June 15, 1967, *Alamo Messenger* Collection, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, TX.
[116]Nicholas Villanueva Jr., *The Lynching of Mexicans in the Texas Borderlands (*Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2017), 137.
[117]"Huelga Trial to Resume October 22," October 18, 1968, *Alamo Messenger Collection,* Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, TX.
[118]E.B. Duarte, "Conspiracy Cited in Valley Huelga," June 14, 1968, *Alamo Messenger Collection,* Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, Texas.

In a turn of events that neither the UFWOC nor its attorneys predicted it was they who ended up on the defense in the aftermath of the unsuccessful lawsuit against several members of the Rangers. By late 1968, the farm workers' union was prohibited from all forms of picketing by court order. In January 1968 attorneys representing the union petitioned "for a re-hearing before the Texas Fourth Court of Appeals" to try and redress the earlier decision.[119]

In another blow to the farm workers' movement in the Rio Grande Valley, Rev. Edgar Kruger in early 1969 was fired by the Texas Council of Churches (TCC) for his perceived "radicalism."[120] Council members argued that Krueger had violated his ministerial position as a spiritual leader and social worker by becoming too heavily involved in the day-to-day operations of the strike. That involvement, in turn, led to he and his wife's arrest by the Texas Rangers on a number of occasions beginning in May of 1967. The Council of Churches at first backed his case by supporting the lawsuit against the Rangers initiated by the UFWOC and backed by the Archdiocese of San Antonio, but later retracted support. TCC leaders contended that the lawsuit was not going as expected and that they had agreed to a compromise with Ranger officials in which they promised that Ranger members would respect the civil rights of strikers. Kruger nonetheless announced that he and his wife would stay in the Valley and help the farm workers' movement in any manner they could, while acknowledging that the TCC's strategy was "a shift from confrontation to reconciliation" vis-a-vi their support of field laborers.[121]

In the aftermath of Kruger's dismissal, the Texas Council of Churches attempted to make amends with the farm workers' movement in the Valley by developing and training leadership

[119]"Appeal in Huelga," January 20, 1969, *Alamo Messenger* Collection, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, TX.
[120]E.B. Duarte, "Fired Minister to Stay with Poor in Valley," February 7, 1969, *Alamo Messenger* Collection, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, TX.
[121]Ibid.

from among the workers themselves.[122] As expected there were some workers who took the offer to become leaders, but many veterans of the movement nonetheless felt betrayed by the TCC. Furthermore, the TCC, which included the Archdiocese of San Antonio among other Catholic regions in Texas "voted a message of appreciation to Archbishop Lucey," after the announcement of his pending retirement as ordinary of the archdiocese.[123]

Prospects seemed grim for the farm workers' movement, nonetheless, good results did eventually come from the strikes, pickets, marches, and rallies. Three major food-chains including Handy-Mandy, as well as 106 independent grocers agreed to stop selling La Casita Farms produce until the Valley farm workers' strike was settled.[124] At roughly the same time, Bishop Medeiros of the Diocese of Brownsville changed his views. By the middle of 1967 he began to support farm workers' demands for higher wages.[125] However, attempts to gather state-wide support for that cause, as in the preceding year, failed miserably. For example, the farm workers' movement attempted to replicate the 1966 Labor Day rally at the state capitol, but instead of attracting thousands of participants, they only were able to gather only an estimated 250 people.[126]

Despite numerous failures along the way, "large scale farms in the Rio Grande Valley area" appeared to be moving closer to paying field hands $1.00 an hour by 1967.[127] Even then opposition to higher wages for farm workers came from many directions. Professional educated

[122]"TCC to Listen to Poor," June 20, 1969, *Alamo Messenger* Collection, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, TX.
[123]Ibid.
[124]"3 Food Chains to Step Selling La Casita Produce," February 10, 1967, Sherrill Smith Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio Archives, Box 1, Folder 8.
[125]"Bishop: Meet Wage Demands," April 20, 1967, *Alamo Messenger* Collection, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, TX.
[126]Jon Ford, "Turnout in Austin only 250," September 5, 1967, Sherrill Smith Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio Archives, Box 1, Folder 8.
[127]E.B. Duarte, "Minimum Wage Struck at Farms," January 19, 1967, *Alamo Messenger* Collection, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, TX.

workers such as nurses felt the need to differentiate themselves from the uneducated workforce, leading to their call for higher wages. Further, organizations such as the Texas Farm Bureau still made efforts to prevent an increase in farm wages. For example, Bill Wedemeyer, director of research and education of the Texas Farm Bureau, said "workers should not be paid more than he is worth," which is not necessarily wrong, but higher wages or incentives can encourage people to work harder, meaning wage increases may have led to a worker being "worth" more.[128]

As 1967 turned into 1968 the Rio Grande Valley strike in Starr County was still going on, but fewer people were interested in it. Nevertheless, this particular strike had become the most widely known labor-management dispute in the American Southwest, leading strikers to believe that they could still attain at a minimum a partial victory.[129] Contradicting mainstream publications such as the *San Antonio Express News*, archdiocesan publications echoed the voice of Gilbert Padilla, the leader of the UFWOC in Texas, stating that the strike was not dead, but had just hit a bump in the road.[130]

Meanwhile voices in the Church continued to lobby government officials at both state and federal levels to aid the farm workers' movement and Mexican Americans ingeneral. Among those Catholic organizations active in providing political, economic, and spiritual support to farm workers were the National Rural Life Conference and the National Council of Churches, the latter of which included members other than Catholic clergy and laity.[131] The main effort of the aforementioned organizations, now joined by Jewish agencies as well, was to

[128]Ibid.
[129]E.B. Duarte, "Huelguistas Still Hopeful," January 12, 1968, *Alamo Messenger* Collection, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, TX.
[130]Ibid.
[131]Msgr. George Higgins, "Farm Bureau Wastes Time," January 12, 1968, *Alamo Messenger* Collection, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, TX.

petition Congress for the passage of legislation that would add farm workers to the National Labor Relations Act.[132]

Roughly at the same time that Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish organizations were lobbying Congress, Cesar Chavez and his California-based UFWOC, alongside the AFL-CIO reaffirmed their continued commitment to the Rio Grande Valley branch of the UFWOC. Carlos Truan of Corpus Christi, Texas was appointed chairman of a meeting that discussed ideas about how to proceed despite apparently overwhelming odds faced by Valley farm workers. At the meeting Truan acknowledged that little success had been found in the Valley strike in the almost two years it had been going on, however, both organizations looked forward to future victories.[133]

The Mexican American farm labor movement in South Texas by mid-1968 was being drowned in a sea of forgetfulness as Chavez pushed a huelga and boycott of California grape growers. Like in the Rio Grande Valley, a significant reason why the movement in California faced problems was the recruitment of Mexican illegal immigrants to work in the place of Mexican American workers. The respective causes of Mexican Americans and Mexican nationals were not the same. Mexican Americans felt that as American citizens they should have more rights, including higher wages for field hands, and Mexican nationals were viewed as a roadblock to their advancement of the former group.[134]

While still part of the Mexican American Civil Rights Movement, but not the working-class movement, as Mexican Americans became more educated as the post-World War II era

---

[132]Msgr. George Higgins, "Yardstick: Apology Due," September 20, 1968, *Alamo Messenger* Collection, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, TX.
[133]E.B. Duarte, "Chavez: Huelga Going On," January 19, 1968, *Alamo Messenger* Collection, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, TX.
[134]"Chavez Pushes California Huelga," May 24, 1968, *Alamo Messenger* Collection, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, TX.

progressed they started to increase demands for equal employment opportunities in government jobs, both at the national and state levels. In this particular sub-section of the larger civil rights movement, the Archdiocese of San Antonio only played a secondary role to LULAC and the American G.I. Forum; nevertheless, they were still active, at least as co-sponsors of events. For example, Dr. George L. Sanchez, a professor of history at the University of Texas at Austin chaired a committee sponsored by Gov. John Connelly, the Archdiocese of San Antonio and LULAC, in which Albert Pena and Joseph Kennard represented the archdiocese. The committee's goal was to help make it easier for young and up-and-coming educated Mexican Americans to seek jobs in various state departments and agencies.[135]

Definite advances were being made by Mexican Americans in both education and the workforce by the late 1960s; however, the majority of them still lived in impoverished and *de facto* segregated communities. Many of those communities lacked, among other things healthcare. The lack of adequate healthcare for Mexican Americans and other impoverished sectors of society, led the Archdiocese of San Antonio to back the hospital referendum of January 14, 1967. The referendum was to increase property taxes, especially in more affluent areas of the city, in order to increase funding for public hospitals. However, the citizenry of San Antonio voted against it, even though the Catholic Church and local mainline Protestant Churches supported the referendum.[136]

Two primary victims of the defeated hospital referendum were the Robert B. Green Hospital and the proposed South Texas Medical School Teaching Hospital, both in San Antonio. However, both institutions found support from The Congregation of Sisters of Charity of the

[135]"Latins Eye State Jobs," January 19, 1967, *Alamo Messenger* Collection, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, TX.
[136]"Isolated Poor," January 26, 1967, *Alamo Messenger* Collection, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, TX.

Incarnate Word, the operators of the Santa Rosa Health System, who, doing their perceived duty as good Catholics, set-out to evaluate their capacity to operate either of the aforementioned public institutions.[137]

Ultimately, it is not known whether the Santa Rosa Health System would have been able to maintain either institution, because the state government, with the House of Representatives taking the lead, enacted a bill to raise money for the operation of Bexar's County public health care system. The bill was designed to save both the San Antonio institutions, as well as raise money for the University of Texas Medical School, which was more popular with both voters and members of the state legislature. By combining the funding of the UT Medical School and public health, it was much easier to get it through the state Congress than it would have been otherwise.[138]

With the issue of public health in San Antonio resolved, the Archdiocese of San Antonio and other Catholic organizations in the region were able to focus on other pressing problems. A Catholic funded orphanage, St. Peter's and St. Joseph's, was by 1967 in dilapidated condition making it necessary for extensive renovations or the construction of new buildings. The original St. Peter and St. Joseph's had been built in 1913 but its history dated back to 1874 "when the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word established San Antonio's first child-care center."[139] In that long history Mother M. Raymond, superintendent of the orphanage estimated that more than 10,000 boys and girls had passed through the doors of the orphanage, and an increase in size was needed. In April 1967 the Archdiocese alongside the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word

[137]"Santa Rosa Begins Study on Bexar County Hospital Problem," February 2, 1967, *Alamo Messenger* Collection, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, TX.
[138]"Tax Bill May be Okayed," March 9, 1967, *Alamo Messenger* Collection, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, TX.
[139]"New Home for Youths," April 6, 1967, *Alamo Messenger* Collection, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, TX.

approved the construction of a 10-building complex to house at any one time at least 200 boys and girls.[140] For their efforts in the realm of health care and education, the Sisters received praise from various local organizations and events including special ceremonies led by Archbishop Lucey to celebrate the centennial of the founding of their order.[141]

The impoverished conditions of Mexican Americans were not only a Texas issue, but a nationwide one. The Archdiocese of San Antonio reported that in rural farming communities in California, including in places like Castroville, racism was as rampant as it was in Texas and Mississippi.[142] Through the *Alamo Messenger,* archdiocesan spokesmen contended that in many ways, discrimination was stronger in some parts of California than in Texas. San Antonio businessmen by the late 1960s may have still held the same anti-Mexican attitudes as they had previously, nevertheless, their connections to the Catholic Church and mainline Protestant denominations softened their views toward Mexican Americans. In places like Castroville, California, on the other hand, the business community according to some sources was one of the most vehement sources of injustice toward Mexican Americans, with blame placed not only on the businessmen, but on Church leaders as well.[143]

Unlike religious organizations in San Antonio, the various churches in Castroville and other rural and mid-size cities in California did not support Mexican American advancement and integration. The Protestant Churches in the area refused to accept Mexican Americans, while the Catholic Church mostly held separate masses for Anglos and Mexican Americans. Meanwhile, churches in San Antonio and Oklahoma City by this point had become accepting of Mexican

---

[140]Ibid.
[141]"Incarnate Word Sisters Praised for Serving Poor," August 8, 1969, *Alamo Messenger* Collection*,* Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, TX.
[142]"Mexican-Americans – It's a Second-Class Existence," February 2, 1967, *Alamo Messenger* Collection, Louis J. Blume Collection, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, Texas.
[143]Ibid.

Americans at English-language masses. Although most Mexican-Americans still attended Spanish-language masses and Anglo-Americans their separate English masses, there was no archdiocesan policy preventing them from joining together.[144] By this point the simple acceptance of Mexican-origin people into all English masses was likely not inspired by Catholic theology, but because de jure segregation had by this point been struck down by the U.S. Supreme Court and federal legislation. However, segregation persisted in rural farming communities throughout the nation.

Local San Antonio businessmen took heart at the good publicity that the Archdiocese of San Antonio provided on their behalf and continued their efforts toward including Mexican Americans among their employees. Additionally, bad publicity from the U.S. Department of Labor regarding poverty in San Antonio, might have encouraged San Antonio businessmen to become "frontline combatants in the poverty war" by 1968. [145] The federal report contended that up to fifty percent of the city's poor were unable to earn a decent living. Other bad publicity also came from secular news outlets in which the author David Shute placed San Antonio among the leaders in poverty in the United States. Shute contrasted the decline in poverty in San Antonio with other large cities across the country, and concluded that it was below the national average.[146] Archdiocesan officials and businessmen did not particularly like or accepted the report and set out through the Economic Opportunities Development Corporation to concentrate on increasing wages and providing work training using both local and federal funding.

[144]Ibid.
[145]Marty Harrison, "Businessmen Take Lead in Poverty War," May 24, 1968, *Alamo Messenger* Collection, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio TX.
[146]David Shute, "San Antonio Leads U.S. – in Poverty," February 21, 1969, *Alamo Messenger* Collection, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, TX.

Funding and volunteers to help train Mexican Americans in the San Antonio area, especially the unemployed or underemployed youth, also came from other Catholic dioceses and archdioceses throughout the nation. The Catholic Extension Society, that originated from Bishop Francis Kelley of Oklahoma City in the 1920s, was a major provider of funding and trained volunteers who made their way to San Antonio in 1968 and 1969. Cheryl Kane who was trained by the Extension Society at the University of Chicago was among the volunteers who in 1968 made San Antonio their home.[147]

Kane and other Extension Society volunteers not only assisted in archdiocesan workforce training programs, but also assisted the Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul who operated El Carmen Clinic.[148] The primary goal of their involvement was to eventually open a new clinic on land that the Archdiocese of San Antonio had donated to the Daughters of Charity. Funding for the clinic would come from the Archdiocese of San Antonio, donations, grants, and through the sale of items donated to the St. Vincent De Paul Society which was made-up of 450 Catholic laymen from around the archdiocese.[149]

As the Extension Society and Daughters of Charity made plans for their future clinic, other branches of the Church, primarily the Vincent De Paul Society of San Antonio, were busy with the construction and opening of another charity clinic which would serve the poor on the southwest side. The new facility was named the De Paul Family Clinic and Archbishop Lucey led its dedication on Sunday November 14, 1968. The objective of the new clinic was to serve as an "outpatient facility for underprivileged persons."[150] While supplies and building costs were

[147]"Archdiocese Aids Project: Volunteers Serve the Poor," September 13, 1968, *Alamo Messenger* Collection, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, TX.
[148]Ibid.
[149]David Shute, "Dedicated Society Helps Relieve Suffering of Poor," August 12, 1969, *Alamo Messenger* Collection, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, TX.
[150]"De Paul Clinic Will Serve Southwest Side," November 22, 1968, *Alamo Messenger* Collection, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, TX.

provided by the Archdiocese of San Antonio and donations through the St. Vincent de Paul Society, the medical services were provided by physician volunteers, in an era where doctors provided services to as many people as possible, even those that could not afford to pay. The nursing staff at the De Paul Family Clinic was provided by religious sisters, like Sister Mary Loretto, and the three doctors and one dentist were Catholic laymen.[151]

Sponsored by various Catholic organizations including the aforementioned Extension Society and Daughters of Charity, the new eastside clinic opened its doors in February 1969. The construction of the clinic was aided by the increase in the number of funding organizations. The Holy Redeemer Community, the Sisters of Mercy of the St. Louis Province, and the Archdiocese itself added to the total contributions that had been accumulated through the former institutions. The services that the new clinic provided to low-income people on the east side included free or low-cost X-Rays, diagnostic services, blood analysis, and pharmacy services.[152]

The San Antonio Neighborhood Youth Organization (SANYO) was another institution working closely with the Archdiocese of San Antonio and the Catholic Extension Society in providing workforce training for Mexican American youths. For example, when San Antonio ISD school officials rejected an offer to sponsor an afterschool work program, because the $1.25 an hour wage for staff seemed high to them, SANYO in conjunction with the Archdioceseagreed to take the program on.[153] The funding of the program came from both donations made by Catholic laity and federal grants, which contributed a larger percentage of the funding. Programs like San Antonio Youth Corps had been successful in other large cities across the country, such

[151]Ibid.
[152]David Shute, "Clinic Fulfills East Side Need," October 17, 1969, *Alamo Messenger* Collection, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, TX.
[153]"Source of Hope," September 20, 1968, *Alamo Messenger* Collection, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, TX.

as New York City because through these types of organizations underprivileged youths found part-time work and were encouraged to stay in school.[154]

An afterschool tutoring program was also developed in which individual students were placed directly at the center of the initiative. While the program was funded by both donations and federal grants, but Project Reach, as it was labeled, was spearheaded by Catholic organizations. The Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word and Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus were the main providers of tutorial services to low-income students. Programs such as the Youth Corps and after-school tutorial programs increased high-school retention and graduation rates among Mexican American students.[155]

Higher graduation rates were not the only benefit of greater educational opportunities for Mexican American youth. The youth themselves, thereafter, started lobbying the Sisters, SANYO, and the Archdiocese of San Antonio to set-up programs in which they could be the volunteers. The goal was not only to provide volunteer services in bettering the inner-city through their "Helping Hands' initiative, run by Pedro (Pete) Lozano, but also to break the stereotype that many middle-and upper-class residents of San Antonio held about Mexican American youth. Long-held stereotypes included that youth from Mexican American neighborhoods, particularly from the Alazan-Apache courts, were violent and crime oriented; these stereotypes were held by both Anglo Americans and Mexican Americans who resided in middle-class sections of the city.[156]

---

[154]Ibid.
[155]"Project Reach," July 25, 1969, *Alamo Messenger* Collection, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, TX.
[156]"Helping Hands Help Poor to Help Themselves," August 8, 1969, *Alamo Messenger* Collection, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, TX.

When analyzing the big picture, the 1960s labor movement was in many ways successful, not only in Texas but in California as well. However, when we examine the Archdiocese of San Antonio, we come to see a quite sudden transition of that archdiocese toward the labor struggle both of urban workers in San Antonio and farm workers in the Rio Grande Valley, followed by an even more sudden retreat. For a brief period, the Archdiocese under Robert E. Lucey was an outspoken supporter and organizer of events leading to the breakdown of discrimination in employment, Project Equality, and for demands for higher minimum wages. Conservative and reactionary opponents were never far from the surface, and as things became more heated, especially with Fr. Smith's outspokenness, they started placing pressure on Lucey to silence the radicals within the archdiocesan ranks.

This retreat toward conservatism began in late 1967 but gained speed as the decade draw to a close and into the early 1970s. Without a Fr. Sherrill Smith, there would have been no transition within the Archdiocese of San Antonio. Fr. Smith was an exceptional local Church leader and warrants a bigger place in the history of America's social justice struggles and in the history of the Catholic Church. After 1967, he remained involved with the movement and he will emerge later in this study. However, after losing his position with the Social Action Department within the Archbishop's main office at the chancery, his influenced waned. Fr. Smith would also become involved starting in 1968 with the "renegade priests" group of which he was a member, and his influence would grow again during that time.[157]

By the end of 1968, the schism between Archbishop Lucey and radical clergy like Fr. Smith and Fr. Killian was too wide to be bridged. Smith and Killian were in fact joined by

[157]"Dissident Priests Severely Criticized," November 1, 1968, *Alamo Messenger* Collection, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, TX.

another 49 priests from around the archdiocese in calling for Lucey's resignation as prelate.[158] The Catholic laity in the San Antonio Archdiocese were deeply divided between their loyalties to Lucey and the radical priest. However, those divisions had a clear class dimension; those in the middle-and-upper classes continued supporting the archbishop, while those in the lower-class and working-class preferred the likes of Fr's Smith and Killian.[159] Ultimately, those divisions did not halt the radical priests and they called on Pope Paul VI to retire Lucey.

As divisions within the Catholic leadership and clergy were causing problems for the farm workers' and working-class movement within the Archdiocese of San Antonio, and other regions where it was active, Mexican American clergy founded, in October 1969, a nationwide organization which they labeled *Priests Associated for Religious Education, and Social Rights* (PADRES). PADRES was founded by Mexican American priests from "seven states and the District of Columbia," who considered themselves a Chicana/o organization, thereby radicalizing at least a segment of the Catholic Church in America. The formation of this organization signaled a further move away from the "radical" leadership of the Archdiocese of San Antonio, and into the hands of Mexican American clergy themselves. Even while Mexican American clergy acknowledged the great accomplishments of Lucey, Smith, and others, they contended that the era of paternalism was coming to an end, and the "Spanish-speaking in the United States" had to struggle side-by-side, and not behind anyone in their fight for social, economic, and educational goals.[160]

American society in general had radicalized in the struggle or counter-struggle for Mexican American and African American civil rights, but that radicalization reached new

[158]Ibid.
[159]Ibid.
[160]"Mexican-American Priests Organize," October 24, 1968, *Alamo Messenger* Collection, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, TX.

heights among the former group in the early 1970s. The Chicana/o era movement became known nationwide in 1970 when a "revolt" occurred in a rural, seemingly unimportant, South Texas town named Crystal City, located in Zavala County. The revolt was twofold: first, the Raza Unida Party challenged the dominant political system, and second, students led a walkout that challenged the discriminatory funding practices between Anglo American and Mexican American students. The Crystal City walkout was not the first walkout; several including the Edcouch – Elsa Walkout of 1968 had occurred before. Even though the Chicana/o era marks a turning point in Mexican American/Catholic relationship to one of less paternalism, the need for Church involvement remained as we will see in the following chapter. Additionally, the continuing immigration from Mexico promoted Church involvement on behalf of Mexican-origin people.[161]

The differences between the Archdiocese of San Antonio and the Diocese of Brownsville highlight the contrast between the Church of old and the new modern social justice Church. The Diocese of Brownsville did not move forward with labor and social justice activism during most of the 1960s. The Rio Grande Valley, which geographically lies outside of the San Antonio Archdiocese, became important because of the activism of San Antonio's clergy in the area. Bearing that in mind, we see that some Catholic clergy seem to actively believe that the Catholic Church is truly a universal Church, while other clergy felt the need to remain confined to prescribed boundaries.

The next chapter in this story will analyze the growth of Mexican American self-determination both within the Church and outside of it. The Archdiocese of San Antonio, long a hotbed for favorable change toward Mexican Americans, would lose its leadership position in the

[161]"Churches Seeking to Mediate Crystal City Dispute," January 2, 1970, *Alamo Messenger* Collection, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, TX.

civil rights movement during the 1970s, in the wake of Archbishop Lucey's retirement in 1969. With the founding of groups like PADRES and political parties like the Raza Unida Party, the Chicana/o movement flourished across the American Southwest and brought a new sense of ethnic pride.

Even though the Archdiocese of San Antonio lost its leadership position vis-a-vis Mexican American civil rights, it remained highly active over the next several decades. Additionally, nationwide the Church remained committed to social, economic, and political rights for all working-class segments of society, and it also remained a home away from home for hundreds of thousands of Mexican immigrants moving across the border. The following chapter covers approximately the dates between 1969 when Archbishop Lucey retired and 1980, the year Ronald Regan was elected to the presidency. While the focus of the study remains at the local level, during these years we see how national Catholic and government policies were placed into effect at the local level. Further, we see how the Chicana/o movement interacted with the Church, especially in San Antonio.[162]

[162]"Human Development," February 27, 1970, *Alamo Messenger* Collection, Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, TX.

Chapter 6: Transformation and Continuity: Oklahoma City and San Antonio, 1970-1980

While the 1960s was a decade of reform and radicalism, the 1970s and 1980s marked a rebirth of conservatism in American politics and society. Nevertheless, the Catholic Church in the United States throughout the period from 1969-1980 remained committed to the improvement of life and educational opportunities for all working-class members of American society, with a particular focus on minorities, as had been the case in the 1960s. The Church's primary focus regarding civil and labor rights throughout the period remained Mexican Americans, because of the large concentration of Roman Catholic Mexican Americans and Mexican-origin people, as compared to other racial minorities such as African Americans, most of whom were members of various Protestant denominations.[1]

The 1970s brought to the forefront a new movement within the Mexican American community: The Chicano/a movement, and the subsequent development of the Raza Unida Party. Young Mexican Americans in this decade started referring to themselves as Chicanos/as, and started self-identifying as brown, instead of their census classification as white. A new cultural pride became the norm in the young Chicano generation. That is not to say, that older members of the Mexican American generation who came of age between the founding of the League of Latin American Citizens (LULAC) in 1929 and the aftermath of World War II, when Hector P. Garcia founded the American G.I. Forum in 1948, did not have cultural pride.

An identifiable difference in the worldview of the two groups was that members of the Mexican American generation wanted change through American institutions including the court system, the Constitution, and the educational system, which they fought and succeeded in integrating through court victories. Among the most notable victories was the *Hernandez v.*

[1]Spanish Surnamed Catholics Appeal to Church for Equal Rights," *Latin Times,* September 10, 1970, http://phw02.newsbank.com/cache/ean/fullsize/pl_00262015_1734_36217_64.pdf.

Texas case (1954) in which the Supreme Court guaranteed that the Fourteenth Amendment was applicable to Mexican Americans. Furthermore, the middle-class members of the Mexican American generation sought inclusion in American society, they were proud of being American, Mexican, and Catholic at the same time. There was no contradiction in being both Mexican and American in their minds. Chicanos, on the other hand, were, in their own view, less proud to be American on account of their conclusion that American society systematically discriminated against them and keep them in a state of poverty.

Even though many Mexican Americans from all generations in the twentieth century faced harsh discrimination, and lived in poverty, it was the American system that offered them the opportunity to freely make their misfortunes known and demand change. The Catholic Church, at least in regard to Mexican Americans, was largely controlled by the middle-class which meant that the Church as a whole had a middle-class mentality akin to that of LULAC and the American G.I. Forum, not that of the Chicano movement. Nevertheless, as explained in the previous chapter, the Church took a different approach than either the Mexican American or Chicano generation of activists.

The Church in the view of its leadership including Archbishop Francis J. Furey, and his counterparts in Oklahoma City, such as Bishop Francis Kelly, and his successors Eugene J. McGuinness and Victor Reed, was *the* Church, and needed to avoid taking sides as much as possible. However, the conflicts between radicals and reformists within the Mexican American community caused the Church anxiety on a number of occasions. For example, Fr. Sherrill Smith, was by Catholic standards a radical who played an important role in the retirement of Archbishop Lucey, because the latter was too reformist in Smith's view. Additionally, as

demands made by Chicanos increased throughout the 1970s, Chicanos started claiming that the Church was not doing nearly enough to aid the Mexican American community.[2]

Lay leadership in the San Antonio Archdiocese was middle-class throughout the 1960s, nonetheless, clergy leaders found their niche in the civil rights arena in the labor struggles affecting the Archdiocese and those of the neighboring Archdiocese of Houston-Galveston, with a particular focus on the Diocese of Brownsville in the area known as the Rio Grande Valley. All struggles subsided as they become less popular, and the labor struggles of the Rio Grande Valley were no different in this regard. Even though the labor struggles had not subsided in the 1970s, the pages of the *Alamo Messenger,* and its successor publication *Today's Catholic*, covered them less as the decade progressed. While these developments played out in the Archdiocese of San Antonio, the Mexican American population of Oklahoma City was slowly expanding.

The Church in Oklahoma had long been friendly toward the small Mexican American community, which was primarily concentrated in the Oklahoma City metro area. There, under the leadership of Bishop Francis C. Kelly in the 1920s, Carmelite priests, refugees from the Mexican Revolution, founded the Church of the Little Flower. The Church of the Little Flower became more than a spiritual center, as within its walls and vicinity the Catholic Church established a school, a health clinic, and recreation center for Mexican Americans. Even though it is safe to say most Anglo Americans in Oklahoma might have had negative views of the new Mexican-origin residents it was largely the Anglos' donations that made the Church of the Little Flower possible.

The Catholic Church in Oklahoma had always had a positive relationship with Mexican-origin people, though many viewed that relationship as paternalist. That relationship would

[2]Ruben Salazar, "Chicano vs. Traditionalists" (March 1970), Bishop Francis C. Kelley Archival Collection, Archdiocese of Oklahoma City.

become strained in the 1970s as a result of the Chicano generation activists including priest members of PADRES (Padres Asociados para Derechos Religiosos, Educativos, y Socialess). The PADRES organization was founded in 1969 as a nationwide organization of Spanish-surnamed priests, which only allowed Mexican American priests to be members; Anglos, however, were welcomed as associates. While PADRES itself was open only to priests, the wider purpose was to attract the support of the Mexican American laity in its demands for a greater voice in the Church structure.[3]

The geographical focus of this chapter is on both the Archdiocese of San Antonio and the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City. Focusing on two distinct areas, the study shows how Church leadership continued aiding the Mexican American community, and how Mexican American demands for change led to change within the Church in those areas. Furthermore, a shift in the Mexican-origin community occurred during the 1970s. Farm workers, labor struggles, and social justice remained important to the Church, but the rise of undocumented immigration moved to the forefront. While the Mexican American Civil Rights movement went through many changes, the only constant in the lives of working-class Mexican Americans, and eventually Mexican nationals, was the Church. Church leaders in the region, as well as nationally, sought to stay above the competing worldview of Chicanos versus the older Mexican American generation. Moreover, Church efforts, albeit more cautious, were in the long-term more beneficial to the Mexican American community than the loud demands made by Chicano activists in this decade. However, this does not imply that Chicanos did not play a key role in uplifting their community; just that Church efforts were in the long run more significant vis-a-vis their positive impact on working-class Mexican Americans.

[3]"Recognition for Chicanos Asked," IDEAL, March 1, 1970, http://phw01.newsbank.com/cache/fullsize/pl_002262015_1719_29725_672.pdf.

By 1968, the Catholic Church nationwide was aware that it had taken for granted Mexicans and Mexican Americans for a long-time with regard to their position within the Church structure. Chicanos contended that the Catholic Church, ruled as it was by Irish-Americans and Italian-Americans, was "among the numerous white organizations that is relegating them to a secondary position of servitude."[4] While Chicano-era radicals condemned the Church for its paternalist policies and middle-class worldview toward Mexican Americans, that criticism was largely unfounded.[5] It is true that the Church had a paternalist policy toward the aforementioned ethnic group; nevertheless, it is important to note that the Church had a paternalist view of the Irish Americans and Italian Americans as well.

Furthermore, earlier generations of Mexican Americans or Mexican immigrants did not have a voice within the American political framework; therefore, the Church was their voice and source of refuge. For example, Mexican-origin people in the Oklahoma City region were never large in number throughout most of the twentieth century, meaning their voices and concerns might have gone unheard by mainstream Anglo society. The Catholic Church made sure that Mexican-origin people were heard and provided for. Yes, the aid provided by the Church was in many ways charity and predicated in part on the notion that Mexican-origin people could not take care of themselves, however, when the first Mexican-origin people arrived in Oklahoma City, it is not likely they cared if it was charity, since they needed the assistance.[6]

By 1970, Mexican Americans had greater access to schools across the nation, which made some of them, especially Chicanos, more self-confident and more critical of what they

[4] "The Catholic Church and La Raza," (1967), Bishop Francis C. Kelly Archival Collection, Archdiocese of Oklahoma City.
[5]"Church Fails Hispanics," (1971), Bishop Francis C. Kelly Archival Collection, Archdiocese of Oklahoma City.
[6]Jaime Fonseca, "U.S. Hispanics Demand More Voice in Church," *Sooner Catholic,* September 4, 1977, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma Historical Society – Research Division, Reel XVI-942-MMM-239-909.

perceived to be conservative institutions. In the Chicano view, conservative institutions needed to be radically changed. However, not all Mexican-origin people had the same access to education, which meant that Church efforts, alongside those of LULAC and the American G.I. Forum, were not completely successful; but for those working-class Mexican-origin people the Church remained a constant source of spiritual, moral, and social support in their continuing struggle for labor rights.[7] Labor leaders including Cesar Chavez were aware that farm workers always got shorted in their demands for better wages and working conditions, therefore he and other leaders who predated Chicano activists constantly thanked the Church, whether at the local level in Delano, or the National Catholic Conference of Bishops (NCCB) for uniting with the poor.[8]

Additionally, Church leaders were aware of discrimination within its own ranks, whether among the clergy or the laity, and were making efforts to eradicate it. Anglo society in general held discriminatory views toward non-whites, not only Catholics; but within the Church structure, bishops argued that Christ, if he were present in the world, would not tolerate racists or bigots. Christ would provide them the opportunity to change their views but would caste them aside if they did not fully embrace Mexican Americans or other minority groups. It is not clear if these types of sermons had much of an effect, because of declining spiritually in American society; nevertheless, according to the NCCB, it was clear that discrimination and segregation in Catholic parishes begin to decline significantly by the late 1960s.[9]

[7]Cesar E. Chavez, "The Mexican-American and the Church," (1968), Bishop Francis C. Kelly Archival Collection, Archdiocese of Oklahoma City.
[8]Ibid.
[9]National Catholic Conference of Bishops (NCCB), "Statement on National Race Crisis," (1968), Bishop Francis C. C. Kelley Archival Collection, Archdiocese of Oklahoma City.

Among the many efforts made by the Church leaders to fully integrate Mexican Americans as equals within the Church structure was the establishment of a Mexican American Affairs Commission, founded in 1970 within the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the Archdiocese of San Antonio. While the goal was integration, it was based on more than archdiocesan or national Church ideals; it was grounded in the new teachings of the Second Vatican Council, as made known locally by Archbishop Francis J. Furey.[10] The Second Vatican Council had profound effects on all aspects of Catholic life, spiritually, and with regard to social worldview, including allowing daily masses to be conducted in the native language of a particular country, instead of the traditional Latin. Furthermore, Vatican II gave impetus to social movements in the developing world, including Latin America, where teachings of this council become intertwined with local ideologies to form Liberation Theology, which emphasized social uplift and political liberation for the poor and oppressed.

In addition, to Liberation Theology and Second Vatican Council influences brought to bear on the American Catholic Church, another important concept brought from Latin America were the Ecclesiastical Base Communities, known in Spanish as "Communidad Eclesial de Base." The Ecclesiastical Base Community was an attempt by Latin American clergy, particularly in South America, to form communities of believers in which Catholic worldviews were allowed to become the primary governmental structure. As originally established it was the clergy, many of whom espoused Liberation Theology, that formed the leadership cadre, however, the goal was to train the impoverished laity to become leaders in their communities,

[10]Archbishop Francis J. Furey, "Catholic Church Establishes Mexican-American Affairs Commission," (1970), Bishop Francis C. Kelley Archival Collection, Archdiocese of Oklahoma City.

meaning that while the Church would always keep positions of power within the community, the people themselves were making decisions that affected themselves and their families.[11]

In the United States especially in areas of high Hispanic populations density, the Catholic Church attempted to establish something akin to the Ecclesiastical Communities. The Archdiocese of San Antonio, for example, under the leadership of Archbishop Francis J. Furey in partnership with the Commission for Mexican American Affairs, established training courses taking their cue from the theories being implemented in South America. Fr. Edmundo Rodriguez of Guadalupe Parish described the initial program as one designed to give people a voice in the community. Furthermore, Rodriguez, and Joseph Bernal, director of the Commission of Mexican American Affairs, acknowledged that the program was developed along the lines of those already active in Latin America, but was also heavily adapted to the conditions in the United States, which allowed more freedom of action.[12]

Developing and administering training programs to make Christian leaders of previously uneducated individuals was expensive, therefore, the Commission for Mexican American Affairs, in addition to seeking funding from the Archdiocese of San Antonio, also sought funding from the Catholic Extension Society, a request backed by Archbishop Francis J. Furey in a letter in early 1973.[13] The Catholic Extension Society, whose goal was to assist less affluent Catholic dioceses and archdioceses, agreed to fund a significant amount of the cost of initiating the Ecclesiastical Base Community leadership training course. [14]

[11]Archbishop Francis J. Furey, "Commission for Mexican-American Affairs Report," Robert E. Lucey Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio, January 10, 1972.
[12]Ibid.
[13]"Archbishop Francis J. Furey to Rev. Joseph A. Cusack, President: The Catholic Extension Society," Robert E. Lucey Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio, March 2, 1973.
[14]"Rev. Edward J. Slattery to Francis J. Furey," Robert E. Lucey Collection, Archdiocese of San Antonio, April 23, 1973.

The Second Vatican Council profoundly affected the Church in the United States. For example, among the changes in worldview adopted by the Catholic Church after the Second Vatican Council was the idea that the Church was not a "leader" guiding the world; instead, it was a part of the world moving right alongside the wider society. Nevertheless, the Church as the body of Christ had a higher calling than average institutions. The Church was God's gift to all; therefore, the upper-echelons of Catholic society should aid the poor worldwide, but not as a solely charitable endeavor, but because the poor are equal brothers and sisters in Christ. Considering these changes related to Vatican II allows for a greater understanding of why American Catholic leaders embraced the full integration of Mexican Americans into the Church.

It is true that Mexican Americans, both clergy and laity, started pursuing a greater say within the Church structure, as well as, in society itself, however, the American Catholic Church is a highly structured institution that might have not budged on demands from below, without coordination from those above. Additionally, the growth of the Mexican-origin population in the United States, especially the Southwest, made their increasing representation an overt necessity within the Church structure, even without Mexican American demands. By 1970, the Spanish-speaking population of the United States had reached 12 million, "over 90% of whom are [were] Catholic," which represented an estimated twenty-three percent of the total U.S. Catholic population Moreover, sixty-seven percent of all Catholics in the states of California, Arizona, Texas, New Mexico, and Colorado, were Spanish-speaking, with the bulk being of Mexican origin.[15]

Chicana/o demands, nonetheless, did accelerate the pace of social integration within the Church, thanks to the leadership of individuals such as Bishop Patrick Fernandez Flores, the first

[15]"Catolicos Por La Raza," (1970), Bishop Francis C. Kelly Archival Collection, Archdiocese of Oklahoma City.

Mexican-American to attain the rank of bishop.[16] Bishop Flores in his sermons and actions had long supported the farmworker's struggle for justice, as many in the Archdiocese of San Antonio had done previously, but now at the age of forty, he was not only supporting that cause, but had become a member of PADRES, where he actively argued for the Church to embrace cultural issues relevant to the Mexican American community.[17]

Bishop Flores preached the long-standing view of LULAC and the Mexican American Generation activists, in calling education "the key for tomorrow's happiness," because it ultimately brings greater self-awareness, a better and healthier lifestyle, and higher wages.[18] Bishop Flores was a keen observer of the reasons for the lack of Mexican American leadership in the Church, and was well aware that the lack of education in addition to discrimination prevented them from taking leadership roles. Education can lead to leadership opportunities in companies and in government. Therefore, the struggle for education launched decades earlier by LULAC and seconded by the American G.I. Forum and the Mexican American Youth Organization (MAYO) not only helped give Mexican-origin children greater educational and employment opportunities, but also secured a role within the Church.[19]

Nevertheless, Chicano generation activists sometimes placed too high a demand on the Catholic Church. While the Church, nationally and internationally, is a fairly wealthy institution, it could not provide everything to the community, even with large donations from wealthier members. Most Mexican Americans, from the farm worker movements in California and the Rio Grande Valley to the community of Mexican-origin people in Oklahoma City, knew and

[16]"Bishop Flores to Visit S. California. IDEAL, December 1, 1970, http://phw02.newsbank.com/cache/ean/fullsize/pl_002262015_1725_44337_778.pdf.
[17]Ibid.
[18]Bishop Flores Preaches Social Activism," IDEAL, December 15, 1970, http://phw01.newsbank.com/cache/ean/fullsize/pl_002262015_1727_32779_167.pdf.
[19]Ibid.

understood this. Radical members of Chicano organizations, like *Catolicos Por La Raza*, (Catholics for the Race), on the other hand, made unreasonable demands on the Church hierarchy. For example, members of the aforementioned group, alongside the Congress of Mexican-American unity called on the Church to stop charging fees for parochial schools at all levels, and that it is subsidized educational expenses for all Chicanos in need, which was not financially feasible.[20]

Catholic leaders in San Antonio and in Oklahoma City, as well as other parts of the country were willing to hear the demands made by Chicanos for a "radical" Church, but they knew that some of those demands were unrealistic. Furthermore, it is likely that members of older organizations like LULAC were not supportive of those demands. The fact was that Chicanos in this sense were making themselves the victims, which was true in a sense, because Mexican Americans had been discriminated against, and deserved a fair chance. However, they were demanding that everything be given to them free of charge. Moreover, those demands were not being made of the government, which is the only organization that can provide full-scale health care and education, but of the Church, which, however wealthy, has its limits. Overall, victimization in this case was overplayed, and did not help advance Mexican American educational or labor rights.

Additionally, Chicano activists appeared to forget that a large percentage, indeed a majority of Catholics in the United States were Anglo Americans, who the Church depended on for its financial support. Making unrealistic demands on the Church likely turned off many of these core financial contributors. Although it might have been paternalism that moved Anglo American Catholics to take an active role in funding charitable programs on behalf of Mexican

[20]"Chicanos Urge Radical Church." (1970), Bishop Francis R. Kelly Archival Collection, Archdiocese of Oklahoma City.

Americans, without their involvement the Church could have not supported labor and social welfare struggles whether in the Archdiocese of San Antonio or any other region.[21]

PADRES which by 1972 had grown to 83 full-member Mexican American priests and 200 associate priests nationwide was itself making highly obstructive demands directly to the Vatican City, therefore, bypassing the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). PADRES, which included the likes of Bishop Patrick Flores and Auxiliary Bishop Juan Arzube of Los Angeles called on Rome (the Holy See) to create a national Catholic Church for Mexican Americans in the United States that was only accountable to Rome.[22] LULAC and the American G.I. Forum with support from the Church had been struggling to get Mexican American integrated into mainstream American society for decades by the time that the PADRES demands were made. The new demands were a step backward because they were socially divisive. By having a national Chicano Church within the United States, there would have been a Catholic Church for that group, and then a Catholic Church for all other racial and ethnic groups in the country. As in the case of "free" education demanded by the Congress for Mexican American Unity, this demand was particularly problematic.

Demands made by Catholic adherents in locations like Milwaukee, Wisconsin, were more likely to slowly change the Church for the better than those of radical groups who had become frustrated with the slow pace of change. Spanish-surnamed Catholics in the aforementioned places did not demand free education, instead they called on Catholic universities and colleges to provide equal opportunity to the Spanish-speaking community.[23]

---

[21]"Charities Fund Dinner," *Today's Catholic* Collection, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, Texas February 15, 1974.
[22]"PADRES Seek Chicano Church," IDEAL, February 1, 1972, http://phw02.newsbank.com/cache/ean/fullsize/pl_002262015_1738_01407_658.pdf.
[23]"Spanish Surnamed Catholics Appeal to Church for Equal Rights," (1970), Bishop Francis R. Kelly Archival Collection, Archdiocese of Oklahoma City.

While the Mexican American civil and labor rights struggle was changing in the late 1960s and 1970s, some ideas from past decades remained the same. Education was always at the forefront for the middle-classes from San Antonio to Milwaukee.

While education remained among the most important issues facing Mexican Americans, even after significant court victories led by LULAC, the necessity to help the lower-classes survive the daily hardships of life was still evident. The Archdiocese of San Antonio always a leader promoting the labor and social welfare rights of those "forgotten" by LULAC and the American G.I. Forum continued lobbying legislators on behalf of the working-classes.[24] When 20,000 Texans on welfare rolls, including Mexican origin people were likely losing state eligibility, because of an increase in the size of Social Security checks, it was the Archdiocese of San Antonio who made it clear that those modest increases would not cover the loss of welfare benefits.[25] Archbishop Francis Furey (San Antonio) contended that while it made sense to cut the state's welfare benefits because of the increase in social security payments, entirely dropping recipients off the welfare rolls was unjust.[26]

Welfare reform and gutting benefits was not only a Texas issue, but a nationalone. President Jimmy Carter, after his election in 1976 called on Congress to enact welfare reform. However, welfare reform can take many directions, which depending on the organization or individual may be bad or good. Conservative Republicans and Democrats called for no more governmental spending on social programs, but that was the opposite direction to whatthe

[24]"Forgotten" is placed in parenthesis because LULAC and the American G.I. Forum did not necessarily forget lower-income and working-class Mexican-Americans. The point is to emphasize their efforts would not be evident in a day or two, or even a week; their efforts were longer-term, and in that time period, daily assistance toward the "forgotten" came from the Catholic Church, or government, but it was the Church who spoke for them in many instances.
[25]Bill Boykin, "Your State Capitol," *Today's Catholic* Collection, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, Texas, September 14, 1974.
[26]Ibid.

president envisioned. Even though Carter vaguely believed in the idea of non-deficit spending, his proposals by necessity required larger budgets. While evangelical Protestant groups alongside other conservative groups rejected Carter's plans, the National Conference of Catholic Charity made up of bishops and archbishops from across the country, together with mainline Protestants, took a different approach. Catholic Charities, for example, backed the idea of a government-guaranteed minimum income of $7,000 per year for a family of four.[27]

The idea behind welfare reform as proposed by President Carter was that welfare recipients had to work at public service jobs at a minimum wage, which the Church and other critics dubbed "workfare." Francis Butler, Associate Secretary for Domestic Social Development for the U.S. Catholic Conference and Mathew Ahman, Associate Director for Governmental Relations of the National Conference of Catholic Charities, both contended that "workfare" was wrong, especially since it would be managed by the states, and not by the federal government. They contended that many states where African Americans or Mexican-origin people were the primary beneficiaries of welfare payments would see new forms of discrimination and "humiliation" aimed at the latter two groups. Moreover, two other problems were evident at least to the USCCB. First, forcing people to work at public sector minimum wage jobs allowed little room for them to seek employment for higher wages, and second, a significant number of those who received Aid to Families with Dependent Children were single mothers, who if they worked would no longer be able to keep a watchful eye on their children.[28]

Economic equality was never far from the surface when looking at official Archdiocese of San Antonio publications. Even though *Today's Catholic*, the successor archdiocesan

[27]Jim Castelli, "A Closer Look at Welfare Reform," *Sooner Catholic.* July 24, 1977, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma Historical Society – Research Division, Reel XVI-942-MMM-239-909.
[28]"Workfare Blasted," *Sooner Catholic,* October 16, 1977, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma Historical Society – Research Division, Reel XVI-942-MMM-239-909.

newspaper to the Alamo Messenger, lessened its focus on labor struggles both within San Antonio and the Rio Grande Valley, it now focused on improving and expanding governmental programs. Poverty in the United States, Fr. Andrew Greely of San Antonio argued in 1972, was still overwhelming, especially considering the wealth of the country; the problem was that the wealth was highly concentrated, and that government aid programs were administered by the affluent.[29] Greely contended that favoritism to the wealthy was one of the most prevalent evils in American society, and that the Church needed to expand its efforts to promote a fair share to all members of society. By this point many federal agencies and programs had been implemented in the aftermath of Lyndon B. Johnson's Great Society programs, however, those programs needed to be perceived as uplifting, rather than perceived as charity funded by the wealthy. [30]

A major problem in recognizing the need to uplift impoverished Mexican American communities, as well as other groups in similar conditions, was that the poverty of America was largely hidden from the mainstream. The United States, was indeed, the wealthiest society the world had yet seen; which meant that those left-behind the prosperity of the nation were caged within their own neighborhoods, with little contact with the affluent society around them. The only contact they perhaps had was when they were employed as wage-laborers outside their own neighborhoods.[31] The informed American public was likely aware of LULAC, RUP, and the labor movements in California and the Rio Grande Valley, however, that was only a segment of the impoverished American population. The USCCB had as its goal to make mainstream America aware of the "suffering in the ghetto, in rural Appalachia, on barren Indian

[29]Fr. Andrew Greely, "Social, Economic Inequality," *Today's Catholic* Collection, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, Texas, October 13, 1972.
[30]Ibid.
[31]"Poverty Concealed from Most Americans," *Today's Catholic* Collection, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, Texas, November, 9, 1973.

Reservations," because only by seeing the face of poverty, especially of its youngest citizens, would the critique of government aid toward them be undermined.[32]

Bishop James Rausch, general secretary of the U.S. Catholic Conference contended that it was a Catholic duty to keep on fighting until all workers had the right to unionize, including those in the Rio Grande Valley and Delano, California. Additionally, Rausch argued that opponents of legislative efforts to reduce poverty across the country were strong, and that the Church should never abandon the struggle for social justice for all. According to Rausch there could be no faith in a Church that acts as most of mainstream America did, and ignores the poor.[33]

An important question that reformers and radicals within and outside the Church pondered was the matter of how to explain the extent of poverty in an affluent country. This question was an old one, which many Catholic leaders including *Pontiffs* had reflected on since Rerum Novarum was issued by Pope Leo XIII. In that particular papal encyclical and in subsequent ones which took their cue from Novarum, the answer was always the same: the economic system was the problem. Bearing that in mind, it is easy to see why Catholic leaders in the United States would blame the economic system as the causes of injustice in the country. Clergy in the United States were taught Catholic social doctrine which made them question the free-enterprise system, unlike many Protestant clergy who were trained in the ideology of Calvinist practice.[34]

---

[32]Ibid.
[33]Bishop James Rausch, "Replace Despair with Hope," *Today's Catholic* Collection, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, Texas, January 25, 1974.
[34]"Economic System Hit," *Today's Catholic* Collection, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, Texas, January 10, 1975.

Americans of all classes, especially those espousing religious affiliations based on Calvinist principles, were taught to look at the wealthy as successful and chosen by God therefore, for them the concentration of wealth in the hands of a few individuals was not viewed as wrong. The Catholic Church, on the other hand, while not abhorring wealth, did consider the fact that by 1975 the top 10 percent of Americans received more income than the bottom half of citizens a problem. This led to declarations by the USCCB to initiate localized efforts to eliminate as much as possible the economic injustices found in the United States. They based their arguments on studies made by organizations within the country, but ultimately, they could be traced back to various papal encyclicals which contended that it was working actively for the betterment of the condition of the workingman was the state's obligation.."[35]

Governmental aid programs, which were well-intentioned and did greatly alleviate poverty levels among Mexican Americans, African Americans, and White Americans who lived in poverty, did not eliminate the need for Catholic assistance to certain elements of the Mexican-origin community. There were many barriers that prevented some Mexican-origin people from receiving assistance from governmental programs. Language barriers, embarrassment, and lack of adequate funding for programs meant that some of the needy people in the community did not receive the support they needed.

Therefore, the Archdiocese of San Antonio, still under Archbishop Furey, led the formation of a six-member steering committee that would provide comprehensive aid for those bypassed by government initiatives.[36] The steering committee while made up of only 6 members, actually represented 15 Catholic dioceses in the South. The goal was not only to meet the needs

[35]Pope John XXIII, "Mater Et Magistra," May 15, 1961; Mater et Magistra - Catholic Charities (cctwincities.org).
[36]"United to Aid," *Today's Catholic* Collection, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, Texas, November 10, 1972.

of lower-income workers, which in San Antonio tended to be Mexican in origin, while in other Southern dioceses they were African American, but to set up a "disaster relief" initiative. This second goal was designed to aid people in emergencies, like hurricanes or other natural disasters, times when even those in the lower-middle classes would need hand. The funding itself would come from donations made by wealthier Catholics in good times.[37]

As during the previous decade, the Catholic Church in the 1970s continued to focus on the needs of the Mexican American working-class, as well as Mexican immigrants. The middle-classes still had LULAC, the American G.I. Forum, and MAYO, while more radicalized members of the community had La Raza Unida Party (RUP), the working-classes and immigrants still had the Church. The same theme is observed, the Church administered as it was by the middle-classes, focused its secular efforts on labor and social rights. The fifteen-member Catholic diocese steering committee was just one example among many that included other national efforts such as the Catholic Campaign for Human Development, founded in 1969, ironically the same year as PADRES, the organization that effectively divided the Catholic Church in the United States.[38]

The Campaign for Human Development's primary purpose was to fund self-help projects that would provide the tools to aid Mexican-origin people to lift themselves out of poverty. The concept was not new, but it did serve to bring more Mexican-origin people into leadership positions within the Church hierarchy, which had been a long-standing demand from Chicano generation activists. However, the positions of leadership were not necessarily given to the most vocal Chicano activists, rather they went to the working-classes, with training provided by the

[37]Ibid.
[38]Archbishop Francis J. Furey, "Abp. Furey Asks: Help Break Cycle of Poverty," *Today's Catholic* Collection, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, November 17, 1972.

Church. Significantly, a reason for giving leadership positions to working-class Mexican-origin people including former farm workers, and people with no more than a high-school diploma, was because they were deemed more loyal to Catholic traditions than the new college educated Chicanos.[39]

Throughout this same period an older organization set up by the Church, the Commission for Mexican American Affairs, continued to develop programs for change within the Church structure, and to provide training to Catholic laymen and women. The 1970s and 1980s would see the publication of many texts on Chicano history, most of it leftist in nature, which the Church sought to counter with its own publications, and through funding for locales where Mexican Americans could learn their history without the leftist taint and victimization perspective. Under the guidance of the Commission for Mexican American Affairs, the Archdiocese of San Antonio set up a bookstore which they referred to as the *Cultural Distribution Center,* where Mexican American Catholics had access to hundreds, if not thousands of books, in addition to films and posters celebrating their history and cultural background.[40]

The scope of the holdings found at the Center were designed to integrate education, employment, history, and training to all Mexican Americans who sought it. Mexican Americans were the primary beneficiaries of the Center, however, all 535,000 Catholics in the Archdiocese were invited to learn about the cultural and historical contribution of the Mexican-origin community in San Antonio. In providing this opportunity, it was hoped that Catholics throughout the region would learn to speak with one voice, instead of being divided into competing groups

[39]Ibid.
[40]"Programs of Social Services," *Today's Catholic* Collection, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX, December 8, 1972.

divided by race or class.[41] The idea was to provide a more traditional perspective which did not solely view Mexican Americans as victims; instead, they were actors whose choices affected their own daily lives. Furthermore, the initiative also portrayed the Church in a positive manner because of its long-term commitment to labor and civil rights struggles since long before the Chicano ideology became common in the 1970s.

Moreover, the USCCB was becoming increasingly open to more Mexican American leadership within the Church. Fr. John McCarthy, executive secretary of the Texas Council of Churches was among those advocating for greater Mexican American participation in the daily life of the Church. McCarthy called on the USCCB to recognize San Antonio as a unique center of Mexican American culture, which would be an ideal place to teach the future priests for a "new" Catholic Church in America. The USCCB acknowledged that in Texas, Mexican-origin people would become the overwhelming majority of the Catholic population; therefore, there was a greater need for their vocations in the priesthood7 in the United States.[42]

Interestingly enough, the low participation among Mexican Americans in the United States was not unique among Hispanics of any nationality across Latin America. While Chicanos, including the priests in PADRES, blamed the underrepresentation of Mexican Americans within the Church structure on the discriminatory tendencies espoused by the Irish Catholic leadership, the roots of the problem lay deeper than a simple American explanation. Hispanic people across the Western Hemisphere had never been the focus of attention by vocational directors, who in Latin America, were primarily Spaniards until well into the

[41]Fr. Robert Kownacki, "Half a Million," *Today's Catholic* Collection, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX, August 24, 1973.
[42]"San Antonio Seen Key," *Today's Catholic* Collection, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX, February 14, 1975.

twentieth century. If the problem was, in fact, discrimination, it was not confined only to the American Church, but to the Latin American Church as well.[43]

Apart from discrimination faced by Mexican Americans seeking ordination within the American Catholic Church, there was also the problem of lifestyle. Even though some PADRES activists might have claimed discrimination toward their community, the fact was that what appeared as discrimination were actually differences in lifestyle among the White American and Mexican American seminarians. Auxiliary Bishop Gilberto Chavez of San Diego, California, a member of PADRES, contended that White seminarians were not to blame for perceived discrimination, because it was the way they had been instructed throughout their lives. The goal, therefore, was not shame them for the "nicer" lifestyles many had in terms of financial support from parents, but to make them aware through evangelization efforts that they needed to become more cognizant of the sensibilities of those around them.[44] However, as Brother Trinidad Sanchez, SJ, PADRES executive director argued, the goal of awareness was predominantly for future seminarians, because they found it difficult to implement immediate changes in the perspectives of either white or Mexican American seminarians. Thus, making it clear that the fast radical changes sought by Chicanos were a mere dream, however, long-term change through slower more moderate steps was a thoroughly viable approach.[45]

Educational opportunities, long a goal of LULAC and the American G.I. Forum, by 1973 were increasingly opening up to Mexican Americans, although their drop-out rate was higher than that of their Anglo counterparts. However, that was not necessarily a result of

[43]"Latin Americans are Catholics with a New Catholicism" (1976), Bishop Francis W. Kelley Archival Collection, Archdiocese of Oklahoma City.
[44]"PADRES: Refocus by Hispanics," *Today's Catholic* Collection, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX February 16, 1979.
[45]Ibid.

"discrimination," because, legally, Anglo school leaders could no longer enforce de jure segregation or second-rate facilities; however, discrimination did still persist. The problem by this point was that the years of legal discrimination had left a large majority of the Mexican - origin community entrenched in poverty throughout the country from Oklahoma City to San Antonio and down to the Rio Grande Valley. That poverty led to ignorance, which in turn led to many parents not pushing their children to succeed in what they perceived as an "Anglo" educational system that had no place for them. Further, many Mexican-origin children, especially those whose parents were agricultural workers and other types of low-incomeworkers did not have adequate clothing or nutritional opportunities.[46]

****

The early 1970s brought to the fore government nutritional programs for children in the American public-school system sponsored by the Department of Agriculture. The goal was to provide healthy lunches and breakfast to low-income students of all races for free, or at a discounted price. Even though that brought tremendous benefits to the children of the country, there are always those who are left behind by such programs. In an effort to fill the gap the Archdiocese of San Antonio, in its 32-county ecclesiastical jurisdiction provided funding for "extra" reduced pricing for lunches. Under government guidelines some parents might have not qualified for free lunches for their children and had to pay out of pocket, however, they might not have the funds to fully do so, therefore, the Church would provide the funds to bridge the gap.[47]

[46]"Lunch Program Used," *Today's Catholic* Collection, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX August 17, 1973.
[47]Ibid.

An increase in funding for the food stamp program for the needy was another lobbying effort the Catholic Church pushed in the mid-1970s. The Church recognized that its own charitable aid would never be enough to meet the needs of people who required it, therefore, at the same time that they called on the Catholic laity to continue supporting social programs sponsored by local archdioceses and churches, they also formed a united front on food aid programs as outlined in various pastoral plans sponsored by the USCCB.[48] Continuity in Church social efforts can be seen throughout these years; the Church never stopped pursuing social justice. Despite harsh criticisms from Chicano activists and a changing world, Church leadership, including a small but growing Mexican American cadre, forged forward in their quest for justice, whether it be charitable efforts, self-help efforts, or labor rights.

Mexican-origin people in Texas and Oklahoma were not the only area of concern of local leadership. The leadership of the Archdiocese of San Antonio and the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City sought to raise awareness among Americans, regardless of race, of the problem of hunger in the developing world. As bad as the food crisis and hunger were in the United States, overall, those problems were much more acute in other regions of the world. That is not to say that people in the United States did not go hungry, and some even died of malnutrition relatedillness. But the levels of suffering in parts of Africa and Latin America were generally higher. In San Antonio, the Archdiocese, along with, the local Protestant Relief Organization, led by regional director Paul Russell, sought to join forces on a program they called "food sharing." Essentially, the program called for people in the area to donate any surplus food they might have or not want, to send abroad.[49]

[48]"Bishop James Rausch, "Urges President to Adopt Food Program," *Today's Catholic* Collection, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX, January 3, 1975.
[49]"Call for Food Sharing," *Today's Catholic* Collection, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX, January 17, 1975.

The Church throughout this period also worked to bridge the gap of the lack of adequate healthcare available to impoverished Mexican American communities. Catholic funding of clinics, hospitals, and orphanages was common in the Archdiocese of San Antonio and Oklahoma City. However, the changing governmental role in providing healthcare through Medicare and Medicaid, both enacted during the 1960s, had a lasting impact on Church hospitals and clinics. Among other things, government involvement in the healthcare industry did provide health insurance to millions of American citizens who had previously lacked it, but it also led to an increase in the cost of healthcare, which meant that Catholic hospitals and clinics, which at one point were nearly free (especially the clinics), now had to slowly increase their fees for services.[50]

Nonetheless, Church officials and organizations which administered the hospitals, including the Catholic Hospital Association (CHA), continued offering discounted services less expensively than non-Catholic hospitals throughout the decade in its more than 715 hospitals nationwide. A massive fundraising effort made by all Catholic archdioceses and dioceses throughout the nation made those discounts possible. Catholics of all ages were involved in such efforts to fundraise for low-income medical assistance. The sense of commitment felt at Catholic-administered medical institutions was a factor that led to great concern at hospitals operated by religious orders, including the Santa Rosa Medical Center in San Antonio.

The era in which groups like the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word, founders of the Santa Rosa Medical Center, could successfully run charity hospitals was coming to a close by the 1970s with an increase in prices charged by pharmaceutical companies, physicians, nurses, as well as the increasing price of the education required to earn advanced degrees. As in other cases

[50]"Catholic Hospitals: $5 Billion Package," *Today's Catholic* Collection, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX, November 9, 1973.

of economic inequality, the Catholic hierarchy blamed the "free-market" for the impoverishment of people, and in this particular case, the lack of adequate healthcare for a great segment of the American population.[51]

Despite the increase in prices, and a shift to making demands for greater government investment for healthcare services for the poor of all races, Catholic Charity clinics and other institutions kept doing what they were designed to do. In the Archdiocese of San Antonio, the "Barrio Clinic," as it was referred to, was established in 1976 to help poor Mexican American families "move into the mainstream of life."[52] Funding for the clinic came from Archdiocesan funds, donations, and from the Catholic Extension Society, and by late 1976 it was able to screen 250 children every month and visit approximately 242 sick persons.[53]

Another similar archdiocesan program designed to provide health care to Mexican Americans was the "Barrio Comprehensive Child Care Project, originally founded in 1972. The program was designed specifically for children, because they were seen as the most vulnerable in their communities. This program was not solely an archdiocesan initiative, instead it was a partnership among various organizations including the county governments in the Archdiocese, primarily Bexar County, and the Catholic Extension Society. The goals of the project were to rid the 32 counties that encompassed the Archdiocese of San Antonio of early childhood diseases that were caused by lack of food and by unsanitary conditions. Within the San Antonio city limits, approximately 4,000 children under the age of six benefited from vaccinations, food, and personal items provided to their mothers on their behalf.[54]

---

[51]"At Santa Rosa a Deep Sense of Commitment," *Today's Catholic* Collection*,* J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX, May 16, 1975.
[52]Sr. Angelina Murphy, "Barrio Clinic was a Major Endeavor," *Today's Catholic* Collection*,* J.E. and L.E. Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX, July 9, 1976.
[53]Ibid.
[54]"Joseph Bernal to Archbishop Francis J. Furey," Robert E. Lucey Collection*, Archdiocese of San Antonio,* Folder 8, November 13, 1972.

The USCCC throughout this period contended that the "free-market" and the social structures that accompanied it were a threat to human dignity, especially considering the fact that America proclaimed itself to be a Christian nation. As such, the concept of putting a price on healthcare needed revaluating, as well as that of stigmatizing people who received assistance through government programs. The idea was that the weak, the elderly, and disabled, among others, should not be forced to beg for assistance, because in a Christian nation it was a duty for society to ensure that they received adequate support. That idea also applied to equal opportunity for Mexican-origin people, who had been excluded from mainstream American society for decades, and who now required a helping hand in becoming entirely self-sufficient.[55]

Rising medical costs across the United States, and the lack of adequate health insurance among Americans, especially minorities like Mexican Americans and African Americans, made the National Conference of Catholic Charities (NCCC), a subdivision of the USCCC, call for a national health insurance program like the one's established in many European countries under the umbrella of social democracy. Msgr. Lawrence Corcoran, NCCC executive director, according to Jim Castelli of the *Sooner Catholic,* argued that it was no longer tolerable "to permit millions of Americans to go without any healthcare insurance protection." While Mexican-origin people and other impoverished groups in America always lacked adequate healthcare, the increasing commercialization and dehumanization of the once noble medical profession made it imperative that the government provide tax-funded insurance, because charity organizations would increasingly become overburdened.[56]

[55]Antoinette Bosco, "Social Structures – A Threat to Well-being," *Sooner Catholic,* January 1978, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma Historical Society – Research Division, Reel XVI-942-MMM-239-909.
[56]Jim Castelli, "National Health Insurance Supported," *Sooner Catholic,* October 16, 1977, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma Historical Society – Research Division, Reel XVI-942-MMM-239-909.

In an effort to at least fund many of the needs of impoverished Catholics, Catholic elementary and secondary students gave-up portions of their allowances to support a campaign called *Operation Drop in the Bucket,* which not only aided American Catholic hospitals, but assisted in the international efforts of the Catholic Relief Services. While it is clear that what the students in a single archdiocese like San Antonio or Oklahoma City could do was minimal all Catholic students from across the nation together in a collective effort proved quite effective. Additionally, the goal of Operation Drop in the Bucket was not to entirely fund any program or initiative, instead it was to supplement existing sources of funding and to fill-in gaps not covered by government agencies.[57]

During the early 1970s an old issue started coming back into the foreground: illegal immigrants, of whom the majority were Hispanics of Mexican origin. Illegal immigrants had been a concern for the Church in the 1930s, particularly during the repatriations, but during the 1940s-1970s, the main issue had been Mexican American civil and labor rights, and how to alleviate the poverty faced by that community. Moreover, the fact that both LULAC and the UFW opposed illegal Mexican immigrants, likely persuaded the Church to remain quiet about the issue, although, they did provide temporal and spiritual services to those people. Now in the 1970s, illegal immigrants became an important political issue, especially during economic downturns, as members of that group were scapegoated by conservative politicians from across the country including Sen. Robert Packwood (R – Ore.) who called illegal aliens "the greatest source of tax strain today."[58]

[57]"Students Help the Poor," *Today's Catholic* Collection, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX, March 8, 1974.
[58]"Border Priests Doubt Reports," *Sooner Catholic,* July 24, 1977, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma Historical Society – Research Division, Reel XVI-942-MMM-239-909.

Neither the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City nor the Archdiocese of San Antonio stood idly by while criticisms, some national in scope and some local, were hurled at illegal immigrants, most of whom were Catholics. The Catholic Church did more than protestinhumane attitudes toward those people in some areas including in the Archdiocese of San Antonio, under the guidance of Augustinian Father John Blethen, they developed temporary housing projects for Mexican immigrants.[59]

In addition to providing aid to illegal Mexican immigrants, various Church leaders attempted to persuade Americans that immigrants, in a limited number, were a boon for the economy. While it was true that immigrants took "American jobs," in the sense that they lived in the United States, those jobs were not sought by most Americans, because they were the lowest-paid jobs in the country, and included agricultural labor and domestic service. Dr. Julian Samora of the University of Notre Dame was among the Catholic leaders arguing that Mexican immigrants provided important services Americans did not want to provide, while also paying taxes. Americans and immigrants alike purchased goods for consumptions, meaning they contributed alike to state and local coffers when they paid sales or excise taxes.[60]

Furthermore, Catholic leadership in both San Antonio and Oklahoma City contended that disgust toward Mexican-origins immigrants was merely political and contradicted social justice and family values as espoused by Christianity. Clerical and lay Catholic Church leaders met with President Gerald R. Ford on February 14, 1975 to discuss issues related to undocumented Mexican immigrants. The proposals made by the Church was that legalization of the immigrants

[59]Ibid.
[60]Dr. Julian Samora, "On Immigration," *Today's Catholic* Collection, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX, February 14, 1975.

needed to become a reality and not remain a mere rhetorical strategy.[61] Dozens of bishops and Archbishops argued that the legalization process needed to become simpler and easier, for those who had families in Mexico. While amnesty for single undocumented immigrants was also sought at the aforementioned meeting, family reunification was at the center of debate.[62]

Auxiliary Bishop Flores was among those advocating for immigration reform with family reunification in mind. The USCCB made him one of the leading spokesmen within the Mexican-origin community. Bishop Flores was bilingual, which made it easier for him to rally people to sign petitions, organize marches, and collect donations to provide services to those fighting possible repatriation.[63] Likewise, federal government officials also knew Bishop Flores's worth when it came to approaching the Hispanic community. In 1975, John K. Tabor, U.S. Secretary of Commerce, appointed Flores as a member of the Census Advisory Committee. The purpose was to have a continuing channel of communication "between the Spanish-origin population and the Bureau," for which Bishop Flores was a good advocate.[64]

Possible repetitions of the massive repatriations of undocumented Mexican immigrants during the 1930s, and lesser federal operations under President Dwight D. Eisenhower in 1954, remained a concern for Church officials in both the Archdiocese of San Antonio and Oklahoma City, as well as at the national level through the USCCB. There were fears among Mexican American leaders that 1975 and 1976 would be the year when a new "Operation Wetback"

[61]"Amnesty for Illegals," *Today's Catholic* Collection, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX, February 14, 1975.
[62]"Bishops Affirm Family, Social Justice." *Sooner Catholic,* November 28, 1976, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma Historical Society – Research Division, Reel XVI-942-MMM-239-909.
[63]"Asks Amnesty for Illegals," *Today's Catholic* Collection, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX, June 27, 1975.
[64]"Bp. Flores appointed to Advisory Committee," *Today's Catholic* Collection, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX, March 16, 1975.

would be initiated. Their reasoning was that Gerald R. Ford needed to show his conservative base he was being tough on border security, especially because it was a close election year.[65]

Msgr. George C. Higgins, the spokesperson for the USCCB acknowledged that the U.S. government had a right to provide border security and limit the number of illegals of any background, but that was done at the border, by providing more manpower and funding, and not after the fact. With an estimated seven million illegals in the United Sates by early 1975, some of them with American-born children, the responsible thing to do was to provide amnesty for them, if they could prove they worked, paid taxes, and had no criminal records.[66] In addition,Msgr. Higgins mentioned that the USCCB would be supportive of federal legislative efforts that would penalize employers who knowingly hired undocumented immigrants, if amnesty were granted for those whose families would be torn apart by possible repatriations. The motive behind penalizing employers was that they were responsible for the workers, because they provided the jobs. If jobs were not provided, then the influx of immigrants would subside.[67]

The lobbying effort against breaking families apart became more urgent from the standpoint of the Archdiocese of San Antonio when the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service started sending out letters to elderly people, some in their eighties, telling them they had no right to be in the United States. Mrs. Isabel Ramirez, an eighty-seven-year-old woman from San Antonio who had moved to the United States at the age of seventeen in 1905, was among those receiving those letters. Mrs. Ramirez had raised three American-born children, two of whom had died in the Second World War fighting in the U.S. Army. An event sponsored by

---

[65]"Critical on Illegals," *Today's Catholic* Collection, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX February 28, 1975.
[66]"Backs Amnesty for Illegals," *Today's Catholic* Collection, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX March 21, 1975.
[67]Cliff Foster, "Aliens Plan Gets Mixed Reviews," *Sooner Catholic,* August 1977, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma Historical Society – Research Division, Reel XVI-942-MMM-239-909.

Archbishop Furey under the umbrella of the "Bishop's Panel" invited people like Mrs. Ramirez to speak before a panel of local and state government officials with the purpose of influencing them to lobby against what the Church an considered an injustice. Moreover, Archbishop Furey promised the Catholic Services for Immigration in the Archdiocese a larger staff, including lawyers to assist the Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent De Paul in their pro-immigrant work.[68]

Opponents of immigration reform contended that the Catholic Church and other pro-immigrant groups were only appealing to the "heart," when there was no economic or legal basis for seeking amnesty for undocumented immigrants. General Leonard F. Chapman, INS Commissioner, was among those critical of illegals and of Church efforts to assist them. Emotional arguments he said were always positive, because America was a Christian nation, and the Church had the right to provide assistance to those who needed it, but he insisted that "facts" led to the conclusion that illegals were a "costly problem" that needed to be controlled immediately or it would become uncontrollable.[69] Chapman, ultimately contended that amnesty would only encourage more immigration, because immigrants would sense that America would grant them citizenship even if they broke the law by being here illegally, which actually has proven correct; undocumented immigrants continue to clamor for "rights" and the Church continues to support them in the present.

Sister Adela Arroyo, D.C. of the Catholic Services for Immigrants in the Archdiocese of San Antonio was highly active in helping undocumented immigrants gain rights under American law. The major right that Catholic and civic agencies sought was the processing of paperwork to make the reunification of families a much simpler process. Sister Arroyo was assisted in hosting

[68]"Illegal Aliens Speak before Bishop's Panel," *Today's Catholic* Collection, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX April 18, 1975.
[69]Leonard F. Chapman, "See Serious Problems as Illegals Increase," *Today's Catholic* Collection, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, Texas, August 20, 1976.

workshops in the greater San Antonio region by Sister Angelina Murphy both of whom sought to conduct at least 10 workshops per year to speed up training of volunteers who processed paperwork.[70]

Meanwhile the Catholic Social Ministers (CSM) in the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City were also establishing workshops to aid undocumented immigrants in processing their paperwork, so they could remain in the United States legally. However, while in the Archdiocese of San Antonio, the focus was Mexican-origin people, in Oklahoma City, the focus was both Mexican immigrants and South East Asian refugees. By 1977 there were approximately 1,500 Southeast Asian undocumented immigrants who were being housed or provided with other assistance by the Archdiocese, particularly St. Joseph's Children Home and St. Ann's Catholic Church.[71] Archbishop Charles Salatka, of Oklahoma City (1977-1992) argued that many of President Jimmy Carter's policy proposals were only a patchwork of agreements no better than the proposals that had been made by President Ford, just a few years earlier. Archbishop Salatka claimed that the "amnesty" section of the proposal was too weak, while INS removal of immigrants was too strong.[72]

The Catholic Church in the modern era finances its activities primarily by tithes and donations of its adherents, which limits the amount of good that could be done in local communities; nonetheless, many of the immigrant assistance programs were funded by Catholic Churches across the country. In Oklahoma City, the Archbishops Development Fund (ADF) was the primary vehicle to help immigrants of any background through the "Friends of Refugees"

---

[70]Sister Angelina Murphy, CDP, "Church to Help Aliens," *Today's Catholic* Collection, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX February 24, 1978.
[71]"Catholic Social Ministries," *Sooner Catholic,* September 4, 1977, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma Historical Society – Research Division, Reel XVI-942-MMM-239-909.
[72]Msgr. George C. Higgins, "how Can We Solve Our Illegal Alien Problem." *Sooner Catholic,* July 1978, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma Historical Society – Research Division, Reel XVI-942-MMM-239-909.

and "Neighbor for Neighbor" programs.[73] Within the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City, the ADF was the umbrella organization that managed the local migration office, in addition to the local Archbishop's Committee for the Spanish-Speaking, which was an idea borrowed from the Archdiocese of San Antonio.[74]

Funding for programs assisting undocumented immigrants and refugees were not the only reason the ADF needed donations. The decades-long struggle for labor rights and social justice among working-class Mexican-origin people was still evolving throughout the 1970s, even though it might have not been as prominent as it had been in the 1960s. Even though the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City had not been as directly involved in the farm workers' struggle as the Archdiocese of San Antonio up to this point, it still promoted a pro-labor agenda. For example, Archbishop Salatka agreed with AFL-CIO president George Meany that "justice delayed is justice denied."[75] According to Meany, federal legislative measures such as the Wagner Act of 1935, had been severely weakened by later bills including the Taft-Hartley Act of 1947, which meant that labor-management relations usually favored management, not workers. Archbishop Salatka alongside Archbishop's Furey and Flores, and others in the USCCB issued a "pastoral letter" that supported H.R. 77, introduced by U.S. Representative Frank Thompson (D-NJ), to strengthen the processes and procedures of the National Labor Relations Board.[76]

Broad efforts at supporting labor by the USCCB were also accompanied by local efforts in both the San Antonio and Oklahoma City regions. The Archdiocese of San Antonio (no longer

[73]"Two-Edged Sword for Christian Unity," *Sooner Catholic,* January 1977, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma Historical Society – Research Division, Reel XVI-942-MMM-239-909.
[74]"Wants Outreach from Catholic Social Ministries," *Sooner Catholic,* February 20, 1977, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma Historical Society – Research Division, Reel XVI-942-MMM-239-909.
[75]Msgr. George C. Higgins, "Justice Delayed is Justice Denied," *Sooner Catholic,* April 3, 1977, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma Historical Society – Research Division, Reel XVI-942-MMM-239-909.
[76]Ibid.

under Archbishop Lucey who retired in 1969 from his position after twenty-eight years of service) continued to issue statements and provide donations, albeit, in smaller amounts to labor struggles in the San Antonio area, and the Rio Grande Valley, as well as California.[77]

The grape boycotts led by the National Farm Workers Union (NFWU) under the leadership of Cesar Chavez were still ongoing in the California farmlands. Archbishop Furey supported the national statements made by the USCCB on assisting the boycott against table grapes by prohibiting any archdiocesan funds from being used in any manner that profited California agricultural businesses such as Gallo Wines and Francia Bros. Wines, which were among the major purchasers of table grapes. The thought among Church leaders was that the Catholic Church was in many ways a bulk purchaser of wine for use in masses where they transfigured the wine into the "blood of Christ," therefore, by shifting to rival unionized wines, they would "force" major grape and wine producers to support the unionization demands of their workers.[78] Adding to the Catholic effort at backing farm workers in California were Protestant Churches which through the National Council of Churches endorsed the Farm Workers' boycott as well.[79]

Throughout the nation, over ten thousand Churches, as well as Synagogues belonging to the Synagogue Council of America, in over 150 metropolitan regions, held rallies, raised funds, and held services in a series of special events aimed at the impoverished working conditions of the over two million seasonal farm workers, most of whom were of Mexican origin. The goal was to present a united front against agribusiness in California, or anywhere in the nation, in

[77]"Abp. Lucey Hailed," *Today's Catholic* Collection, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX, April 26, 1974.
[78]"National Farm Worker Week," *Today's Catholic* Collection, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX, April 26, 1974.
[79]"TCC Backs ERA, Farm Workers," *Today's Catholic* Collection, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX March 7, 1975.

order to make them aware that farm workers had support for higher wages and unionization drives among masses of American people from a wide range of religious backgrounds.[80]

Meanwhile, the labor movement in the Rio Grande Valley still kept pushing forward with its demands. A major difference at this point was that the old animosities between Mexican American and Mexican-origin workers started to dissipate. Labor union leaders still claimed that Mexican labor could be used as strike-breakers, however, they tried to get Mexican nationals involved in the labor struggles themselves by calling for immigration reform alongside Catholic Church officials.

The tentative reconciliation between immigrant farm workers and the native Mexican American farm workers received further attention from the Texas Farm Workers Union, the Archdiocese of San Antonio, and the Texas Council of Churches early in 1979. Bishop James Rausch, chairman of the Bishops' Committee on Farm Labor, along with Cesar Chavez and Archbishop Furey, were just a handful of the farm movement's supporters who spoke out on the issue of braceros. In February 1979, it became apparent that Mexican President Lopez Portillo was going to ask President Carter to support a new bracero program. Carter made it clear that he opposed the Mexican proposal for a new bracero program. The worry among the USCCB and labor organizers was that the United States would acquiesce to Mexican demands in exchange for the importation of Mexican oil, given the backdrop of the fuel crisis which affected the country in the late 1970s.[81]

Although the labor struggles in the Rio Grande Valley did not subside after Fr. Sherrill Smith was silenced in the late 1960s, and after Lucey's retirement in 1969, one of the major

[80]"Farm Worker Week," *Today's Catholic Collection,* J.E. and L.E. Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX, May 2, 1975.
[81]Bishop James Rausch, "Bracero Plan Opposed," *Today's Catholic* Collection*,* J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX, February 16, 1979.

reasons why the Archdiocese of San Antonio became quieter on the issue was the fact that the Diocese of Brownsville itself started to become more heavily involved in the pro-labor movements in the region. Furthermore, farm workers started losing support when it became clear that the heavy involvement from outside sources did not appear to make a difference.[82] Not only did farm workers lose support in the Rio Grande Valley, but also in areas like California, where the Catholic Church, Protestant denominations, and Jewish groups supported boycotts, because victory did not seem within grasp, and when noticeable gains were made, it appeared as if farm worker unions kept adding new demands.[83]

The fear of these new demands was real enough for it to make the pages of *Today's Catholic* in late May 1975. Church officials within the Rio Grande Valley, San Antonio, and nationally, sided with workers on their right to unionize, but they still supported the growers on a few key issues. For example, while most UFW members were peaceful and supported non-violent means of attaining their objectives, some did invade and destroy private property, which only served to dim the prospects for victory. Any movement that utilized property destruction in twentieth-century America as a strategy was viewed as un-American, which further pushed some farm labor supporters away.[84]

Added to the worries of the general public losing interest in the demands made by farm workers' unions on behalf of their members, was the fact that growers and their supporters did not lose interest. All through the 1970s, growers in the Rio Grande Valley had their usual allies, minus the Catholic Church, which swung toward the workers. In areas like Hidalgo and Starr

[82]"TFW—how far along," *Today's Catholic* Collection, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX, September 16, 1977.
[83]"National Briefly," *Sooner Catholic,* October 16, 1977, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma Historical Society – Research Division, Reel XVI-942-MMM-239-909.
[84]Gary Gossett, "Valley Harvest 1975—Growers, UFW at Odds," *Today's Catholic* Collection, J.E. and L.E. Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX, May 30, 1975.

Counties, growers could always count on the sheriff's department to break up strikes, and force workers, including Mexican nationals to board buses to go to work in the fields. The Sheriff's Department in Hidalgo County was said to have given area farmer C.L Miller "open season" on the farm workers.[85] Ultimately this meant that local law enforcement officials would not prosecute local growers if they shot striking farm workers; it would be up to federal authorities to protect workers.

Furthermore, the Texas Farm Workers Union, founded by Antonio Orendain, was nowhere near as strong or cohesive as the National United Farm Workers Union run by Cesar Chavez in California. Orendain originally had been a highly placed UFW leader in California, but he made his way to Texas in the early 1970s to organize what was supposed to be a local branch of the UFW. At its inception the Texas Farm Workers' Union (TFWU) was a member of the UFW, but Orendain subsequently separated it and made it an independent organization. As an independent organization, the TFWU did not have the funds or national logistical support to organize mass boycotts and strikes on the scale of those led by the UFW in California and Arizona. Nonetheless, it sought to organize strikes in the Rio Grande Valley citing assistance from both the Archdiocese of San Antonio, now headed by Archbishop Patrick Flores, and the Diocese of Brownsville, headed by John J. Fitzpatrick.[86]

UFW strikes and boycotts in California and Arizona, like the previous grape boycotts did find some success. The UFW did negotiate higher wages for workers, and a greater number of workers were unionized. Meanwhile, the strikes called by the TFWU in the Rio Grande Valley failed. Although the farm workers had the support of the local Catholic Church, and even the

[85]"Valley UFW Makes Organizing Push," *Today's Catholic* Collection, J.E. and L.E. Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX May 30, 1975.
[86]"A Strike is Suicide," *Today's Catholic* Collection, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX, February 23, 1979.

Texas Council of Churches, a Protestant organization, it lacked support from the rank-and-file membership of those churches, and from the local public, which in Texas had always been more conservative and anti-union.[87]

Overall, demands made by farm workers and the UFW needed to be made peacefully and through legally prescribed and accepted established methods to secure broad popular support from the Church and mainstream society. The problem was that not all farm workers were unionized, and this was because of a lack of information, grower and local law enforcement opposition, and the fact that many workers did not want to belong to any union, because they thought unions were too overbearing. Therefore, Bishop James S. Rauch of Phoenix, Arizona argued at the biennial convention of the UFW that unions needed to be more democratic in their administration, since their top-down organizational structure alienated many workers. It is true that those in administrative and leadership positions warranted some respect, but respect, Bishop Rauch contended, was earned and not demanded.[88]

The Archdiocese of San Antonio and the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City, both of which had been longtime supporters of Mexican American civil and labor rights continued their struggles alongside those of the Mexican-origin community throughout the decade of the 1970s. However, there are noticeable differences between this decade and earlier ones in both regions.[89] In the Archdiocese of San Antonio, Mexican-origin people started taking more leadership roles within the Church structure, especially after the appointment of Archbishop Francis J. Furey and his Auxiliary Bishop Patrick Flores. Another identifiable shift in the San Antonio region was the

[87]"Churches back Farm Workers," *Today's Catholic* Collection, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX, June 22, 1979.
[88]"Farm Workers and Unions," *Today's Catholic* Collection, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX September 2, 1977.
[89] Mexican-Americans, Anglos Work Same," *Today's Catholic* Collection, J.E. and L.E. Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX, February 14, 1975.

increasing concern for Mexican immigrants, as the anti-Mexican sentiment of the United Farm Workers subsided. The defense of Mexican immigrants would become a greater concern for the Church as the 1970s turned into the 1980s.

The relationship between Mexican Americans and the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City remained largely the same as it had been in previous decades. A reason for the lack of change within that relationship was because of the still small population of Mexican-origin people in the OKC metro area. Throughout this decade the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City continued its social service and educational initiatives on behalf of Mexican-origin people. At a national level, the Catholic Church continued to support farm labor movements in California, Texas, and beyond, even though those struggles became less prevalent on the pages of Catholic publications whether it be the Oklahoma *Sooner Catholic*, or *Today's Catholic* in San Antonio.

The 1980s would bring greater Mexican American and other Hispanic inclusion within the Catholic Church structure nationally, however, the core focus here will be to trace further developments in both the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City and Archdiocese of San Antonio. Additionally, as Mexican Americans slowly joined the middle-classes the Church became more concerned with immigration issues, and abortion issues, among other things. The next chapter discusses the roles played by both the aforementioned archdioceses in the life of Mexican Americans, as well as other Hispanic people's in the United States.

Chapter 7: Enduring Divisions: Social Justice in a Conservative Age, 1980-1992

On January 20, 1981, Ronald Reagan and George H. W. Bush were sworn into the office of President and Vice-President respectively. Conservatives were elated with their victory, and with what with many historians consider the end of the New Deal era. Although the New Deal was a set of programs in the 1930s directed by Democrat Franklin D. Roosevelt, the idea of government intervention and deficit spending had not been contradicted or opposed by any major political figure who was in a position to make important changes. It is true that Senator Robert A. Taft and Senator Barry Goldwater, who was the Republican nominee in the 1964 election, were vehement opponents of New Deal policies and, in Goldwater's case, also subsequent government programs, including those implemented during the Presidency of Lyndon B. Johnson (1963-1969). However, they did not have nationwide support to make their policy initiatives a reality, as made evidenced in Goldwater's resounding defeat in the 1964 presidential election.

Among the elated conservatives stood many Roman Catholics, both clergy and laity; however, for many of them it was a qualified victory. The Roman Catholic Church and its adherents might have supported the Regan-Bush victory on issues such as overturning or limiting Roe. V. Wade, as well as, pushing against the LGBTQ movement, which was not as strong a force in the 1980s as it would later become. Nonetheless, many Catholic leaders including the Archbishops and Bishops of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), feared that the conservative resurgence would mean a setback for labor, social, and immigrant rights that had been achieved in the previous decades.

The Reagan era brought an end to two decades of Chicana/o upheaval among Mexican-origin people that had grown out of the radical movements of the 1960s. Therefore, just as the

Mexican American Generation organizations, LULAC and the American G.I. Forum, lost some of their impetus after school integration cases, the Chicano movement started to fade away. Even though organizations of both eras became less important, there was still a need for organizational help for Mexican-origin people, and as the 1980s continued, for other Hispanics, both American-born and immigrants. Although radical organizations moved into the background, two forces continued to press for Mexican American labor and social rights, in addition to immigrant rights: the Roman Catholic Church and labor organizations such as the United Farm Workers.[1]

This chapter will examine labor, social, and immigrant rights including, labor unions, principally the UFW and its offshoots. Nevertheless, the two major areas of study remain the Archdioceses of Oklahoma City and San Antonio and their interactions with Mexican Americans and other Hispanics. While the study is focused primarily on those two regions, the national Church, represented through the USCCB is also a major component of the chapter. The USCCB and its various subcommittees provided guidance and funding to many of the initiatives and programs at the local level. This became more common as the Hispanic population expanded throughout the late twentieth century and Oklahoma City and San Antonio church leaders and clergy played less of a leadership role in social and labor justice efforts on behalf of their respective communities.

Even though Archbishop Patrick Flores of San Antonio and Archbishop Charles Salatka could not play the expansive roles their predecessors had played, they remained influential within their own enclaves, Flores especially in the San Antonio and south Texas region, because there was a much larger Roman Catholic and Mexican-origin population than in Oklahoma City. Nonetheless, the Catholic Church remained a solid promoter of labor, social, and immigrant

[1]"Aid Festival, *Today's Catholic* Collection*,* January 11, 1980, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX.

rights for the Mexican-origin community. Both archdioceses sought to continue their pledge of aiding the most vulnerable in society, the poor, Mexican Americans, and immigrants; thereby showing that the Church remained the one constant in the life of Mexican-origin people.

This chapter also examines how the archdioceses dealt with the conservatism of the 1980s, as manifested in debates over abortion, immigration, and multiculturalism, and how the archdioceses started to take a more central role, replacing issues such as labor, social justice, and educational struggles, which had been mainstream up through the 1970s but began to garner less attention from the Church. A major demand made by Mexican Americans, especially, those of the Chicana/o generation, was acceptance into the ranks of the Church and of their own culture as equal to Anglo culture. Chicanos did not support English-only or Americanization efforts as had the Mexican American generation, so the struggle for a Hispanic identity within the Catholic Church was in constant flux throughout the twentieth century.

The 1980s marked a turning point in the struggle for acceptance of Mexican culture in the Church. This became evident at an earlier date in the Archdiocese of San Antonio than in its Oklahoma City counterparts, simply because of the former's much larger Mexican-origin population. A significant contributing factor was the efforts made to learn the Spanish-language by a still predominantly Anglo clergy in both archdioceses. Furthermore, English-only publications such as San Antonio's *Today's Catholic*, the official archdiocesan newspaper, became an English and Spanish publication in 1981, despite heavy opposition from the more politically conservative laity.[2]

Opponents of a bilingual newspaper argued that the Archbishop and other leaders of the Church in San Antonio were attempting to make San Antonio a "little Mexico," and that they

[2]"Today's Catholic to Publish Spanish-English Edition," *Today's Catholic* Collection, November 13, 1981, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX.

planned to discontinue the newspaper. Claudia L. Fore, an outspoken and disgruntled parishioner, contended that Archbishop Flores did not serve the interests of all Catholics, only Mexican Americans and other Hispanics.[3] The arguments of Fore and others were not well received by the archdiocesan leadership, because they were doing nothing to harm the English-language section of the newspaper, they were only expanding it to add pages in Spanish.

Beginning with Archbishop Lucey in the 1940s, the San Antonio archdiocese had a great impact within the Mexican American community of San Antonio and greater south Texas. However, some Chicano generation resented the Church's top-down and paternalistic approach. Even though paternalism did play a key role in promoting social and labor rights on behalf of Mexican Americans, that group was not only influenced by the Church they also heavily impacted the way the Church functioned locally. Another turning point long in the making was the establishment of the Mexican American Cultural Center (MACC) originally founded in 1972 by Fr. Virgil Elizondo, an organization under the guidance of the Archbishop, but directly administered by Mexican American clergy. Although the MACC was not a 1980s creation, it marked a turning point when established and again during the Reagan presidency.[4]

The influence that the Archdiocese of San Antonio held vis-a-vis Mexican American social and labor rights, along with a growing multiculturalism, was observed in other parts of the United States. Various archdioceses throughout the northeast by the 1980s had established Spanish-speaking ministries, which became more a necessity within the Church because of the growing Hispanic population stretching from Washington, D.C., to Boston, Massachusetts.[5]

---

[3]Claudia L Fore, "English Expected," *Today's Catholic* Collection, January 11, 1980, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX.
[4]"Mexican-American Culture Center to celebrate 10th Anniversary," *Today's Catholic* Collection, June 25, 1982, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX.
[5]"NBC to Spotlight Hispanics in U.S.," *Today's Catholic* Collection, March 21, 1980, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX.

Directors of Spanish-speaking apostolates from those regions congregated at the Mexican-American Cultural Center (MACC) in San Antonio, to learn about the institute and its programs on behalf of the Hispanic community. The goal was to establish a Mexican American Center in the northeast, which could be the engine for creating ministries and programs for those new members of Catholic congregations.[6]

The MACC was not only a beacon of knowledge about Mexican American culture that served as a guide to parishes in the Northeast, it also served as a source of inspiration for regions one might not expect. New Mexico, a region with a large Mexican American population, also adapted some of the ministry techniques first applied in the Archdiocese of San Antonio to various parishes in the state. Father Benedict Begin, OFM, of St. Helen's Parish in Portales, New Mexico, was among the beneficiaries who learned how to "better understand parishioners needs" through education and information sessions he attended at the MACC, which was necessary given that his parish was ninety-percent Spanish-speaking.[7]

Meanwhile, Archbishop Charles Salatka in Oklahoma City, while not seeking to make the *Sooner Catholic* into a bilingual publication, was seeking more inclusion of Mexican-origin believers into positions of power within the Church hierarchy. However, the lack of Mexican-origin people in leadership spots in Oklahoma City was significantly less of a concern because of the small Mexican American population of that city and state in general.[8] Nevertheless, taking his cue from a national survey of Hispanic Catholics, Archbishop Salatka was a keen observer that Mexicans and Hispanics in general were growing at a much faster rate than the general

---

[6]"Similar to MACC: Center for Northeast," *Today's Catholic* Collection, February 29, 1980, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX.
[7]"MACC Fame Extends Around the World," *Today's Catholic* Collection, July 17, 1981, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX.
[8]Robert Medley, "Be Counted Hispanics Urged" (1989), Bishop Francis C. Kelley Archival Collection, Archdiocese of Oklahoma City.

population, most of whom were Catholic, therefore, they needed their own space and festivals within the Catholic structure.[9]

The national survey spelled out that Hispanic Catholics in general were significantly more traditional in their religious commitments than Anglo society as a whole by the 1980s, with the exception being the better educated Church members. The Church in Oklahoma City set forth the goal of having "Mexican-themed" festivals expand-out from the Little Flower Church which had remained the center of Mexican Catholicity since its foundation by the Carmelite priests, under the guidance of Bishop Francis C. Kelley in the 1920s.[10] During the succeeding decades after 1920, another Church dedicated primarily to Mexican-origin people was Our Mother Mary Parish in Waynoka, Oklahoma[11]

Even though the Hispanic population of Oklahoma was considerably lower than in Texas, that population was growing. By 1986, Church surveys acknowledged the existence of 200,000 Hispanic Catholics in the state, with approximately sixty percent, or 120,000 of those living within the geographical boundaries of the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City. According to Sister Carmelina Ayala, several of the surveys sent out by the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City gave inaccurate figures, because those surveys only pertained to members of Catholic parishes and their non-member relatives.[12] Archbishop Salatka, nevertheless, assumed that the number of Hispanic Catholics was at least 120,000, and made it mandatory that all seminarians from the

[9]"Hispanics Growing Faster," *Today's Catholic* Collection, April 2, 1982, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX.
[10]"Hispanic Catholics: Strong in Faith, Weak in Parish," *Sooner Catholic,* February 2, 1986, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma Historical Society – Research Division.
[11]"Rev. Don Wolf to Archbishop Charles A. Salatka" (December 8, 1988), Bishop Francis C. Kelley Archival Collection, Archdiocese of Oklahoma City.
[12]Sister Carmelina Ayala, "Ad-hoc Committee for Ministry to Hispanics in Oklahoma City (May 30, 1989), Bishop Francis C. Kelley Archival Collection, Archdiocese of Oklahoma City.

archdiocese take twelve hours of Spanish language instruction, including possible instruction in Mexico, or at the MACC in San Antonio.[13]

Further, a problem that had long afflicted the Church within the Mexican-origin community, the lack of Mexican American clergy, was slowly coming to an end according to church sources from both San Antonio and Oklahoma City. By the 1980s, there were 954 Hispanic students enrolled in seminaries nationwide, which accounted for just under seven percent of all seminarians. Fr. Alfonso Gallegos, Hispanic Division Director of the California Catholic Conference, told *Today's Catholic* that while the number seemed small, it was a good improvement, especially taking into account that most Hispanic seminarians came from California and Texas, the states with the largest Hispanic populations.[14]

The idea of a multicultural Church was not a new idea in the 1980s, because the Church was made up of people of many nationalities, cultures, and languages, but it was a new concept in several American archdioceses.[15] Multiculturalism, was in part even, a new concept for the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City, which had a history of supporting Mexican-American rights, albeit in a paternalist fashion. Now that paternalist sense of helping Mexican-origin people and other Hispanics started fading away, even without the loud demands that Chicano activists had made in the 1970s. The Church leadership could sense that the times were changing and that they needed Hispanic ministers for an increasingly multicultural Church.[16]

---

[13]"ACCW Luncheon for Presidents of Altar Societies" (October 10, 1989), Bishop Francis C. Kelley Archival Collection, Archdiocese of Oklahoma City.
[14]"Hispanics are 6.8% of U.S. Seminarians," *Today's Catholic* Collection, July 24, 1981, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX.
[15]Romero Cruz, "Church 89: Confronting Today's Pastoral Questions" (1989), Bishop Francis C. Kelley Archival Collection, Archdiocese of Oklahoma City.
[16]Rev. Rosendo Urrabazo, CMF, "The Hispanic Agenda: The Pastoral Plan and Beyond" (1989), Bishop Francis C. Kelly Archival Collection, Archdiocese of Oklahoma City.

Perhaps the biggest change that marked a turning point in the relationship between Mexican-origin people and the Church in Oklahoma was the debate over the inclusion of Spanish masses in predominantly Anglo parishes. It is true that Spanish masses existed in Oklahoma dating back to at least the 1920s, but these masses were solely held at the Little Flower Church, which in a sense, was a segregated parish. The Little Flower was never officially segregated by archdiocesan rules, it just happened that Mexicans congregated there after the Carmelite priests established it. Even though no bishop or archbishop segregated Mexican-origin people; white Catholic parishioners would not accept them into their parishes, dismissing Hispanics as poor, uneducated, and dirty.[17]

Archbishop Salatka argued that the idea of Mexican-origin people as unavoidably poor was never the case, and that it was slowly becoming less so, as many Mexican Americans, the children of poor parents, were moving into the professional classes. Furthermore, Salatka sought to inculcate the idea of multiculturalism in the minds of white Catholics, whose parishes might have been white in the past, but were now becoming home to brown people as well. A Mr. and Mrs. Ramsey were an example of those wanting Hispanic people to attend their own parishes, and called on the Archbishop to create Hispanic only churches. Salatka, politely responded to them by stating that the churches needed to be welcoming to Catholics of all backgrounds, who should be accepted into committees and ministries and Hispanics should retain the option of attending Spanish masses in those parishes.[18] The goal was not to force Spanish masses on an English-speaking audience but to have Spanish masses, while having bilingual church meetings for all parishioners. The region around Highway 81 and Interstate 40, which saw large Hispanic

[17]Sister Carmelina Ayala, "Ad-hoc Committee for Ministry to Hispanics in Oklahoma City" (May 30, 1989), Bishop Francis C. Kelley Archival Collection, Archdiocese of Oklahoma City.
[18]"Archbishop Charles A. Salatka to Mr. and Mrs. Ramsey" (June 21, 1991), Bishop Francis C. Kelley Archival Collection, Archdiocese of Oklahoma City.

growth in the late 1980s and early 1990s, was at the center of debate over English and Spanish within Catholic parishes.

Although Salatka, as prelate of Oklahoma City, directed all affairs concerning Hispanics and non-Hispanics alike, the chief architect of Hispanic ministry for Oklahoma outside Little Flower was Father Manuel Magallanes.[19] Fr. Magallanes provided ministry to as many Hispanic people a possible within the jurisdiction assigned to him, but was in no way able to provide services to all the Hispanic parishioners who were now calling Oklahoma home. A major problem was that a significant number of Hispanic parishioners in his area did fit the stereotype of being lower-class and uneducated, at least from the perspective of white Americans, because they were seasonal farmworkers. These farmworkers, like those from past generations, travelled from place to place seeking jobs for themselves and their families; therefore, they were not settled, which made it hard to determine where Spanish masses and ministries were needed.[20]

Fr. Magallanes, in addition to personally providing masses and ministry to Hispanic Catholics, was charged with seeking other priests who were favorable to the inclusion of Spanish services in their parishes. Technically, parish priests did have a say, because they had to follow directives given by the archbishop, but coercion was not the proper tool; therefore, the first parishes to become bilingual were those whose pastors were friendly toward the idea. Among the various priests were Mike Wheelan, Philip Bryce, Marvin F. Leven, Philip M. Donohoe, Joseph C. Kolb, and James H. Ross. Fr. Ross, who was the pastor of Saint Peter and Saint Paul Church in Kingfisher, where he would be charged with the Hispanic ministry project for central and

[19]Ibid.

[20]"Archbishop Charles A. Salatka to Rev. Louis V. Scagnelli" (October 3, 1991), Bishop Francis C. Kelley Archival Collection, Archdiocese of Oklahoma City.

western Oklahoma. Fr. Magallanes and Fr. Louis V. Scagnelli were the overseers of that project.[21]

Fr. Mike Wheelan, under the guidance of Fr. Magallanes, was among the new generation of Oklahoma priests who were beneficiaries of the mandated twelve hours of Spanish all seminarians had to take in their studies. In his charge were mostly single men, many of whom did have families but in Mexico, not the United States. The idea of multiculturalism did not apply as much to them, because they were not expected to be part of a parish, rather they were present primarily only during the months of June, July, August, and September. While inclusion was not the goal with these seasonal farmworkers, the noticeable difference from decades prior was that the Archdiocese was actually trying to reach out to these men.[22]

Fr. Joseph C. Kolb, the pastor of Stain Joseph's Church in Hennessey was not only following guidance from Frs. Magallanes and Scagnelli, but on his own initiative was already celebrating mass in Spanish for his Hispanic parishioners. Fr. Kolb in a meeting with Fr. Magallanes acknowledged that his Hispanic parishioners were slowly becoming more visible at church events, but that the number, at sixtyfive was still small. Additionally, Kolb admitted to his limited knowledge of Spanish, which did not affect verses and practices that were repetitive but did affect his homilies which limited his Spanish-language mass to only the third Sunday of each month.[23]

Although the various priests willing to support the Hispanic ministry project initiated by Archbishop Salatka were all enthusiastic about having new members in their parishes, among

[21]"Rev. Louis V. Scagnelli to Rev. James H. Ross" (February 10, 1991), Bishop Francis C. Kelley Archival Collection, Archdiocese of Oklahoma City.
[22]"Archbishop Charles A. Salatka to Rev. Mike Whelan" (June 18, 1991), Bishop Francis C. Kelley Archival Collection, Archdiocese of Oklahoma City.
[23]"Rev. Louis v. Scagnelli, O.C.D., to Rev. Joseph C. Kolb" (February 11, 1991), Bishop Francis C. Kelley Archival Collection, Archdiocese of Oklahoma City.

them, Fr. Philip M. Donahoe stood out. Fr. Donahoe not only informed Magalles and Scagnelli that he would happily work with them and with Hispanics, but also gave his reasons for supporting Hispanic ministry. Donahoe argued that the faith of Hispanics, especially Mexican-origin Hispanics, was stronger than that of the rest of his parishioners. Further, Mexican-origin parishioners showed their "love of faith, Our Blessed Mother," and the family," according to Donahoe. In his view, the integration of Mexican-origin people into his congregation and into Churches nationwide, was a blessing, because here was a people who loved the faith, not because it was an obligation, but because they genuinely believed.[24]

Even though not all white Oklahoma Catholics embraced the idea of multiculturalism, the clergy did so, maybe because they were sworn to obedience to their superiors, or maybe out of genuine acceptance of Mexican-origin and Hispanic peoples; regardless, they were serving as an example to their parishioners. Fr. Phil Bryce, an established pastor at Saint John Nepomuk Church in Yukon, was among the several priests working with Fr. Magallanes. The goal again was to establish Hispanic ministries and apostolates in that city, not to replace English-language masses and programs.[25]

Lastly, among the priests inclined to work on the Hispanic ministry project was Fr. Marvin F. Leven; however, his case was different, because his parish, Holy Trinity Church in Okarche, had no Spanish population as of early 1991. Fr. Leven told Magallanes that he would happily acquiesce to Hispanic ministry if they would make Holy Trinity their place of worship in

[24]"Rev. Louis V. Scagnelli, O.C.D., to Rev. Philip M. Donohoe (February 11, 1991), Bishop Francis C. Kelley Archival Collection, Archdiocese of Oklahoma City.
[25]"Rev. Louis V. Scagnelli, O.C.D., to Rev. Philip Bryce" (February 11, 1991), Bishop Francis C. Kelley Archival Collection, Archdiocese of Oklahoma City.

the future. Meanwhile, Sister Joselita Allen, CST, Holy Trinity's Director of Religious Education, took care of any Hispanic need that fell to them.[26]

As in the case of opposition to making *Today's Catholic* bilingual in the Archdiocese of San Antonio, opposition from conservative white Catholics to multiculturalism was evident in several parishes in Oklahoma. The view among white Catholics of this inclination was not that Hispanics should not be allowed into their parishes, likely because discrimination was illegal, but that Hispanics should Americanize and accept English masses and practices during mass and Church celebrations. Fr. Donald C. Moore was one of the priests who had to deal with pushback from his congregation when he first included a Spanish mass in his Sunday line-up. Fr. Moore argued that he observed three groups as far as the parish was concerned. The largest group was those Anglos and Mexicans who got along for the unity of the parish, but neither made any effort to get along with each other outside church activities. The second group was the Mexicans and Anglos that mixed together, mainly because those Mexicans had climbed into the middle class and were fluent in English. The smallest group were those Anglos who refused to interact with Hispanics. Nevertheless, Fr. Moore acknowledged that many of the older Anglos were in the latter group, and therefore, their mentality might have been more ingrained with racist or discriminatory tendencies, but overall, he was pleased with ways things were working out.[27]

Throughout the same timeframe that both archdioceses were working on creating a multicultural and bilingual church environment, the issue of immigration and immigrant rights became increasingly important for them, as well as the USCCB. Immigration had already been an important issue for the Church, as for many people in the Mexican American community.

[26]"Rev. Louis V. Scagnelli to Rev. Marvin F. Leven" (February 11, 1991), Bishop Francis C. Kelley Archival Collection, Archdiocese of Oklahoma City.
[27]"Rev. Louis V. Scagnelli, O.C.D., to Rev. Donald C. Moore" (February 11, 1991), Bishop Francis C. Kelley Archival Collection, Archdiocese of Oklahoma City.

However, views on immigration have changed throughout American history, and Mexican immigration was not an exception in this regard. For example, LULAC, undoubtedly the most important secular organization to work on behalf of Mexican American rights during the twentieth century, early on was opposed to immigration from Mexico and opposed immigrants' membership within the organization. Those views in time would quietly change. Additionally, labor rights organizations such as Cesar Chavez's United Farm Workers (UFW), and its Texas offshoot, the Texas Farm Workers Union, had originally not only opposed undocumented immigrants, but braceros as well.

The reasoning behind their anti-Mexican sentiment was that undocumented and bracero laborers drove the wages down for American-born Mexicans; therefore, they were not a benefit, but a detriment to the cause. A major complaint among labor leaders and the rank-and-file membership was that on many occasions Mexican workers were used as strikebreakers, especially in border areas of the Rio Grande Valley -- they were trucked in to do the jobs that Mexican Americans would not do without wage increases.[28]

The Church, on the other hand, was in theory never officially opposed to immigrants from Mexico, even though many within the ranks of both laity and clergy were, viewing Mexican immigrants as inferior, a viewpoint that remained alive throughout and after the 1980s. Nonetheless, the idea of Mexican inferiority did become less and less prevalent. By the late 1960s, and increasingly throughout the 1970s and 1980s, the USCCB, in addition to the Archdioceses of Oklahoma City and San Antonio, started to take a more active role in the promotion of Mexican immigrant rights. The Church at the national level it is worth noting, had

[28]"Huelga Strike," *El Cuahmil,* July 1980, Chicano Collection-Edinburg Campus – University and Special Collections – The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, Edinburg, TX.

already been active in immigrant rights with prior Catholic newcomers including the Irish and Italians.[29]

The Archdioceses of San Antonio and Oklahoma City were active on the ground on behalf of immigrants, who were in the 1980s primarily Mexican, but also included other Hispanic immigrants, Asians, and even Poles fleeing from their communist and ant-clerical governments.[30] Despite the regional focus of this study, it is important to acknowledge that these archdioceses were part of something much larger, and by the 1980s, may not have been at the forefront of social justice efforts on behalf of immigrants; therefore, some of their efforts were coordinated or at least promoted from larger regional or national Church organizations.[31]

With that in mind, it becomes necessary to pinpoint some of the larger issues surrounding the Catholic Church and its views on immigrant rights. Bishop Rene H. Gracida of Pensacola-Tallahassee, chairman of the Committee on Migration and Tourism within the USCCB, was an advocate for low-cost and fast immigration reform with an emphasis on family reunification. Bishop Gracida was promoting this reform several years before the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 signed by President Reagan. Thus, the Catholic Church was at the forefront of that struggle and worked actively with other organizations. Bishop Gracida, for example, worked with churches from other denominations and nations, including the Episcopal and Methodist Churches in the United States, and the Mexican Episcopal Conference, the latter actually being a Catholic organization, not an Episcopal one.[32]

---

[29]"I International Conference," *El Cuahmil,* April 1980, Chicano Collection-Edinburg Campus – University and Special Collections – The University of Texas Rio Grande valley, Edinburg, TX.
[30]"Sister Visda is Reassigned," *Sooner Catholic,* July 13, 1986, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma Historical Society – Research Division.
[31]Carol Ann Pearson, "Church Said Looking," *Today's Catholic* Collection, January 25, 1980, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX.
[32]"Joint Focus on Immigration," *Today's Catholic* Collection, April 11, 1980, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX.

Not only did the Committee on Migration and Tourism focus on supporting immigration reform. but attempted to get American archdioceses and dioceses to work with poorer parishes in Mexico by funding programs to properly enable would be Mexican immigrants to navigate the challenges of the American immigration system. The overarching goal was to attempt to convince some of the male immigrants to remain in their home country with their families, but if that wasn't effective, prepping them for the next transition was the next best objective.[33]

Opposition to immigration reform came from both sides of the congressional isle, Republicans and Democrats, but for different reasons. Many Democratic congressmen from the Southern states tended to be conservative, which likely made them close ranks with Republicans who opposed any type of immigration reform. Then, there were those politicians who disliked the idea of immigration reform, especially the reform proposed by the Reagan Administration in 1981, because it did not go far enough in reuniting immigrant families. The Church, both nationally and within the two archdioceses of this study, alongside labor unions, and LULAC, opposed the immigration reform plan which Reagan sent to Congress on July 30, because it included an "experimental guest worker program," which would have allowed over 50,000 Mexican laborers to enter the United States for temporary periods of up to twelve months.[34]

From the viewpoint of Archbishop Flores there was nothing "experimental" in the guest worker program, because such programs had been allowed before, most notably the bracero program established during the Second World War and finally terminated two decades later. Furthermore, the UFW, while not so thoroughly opposed to immigrants as they had once been, also condemned the program, because it could lead to a new class of underpaid workers. Their

[33]Ibid.
[34]"Immigration Reforms Meet Heavy Opposition," *Today's Catholic* Collection, August 7, 1981, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX.

view was that the reform bill was nothing but a plot by corporate agribusinesses that wanted the steady stream of low-wage labor that strides in Mexican American labor and education rights were making less available within the United States.[35]

Already, many farmers across the Southwest including the Rio Grande Valley, where the Archdiocese of San Antonio under the direction of Archbishop Robert Lucey and Fr. Sherrill Smith, had been heavily involved in the labor struggles, were not adhering to minimum wage laws for field workers.[36] If the guest worker program came into fruition that would mean that the minimum wage laws would essentially be de facto nullified. Rio Grande Valley farmers, with the exception of small farms, a concept left fairly ambiguous to the detriment of farm laborers, were refusing to pay the $3.10 per hour mandated by the law. From that point of reference, the Church and the UFW were both on the right track when they argued that guest workers were sought not because they were needed, but because of the low-wages that could be paid to them.[37]

Bishop John Fitzpatrick of the Diocese of Brownsville showed his solidarity with the farmworkers by standing firm against the guest worker program proposed by the Reagan Administration. Further, Fitzpatrick and Olga Sierra Sadman, board member of the National Farm Worker Ministry, stated that ninety-two percent of the farm work force in Texas was made up of Mexican-origin people. The attempt made by the administration to import more of the same workforce was just designed to keep as much of that population impoverished and voiceless, at a time when they were starting to assert their rights.[38] In addition to paying lower wages to their guest workers, farmers wanted people that would keep silent about working and

[35]Ibid.
[36]"AFL-CIO Honors Fr. Sherrill Smith," *Today's Catholic* Collection, September 11, 1981, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX.
[37]Edward Tuddingham, "Farm Workers Rights," *El Cuhamil,* October 1980, Chicano Collection-Edinburg Campus – University Library and Special Collections-The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, Edinburg, TX.
[38]Margaret Uglow, "Chavez Asks why Valley Pay below U.S. Minimum," *Today's Catholic* Collection, March 12, 1985, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX.

living conditions, something Mexican Americans and naturalized Mexicans were no longer willing to do.

A point of contention in the early 1980s in the Rio Grande Valley and across the nation's farms more broadly was the use of unsafe pesticides. The Archdiocese of San Antonio and the Diocese of Brownsville, both supported the medical findings that pesticides used in the field led to respiratory ailments and genetic alterations.[39] Workers who had been harmed because of those pesticides sprayed in the fields, even while they were working, now sought compensation for their medical bills, which farmers did not want to pay. Indeed, some farmers could not afford to pay these costs, thus leading to their push for temporary workers who would be expelled after their twelve-month guest period in the nation.[40]

The issue of pesticides in agriculture was not only a problem as viewed by Archbishop Flores, but a wider concern for the Church and the United Farm Workers (UFW). The UFW, still led by Cesar Chavez in the late 1980s, was another vocal critic of the use of pesticides in the fields. Although the UFW's primary goal of eliminating the use of certain pesticides was not based on opposition to the "experimental guest worker program," as with the Archdiocese of San Antonio, they had in the past acknowledged that those types of programs were favored by farmers, especially corporate farmers, because of the lower-wages they could pay foreign workers, without breaking the law by hiring undocumented persons.[41]

Even though the debate surrounding the 1986 Immigration Act was largely attributable to the Mexican-origin community, by the 1980s and 1990s other immigrant groups' numbers were

[39]Robin Alexander, "Pesticides Over Farmworkers," *El Cuhamil,* March 1982, Chicano Collection-Edinburg Campus – University Library and Special Collections – The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, Edinburg, TX.
[40]"Pesticides: More Important than Life," *El Cuhamil,* October 1980, Chicano Collection-Edinburg Campus – University Library and Special Collections – The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, Edinburg, TX.
[41]Gerard E. Sherry, "Farmworker Leader Chavez Ends Fast During Mass," *Today's Catholic* Collection, August 26, 1988, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX.

increasing. However, most of the measures being proposed by the immigration reform act did not affect them as they did not meet the requirements. Furthermore, during the time of these debates over Mexican and other Hispanic immigration, the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City was becoming home to immigrants from various Asian countries, some of whom had only limited knowledge of the English language, or whose religious values were not like those of Mexican Americans or White Americans.

The projects aimed at Hispanics would not help those other new arrivals. As the Catholic laity of Oklahoma was becoming more open-minded regarding Mexican-origin people within their midst, the Church faced the problem of how to help newer Catholic immigrants, although still in significantly lower than numbers than the former group. For Asian Catholic immigrants, the archdiocese did not offer a multicultural and bilingual environment as it did for Mexican-origin people, instead it offered them English language classes and assistance in navigating the laws, rules, and regulations of their new home, in addition to helping them find employment and housing. Asian Catholics who were not already affluent or educated came to face some of same the assimilationist and paternalistic tendencies that Mexican-origin people had contended with for decades. [42]

Moreover, Asian immigrants many of them refugees, were not only under the radar ofthe Archdiocese of Oklahoma City, but a subject of discussion at the national level of the Catholic Church.[43] The U.S. Bishops in pastoral statements, for example, sought to raise awareness among the laity and wider society about the rights of immigrants. There were those outside the Church, and within, who said immigrants were foreign, therefore, they should not have rightsin

[42]Fr. Silvano Tomaso, "Struggling New Immigrants Need Pastoral Help," *Sooner Catholic,* March 15, 1992, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma Historical Society – Research Division.
[43]"Take Up Slack in Social Services," *Today's Catholic* Collection*,* February 19, 1982, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX.

this country, however, the Church and most Americans opposed that positions. Bishop Gracida had by 1986 been replaced by Bishop Anthony J. Bevilacqua of Pittsburgh as chairman of the Bishops' Committee on Immigration, and in that position sought to access a wider audience for the Church's position on family reunification as the key to any immigration reform policy. Reunification was important for all immigrants, Mexican, Central American, or Asian, because the Church promoted the unity of the family.[44]

Among the Asian immigrants coming into the United States, specifically into the area of San Antonio and surrounding areas were families from Indochina. These families were assisted by local archdiocesan resources and funding for immediate housing and food. Nonetheless, the Archdiocese of San Antonio worked closely with the resettlement office of the USCCB, which had a branch in San Antonio. The cooperation between the two started when the USCCB was looking for sponsors for more than 300 refugees. A major difference at this moment in time, between Indochinese immigrants and Mexican immigrants was that Mexican immigrants had, in some cases, a network of friends and relatives to help support them in America. The former group did not, thus, the Archdiocese was playing a role akin to what the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City had played for Mexican-origin immigrants in the 1920s and 1930s.[45]

Alongside Mexican and Asian immigrants there were also immigrants from Eastern Europe and Ireland arriving in various regions of the United States. A portion of those immigrants were of Catholic background, therefore, like Mexican immigrants before them, they found a home within the Church. From the late 1970s through the middle of the 1980s, many immigrant refugees from Poland arrived in the Archdiocese of San Antonio. Poles had a long

[44]"Rights of Immigrants," *Sooner Catholic,* August 10, 1986, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma Historical Society – Research Division.
[45]"Refugees Still Need Help," *Today's Catholic* Collection, March 28, 1980, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX.

history in the greater south Texas region, because many Polish immigrants had settled in Karnes County starting in 1854. Some of the towns in the county, including Cestahowa and PannaMaria were founded by Polish immigrants. Furthermore, earlier waves of Polish immigrants had settled in San Antonio proper, and many of them despite losing their language and part of their culture in the frenzy of Americanization that took place in the early twentieth-century, did not lose their religion and desire to help Polish newcomers.[46]

The Polish American Center, a branch of the Polish National Alliance Lodge 2540, based in San Antonio, worked closely with Archbishop Flores to bring aid to many Polish families, as they had done with so many Mexican immigrants in decades past. As with the immigration reform proposals the USCCB advocated for, a main purpose of resettling Polish refugees under the auspices of the Archdiocese of San Antonio, was the Catholic desire to maintain family unity. While it is true that government organizations made it a goal to keep families together, it did not bother secular officials as greatly as it did Catholic leaders, which influenced many Catholics, both European American and Mexican American, to financially contribute to the support of Polish refugees.[47]

Even though the story of Polish refugees in the late twentieth century seems far from that of Mexican-origin people and their relationship with the Catholic Church, it underscores that the Church had a positive relationship with immigrants to the United States throughout most of its history. Additionally, Mexican American people had made great socioeconomic advances from the 1920s to the 1980s, which allowed them to contribute to other immigrant groups, something previously difficult for most Mexican Americans. Aid received by Polish refugees through the

[46]"Food, Clothing, Furniture Sought for New Americans," *Today's Catholic* Collection, September 11, 1981, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, Texas.
[47]Martha Brinkman, "San Antonio Awaiting Nine Polish Refugees," *Today's Catholic* Collection, September 11, 1981, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX.

Archdiocese of San Antonio was very similar to that received by Mexican immigrants in earlier eras. The aid came in a variety of forms including small amounts of direct cash assistance gathered from donations and special collections; however, the main goal, as explained by the Seraphic Sisters, was to give those refugees jobs.[48]

Another story which seems distant from that of Mexican and Hispanic immigration is that of Irish immigrants in this era; however, there are similarities regarding support from the Church. Irish Catholics have had a long history of immigrating to the United States because of political repression and economic problems in their homeland. Even though their immigration tapered off in the twentieth century, Irish immigration continued. As with Hispanic immigration, the USCCB and the Archdiocese of San Antonio were advocates for immigration reform that benefited Irish Catholics. Cardinal John J. O' Conner of New York called on President Reagan and Congress in 1988 to grant amnesty to this group of people who desired "good jobs to send money home to their relatives."[49]

As the Reagan Administration and Congress debated immigration reform at the national level, immigrant rights kept on being violated by employers, even though anti-Mexican sentiment subsided ground and certain segments of Mexican-origin immigrants were becoming more fully assimilated within American society. Despite the change for Mexican-origin people in the country; the majority continued to be lower-income and undereducated. The perception among more conservative White Americans of Hispanics as being solely Mexican, remained constant, and random raids by immigration officials from the Immigration and Naturalization Services (INS) continued in the 1980s. Both the archdioceses stood firmly opposed to those

[48]"Texans Thanked for Aid to Refugees," *Today's Catholic* Collection, November 13, 1981, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX, November 13, 1981.
[49]"Amnesty Asked for Illegal Irish Immigrants," *Today's Catholic* Collection, August 12, 1988, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX.

types of raids, because families were separated through them. Moreover, raids and random spot checks conducted by INS officials in many cases were discriminatory because American citizens of Hispanic ancestry were stopped and question and about their immigration status, while White Americans were not.[50]

Concern over INS raids was evident in the Archdioceses of San Antonio and Oklahoma City, and throughout the country, including in the various committees of the USCCB, specifically those dealing with immigration and social justice. Bishop F. Joseph Gossman of Raleigh, North Carolina like Archbishop Flores, called the raids an abomination. He described them as "cruel, heartless, and unnecessary use of force," because parents were being separated from children. Bishop Gossman acknowledged that laws are important and that a countrywithout laws cannot function, nonetheless, "human dignity and family cohesiveness" trumps such concerns. The opposing viewpoint consistently expressed throughout American history, was that immigrant workers took jobs from Americans. The Church, with exceptions in small pockets, argued that the perception of immigrants taking jobs from American workers was unfounded in the past as well as in the present.[51]

Despite anti-immigrant sentiment among a certain segment of the American population, strides were made during the Reagan Administration toward an immigration reform package favorable to the USCCB, as well, as the Archdioceses of San Antonio and Oklahoma City. The Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) was signed into law by President Reagan on November 6, 1986 after years of debate. The law had originally included an "experimental" guest worker program, proposed by the President's cabinet in 1981. Passage of the law came

[50]"INS Raids are Declared Harassment of Hispanics," *Today's Catholic* Collection, January 22, 1982, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX.
[51]Guy Munger, "Round-Up of Aliens Cruel," *Sooner Catholic,* August 30, 1992, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma Historical Society – Research Division.

after lobbying efforts made by pro-immigrant groups, immigrant families themselves, churches of several denominations, not only the Catholic Church, and meetings with the President. Amid the organizations that sent people to meet with the President on behalf of immigration reform was the USCCB, whose delegation including several bishops and archbishops. Although the meetings dealt with a number of issues including support for the President's anti-abortion position, such delegations critiqued the president for his lack of action on immigrant rights.[52]

Consequently, the Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) applied not only to people of Mexican origin, but to individuals and families of different national backgrounds who had lived in the United States since 1982. Notwithstanding the reality that Mexican immigrants were likely to benefit more from the path to legalization, because of their sheer numbers, a goal of the USCCB since the beginning of the decade was to have a law broad enough to cover refugees from places like Central America.[53] The number of Central Americans arriving mostly from El Salvador and Guatemala increased in the 1980s and was a consequence of American foreign policy according to some. Cardinal Timothy Manning, who served as the Archbishop of Los Angeles from 1970-1985, was among the primary movers in the Church who viewed American foreign policy as responsible for the upsurge in Central American immigrants.[54]

Although the Church response to Central American immigrants tended to be one of compassion and sympathy for their plight and generally agreed that U.S. foreign policy was at least partially responsible the responses of individual archdioceses or dioceses were different throughout the country. For example, Oklahoma City Catholics would take Central American

[52]"Bishops Visit President Reagan," *Today's Catholic* Collection, April 27, 1984, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX.
[53]"Allow Refugees to Stay Bishops Plead," *Today's Catholic* Collection, February 1, 1985, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX.
[54]Richard Daly, "USCC Lobbies for the Bishops," *Today's Catholic* Collection, May 11, 1984, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of The Incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX.

immigrants into their homes while their status was resolved, or at minimum found stable employment and housing. This was not itself an initiative that originated from Archdiocesan leadership instead it was something that in some cases was lay led, or if not, led by clergy who were not in positions of power other than being parish priests or nuns. These assistance efforts were occurring in regions across the country.

The overall purpose of the law was to provide a path to citizenship to undocumented immigrants, regardless of place of origin, who had arrived in the country prior to 1982. Pro-immigrant groups and individuals may have criticized other provisions of the law, such as fining employers who willingly hired illegal immigrants, and the employer's requirement to appear personally before immigration officials to back an applicant. Nevertheless, the Archdioceses of San Antonio and Oklahoma, and the wider Catholic community was content with the law.[55] As Bishop F. Joseph Gossman had made clear, the Catholic Church supported the principle of a nation of laws, therefore, for them the fining of employers was not necessarily a bad measure. The view in the Archdiocese of San Antonio was that the law made family reunification possible, allowed other families to remain together, all while shifting some of the burden to unscrupulous employers who would hire undocumented workers because they worked for lower wages.[56]

The legal system and the process of applying for benefits under IRCA provisions were likely to be a problem for many would-be beneficiaries. The question then became how to best help as many immigrants as possible gain their American citizenship. Unlike, larger national issues in which directives were given by the USCCB, the help provided to immigrants in navigating IRCA was left to the local dioceses and archdioceses to implement and fund. In the

[55]Laurie Hansen, "Proposed Immigration Rules Contrary to Spirit of Law," *Sooner Catholic,* February 22, 1987, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma Historical Society – Research Division.
[56]"Human Rights Involved in Immigration Legislation," *Today's Catholic* Collection*,* May 25, 1984, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX.

Archdiocese of Oklahoma City, Archbishop Charles Salatka called the matter of aiding Hispanics in becoming Americans an urgent matter, because that would allow them to have peace of mind and become full members of their communities and parishes. Archbishop Salatka's first step after IRCA's passage was to hire a director and assistant secretary to head the process of giving legal advice to applicants. The idea was that a core group of salaried employees would train a host of White and Mexican-origin Catholics in the archdiocese to fill out and gather necessary information about as many applicants as possible.[57]

Besides the hiring of a small team of legal and administrative experts to serve under the direction of archdiocesan leadership, Salatka issued a request for all parishes in Oklahoma City, including for those in the adjacent Dioceses of Tulsa and Little Rock, over which he served as prelate, to publish several notices regarding IRCA's provisions. Perhaps one of the most important of the notices published in Church bulletins, even those without a Hispanic presence, and in the *Sooner Catholic,* was for undocumented persons not to leave the country. The notice published in both English and Spanish, was made because of one of the strictest requirements of the law. This requirement placed the burden on the immigrant to prove that they had been in the United States continuously from November 6, 1980 until their application had been filed. Therefore, if they left the country for Christmas and Easter Holidays, for example, they would throw away their best shot at becoming American citizens.[58]

Parish volunteers made up the bulk of those helping thousands of immigrants in the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City, and over 1 million nationwide in submitting the application, fees, and proof for IRCA. Archdioceses, dioceses, and parishes nationwide, alongside immigrant

[57]Martha May CSJ, "Archdiocese Helps with Amnesty," *Sooner Catholic,* March 8, 1987, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma Historical Society – Research Division.
[58]Martha May CSJ, "Don't Leave Country Now, Undocumented," *Sooner Catholic,* April 5, 1987, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma Historical Society – Research Division.

and social justice ministries from the Episcopal and Methodist Churches, served as the frontline for immigrant families. However, as Msgr. Nicholas DiMarzio, director of the USCCB's Migration and Refugee Services mentioned, there was one detail about the volunteers that caused concern. The volunteers in dioceses in the Northeast, Midwest, and Oklahoma City itself were not fluent in Spanish, while some of the applicants were not fluent in English. Church officials, nationwide, then became involved, by issuing directives that volunteers should be trained in basic Spanish language skills, because close to seventy-five percent of those eligible for citizenship were of Hispanic background.[59]

From the necessity of teaching Spanish skills to White Catholic volunteers came other programs soon established or expanded by Archbishop Salatka. Unlike the efforts to help immigrants legalize their status in the country, the other programs were more closely aligned with social justice assistance to the less fortunate, or labor issues affecting people of different ethnic backgrounds. However, some of those programs were aimed directly at the assistance of Hispanics. A program titled *La Familia Unidad,* (the United Family), was an outreach program for Hispanic Catholics administered by the Catholic Social Ministries of the archdiocese.

The United Family program was located in South Oklahoma City and the purpose was to work holistically with Hispanic families, rather than in a piecemeal fashion. The Archdiocese of Oklahoma City especially among its more conservative members, was being critiqued for being a social justice and charitable organization, instead of one designed to save the souls of its adherents. That critique had been leveled at the Archdiocese of San Antonio since the 1940s when Archbishop Lucey initiated what became an extraordinary relationship between Mexican

[59]"Parishes May Help Millions of Illegals, "Sooner *Catholic,* January 11, 1987, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma Historical Society – Research Division.

Americans and the Church.[60] Nevertheless, to prove naysayers wrong, Archbishop Salatka's new initiative, administered by Bette Norton and Dania Sandoval as coordinator and case manager, respectively, was to meet the needs of Hispanics in education, advocacy, direct financial assistance, in some cases, and most importantly, as spiritual guides.[61]

In addition to Archbishop's Salatka's efforts to prove that the Church's main goal was to save souls, the social service wing of The United Family, and larger Catholic Social Ministries was inspired by the U.S. Bishop's Economic Pastoral, that was officially published in 1987, but which the USCCB had been releasing piecemeal throughout 1986. Economic Justice for All, as the economic pastoral was commonly known, did give immigrants, refugees, and Hispanics a central position in its pages; however, it also served as the foundation for the expansion of Catholic social justice ministries nationwide. The main concept behind the pastoral was the Church's idea that all people, regardless of race, nationality, social class, or economic standing had the right to actively participate in the economy. The USCCB's view was that measuring the health of the economy by how well the stock market was doing, or how much profit corporations were making had always been immoral. In the eyes of the Church, which they viewed as the eyes of Christ, the health of the economy could only be measured if poverty were sharply reduced and people stopped celebrating the massive wealth of a small percentage of the population.[62]

Archbishop Salatka's contention to prove that the Archdiocese was involved in saving souls, and not just a social service agency was preceded by the same type of efforts in the Archdiocese of San Antonio. Archbishop Flores and Ruben Sandoval, an attorney with the

[60]"What About Welfare," *Today's Catholic* Collection, April 4, 1980, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX.
[61]Martha May, CSJ, "Help for Hispanic Outreach Families Goal of New Program," *Sooner Catholic,* July 13, 1986, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma Historical Society – Research Division.
[62]"U.S. Bishops' Pastoral: Economic Justice for All," *Sooner Catholic,* February 22, 1987, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma Historical Society – Research Division.

MACC, called on the Church to teach that social justice and charity were not separate from the salvation of souls. In fact, social justice went hand in hand with creating a space for oneself in the afterlife. The idea that social justice and savings souls were separate was misguided, because it is a moral obligation based on the Bible to provide alms to the less fortunate. If a Churchfailed to support social justice activism, then the Church would be modeling the wrong moral values.[63]

Moreover, the Sisters of Divine Providence, who ministered primarily in the Southwest including San Antonio, were also advocating the same type of social teaching by the Church. "Concern for the materially poor" was not solely a conflict between the right and left within the political establishment, but a Catholic ideology. Throughout this period, several Church institutions and organizations were all attempting to prove that they served the ultimate purpose of saving souls, but many of their arguments were based on social justice; a social justice ideology that they claimed came directly from the Bible, and therefore, God.[64] The overall perspective of the Sisters was similar to that of nuns nationwide who argued that unjust social structures needed to be removed for the benefit of minorities. Sister Mary Augusta Neal of the University of Notre Dame believed that critics of Church participation in the political sphere were wrong, because social justice had been a consistent theme throughout Church history.[65]

Furthermore, since the promulgation of *Rerun Novarum* in 1891, the Church had been arguing against the unregulated market economy. The present was no different, because Pope John Paul II stated that this type of economy only served to benefit a small percentage of the population globally. Cardinal Roger Etchegaray, President of the Pontifical Council for Justice

---

[63]"Sandoval: Be Active in Social Justice System," *Today's Catholic* Collection, July 17, 1981, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX.
[64]"CDPs Told: Stand with the Poor," *Today's Catholic* Collection, July 17, 1981, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX.
[65]"U.S. Nuns Want Social Justice," *Today's Catholic* Collection, April 16, 1982, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX.

and Peace said that only a mixed economy with government regulation on behalf of the public could provide corrective mechanisms to promote a "more just and equitable distribution of goods."[66]

The Catholic Church was not the only religious organization to call for federal increases in social spending. Throughout the country, leaders of mainline Protestant denominations like the Episcopal, Methodist, and Presbyterian Churches had the same conception that Catholics did, in that the poor should be favored in government spending. Much of the criticism aimed at the Regan Administration was because of the increases in military spending, and cuts in social spending; the more liberal religious establishment considered this approach immoral. Mainline Protestant denominations had been active in social, labor, and educational struggles in the past, and joined with the Catholic Church to advocate for more funding in response to the support Reagan received among more conservative religious organizations, including the Southern Baptists during in his tour of Southern legislatures promoting his budget program.[67]

Of course, social justice advocacy was not a new issue by the time the economic pastoral was published. However, it served as an important reminder that the Church had been advocating for government intervention on behalf of the worker, the immigrant, and the poor, for almost a century by 1987.[68] Additionally, that advocacy was not only made at the national level by the USCCB, it was made at the international level by papal encyclicals, and at the local levels by various archdioceses, dioceses, and parishes, among them the Archdioceses of San Antonio and Oklahoma City. For instance, the 1980s began with a call by the Church to eliminate poverty to

---

[66]Cindy Wooden, "Unregulated Market Economy Cannot Protect the Poor," *Sooner Catholic,* January 3, 1993, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma Historical Society – Research Division.
[67]"Bishops, Protestant Leaders, Poor Should be Favored," *Today's Catholic* Collection, April 2, 1982, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX.
[68]"Refugee Policy Changes," *Today's Catholic* Collection*,* March 29, 1985, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX.

the greatest degree possible. The USCCB urged Congress to make the United States the global leader in the "eradication of world poverty," as a way to guarantee world peace, because poverty leads to chaos, desperation, violence, and rebellion. A perfect world, the Church understood, was not possible, but by increasing social spending within the country, and development assistance, while reducing military spending, world hunger could be dealt a massive blow.[69]

An important way to eliminate poverty in the United States, according to Catholic prelates like Archbishop Flores, Archbishop Salatka, and Bishop Thomas Kelley, who served as general secretary of the U.S. Catholic Conference, was to increase funding for food stamps.[70] Providing food stamps specifically directed to children, pregnant women, and the elderly was a moral imperative, the prelates argued, because it showed the world that the United States was a truly Christian nation, and leader of the democratic world, in contrast to the Soviet Union, which represented a godless and irresponsible society.[71]

A country as wealthy as the United States, in the view of the Church, could do much more to alleviate the poverty affecting a great number of its citizens. Jerry Filteau, a Catholic writer, argued that responsibility for the fight against poverty fell on all members of society. The problem was that people in suburbs and affluent cities were isolated from their impoverished neighbors, and therefore did not show empathy toward them, although they claimed to be Christian. Filteau, basing his ideology on Catholic social teaching, called for higher taxes on the wealthy, while eliminating income taxes for individuals and families that fell below the poverty

[69]"Eradicate Poverty for World Peace," *Today's Catholic* Collection, April 4, 1980, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX.
[70]Bishop Thomas Kelly, "More for Food Stamps," *Today's Catholic* Collection, March 14, 1980, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX.
[71]'Evils of Marxism, Capitalism," *Today's Catholic* Collection, September 18, 1981, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX.

line. This idea went directly against the beliefs of many Americans who voted for Reagan-Bush in 1980 and re-elected them in 1984.[72]

These writings by Filteau, and the USCCB, appeared "radical" to conservatives such as William F. Buckley, Jr., because of the fact that the Church at the national and local levels was aligning itself with legislative ideas like the Humphrey-Hawkins Full Employment Act, an amendment to the Employment Act of 1986. The act was sponsored by Representative Augustus Hawkins and Senator Hubert Humphrey, and signed into law by President Jimmy Carter in 1978.[73] Overall, the act was not heavily enforced after Carter's defeat and the subsequent ascension of President Reagan, which was a reason why the USCCB called on the federal government to reinvigorate a "liberal full employment bill," because work leads to dignity and progress.[74]

The view was that the Reagan Administration was not doing enough for minority groups whether they were Mexican American or African American. Not only did the Church feel that way, but they were joined by LULAC in claims that the government refused to enforce equal opportunity laws. Businesses did not apply those laws to undocumented workers residing in the country. LULAC's argument was that under the Equal Opportunity Employment Act (EEOC), "aliens employed inside the United States are protected," meaning that businesses had to follow the same regulations as with American citizens.[75]

---

[72]Jerry Filteau, "Poverty Amid U.S. Riches a Social, Moral Scandal," *Sooner Catholic,* December 14, 1986, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma Historical Society – Research Division.
[73]Jerry Filteau, "The Bishop's and the U.S. Economy," *Today's Catholic* Collection, January 18, 1985, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX.
[74]"Dignity of Work Upheld," *Today's Catholic* Collection, September 18, 1981, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX.
[75]"Discrimination Against Mexican Workers Charged," *LULAC News,"* December 1980, Chicano Collection-Edinburg Campus – University Library and Special Collections – The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, Edinburg, TX.

A cause of concern for impoverished and working-class families, and their advocates, such as the Church since Reagan's inauguration were cuts to social spending. These cuts all reduced federal funding for health care, food stamps, and public housing. Fr. Thomas Henry, Executive Director of the National Conference of Catholic Charities (NCCC), expressed opposition to those cuts. In the view of the NCCC, represented by Fr. Henry, the federal government was regressing to the pre-New Deal era vis-à-vis legislative efforts to help the average working-class American. Charities and non-profits in the United States, whether affiliated with the Catholic Church, or other churches, or secular organizations, were in the modern age not supposed to be the safety-net in an advanced county. The expectation was that those types of institutions were to serve as a place of last resort for individuals and families who were in acute circumstances and needed assistance immediately, because government aid, if they qualified, usually took time to be processed through the bureaucratic red tape.[76]

Additionally, what irked the USCCB and NCCC more than cuts to social spending were legislative proposals by Republicans which could have been detrimental to charities and non-profits. During the 1985 legislative session, for example, Congress proposed to limit the amount of deductions individuals could take regarding charitable contributions to "2 percent above the donor's gross income." Church leadership nationwide and in the Archdiocese of San Antonio were perplexed at the Republican initiatives, because the Reagan Administration appeared to be seeking a curtailment of charitable giving at the time that working-class families, the poor, and immigrants needed their assistance due to cuts in federal social spending.[77]

[76]Liz Armstrong, "Budget Priorities Stir Controversy," *Today's Catholic* Collection, January 18, 1985, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX.
[77]Richard Daly, "Tax Plan Could Hurt," *Today's Catholic* Collection, January 5, 1985, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX.

In addition to the cuts in social spending, much of the spending that was maintained by the federal government was administered differently than in the past. Under the Reagan Administration the distribution of funds to the states was made through block grants. These grants started almost as soon Congress approved Reagan's $35.2 billion reduction in social spending in July 1981. Richard Daly, a representative of several Catholic organizations such as the Texas Catholic Historical Society and St. Edwards University, argued that block grants were regressive because the federal government was giving state and local governments discretion over spending the limited social funds available. The regressive nature of the grants came in the way states and localities could distribute the money; meaning that in certain states like Texas, which had a history of racial discrimination, minorities could be adversely affected by the new measures.[78]

Moreover, since some educational programs were now going to be funded by block grants, a fear among the Archdiocese of San Antonio, and likely others, was that children would be adversely affected. In Texas the issue was more immediate because into the early 1980s the children of undocumented residents were prohibited from attending free public schools. The prohibition itself was not old, as it was enacted in 1975, without much in the way of public hearings. If Texas legislators were capable of preventing children from attaining education, even though a federal district court declared the law unconstitutional, they could be capable of cutting any benefits children might enjoy including nutrition programs partially funded by the federal government, even if those children happened to be American citizens.[79]

[78]Richard Daly, "Distribution of Block Grants Needs Monitoring," *Today's Catholic* Collection, October 2, 1981, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX.
[79]Richard Daly, "Undocumented Children in Public Schools," *Today's Catholic* Collection, October 9, 1981, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX.

While most of the advocacy efforts on behalf of social justice and spending was done at the national level, local parishes felt the brunt of cuts in social spending. To meet some of the problems, both immediate and long-term, several parishes in the Oklahoma City area started providing food to needy families, many of them immigrant newcomers. As some parishes were making those efforts, others were starting to provide meals for the homeless men and women at Oklahoma City's daytime home for the homeless, located on California Street. The parishes involved in that particular ministry included Epiphany Parish, St. Charles Parish, St. Andrew's, and Christ the King. Carlos Falcon, director of the homeland shelter thanked the Catholic Church for its efforts at providing a measure of decency and comfort to some of the most vulnerable members of society.[80]

Also, throughout the country other parishes and dioceses were initiating or expanding several programs designed to provide meals to the poor in the face of federal cuts to social spending. Franciscan Brother Giles Naedler and several other Franciscans in the New York City area operated a program to provide food in one of New York's poorest sections. However, the financial resources of Franciscans, as well as those of the Church in general have limits, therefore, the first beneficiaries of the meal program were over 70 shut-in seniors who had no family, or if they had, they had been abandoned by them. After the nutrition needs of these individuals were met, the volunteers would go to other homes to see if they could be of any assistance.[81]

[80]Martha May, CSJ, "Parishes Serve Brunch to Homeless every Sunday," *Sooner Catholic*, January 19, 1992, *Sooner Catholic* Collection, Oklahoma Historical Society – Research Division. Although the source does not specify the nationality of the immigrants.
[81]Chris Sheridan, "Serving the Poor," *Today's Catholic* Collection, March 14, 1980, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX.

Healthcare was another important provision included in the 1987 economic pastoral and had been an issue in the United States for almost the entire twentieth century. Healthcare benefits for the vulnerable in society became more important for the USCCB and local archdioceses in this era. Previous church efforts in areas such as San Antonio and Oklahoma City were mainly localized initiatives funded through local contributions, or provided by the Catholic Extension Society, but now, those efforts were providing too little to meet the overwhelming cost of health care.

Both the Archdioceses of San Antonio and Oklahoma City had funded clinics for low-income individuals, some for the general population, and some directly in Mexican American neighborhoods. A few of the clinics such as those established at the Little Flower Parish in Oklahoma City dated back as far as the 1920s, making them sixty-years old by the late-1980s. These clinics, as shown in previous chapters, were usually administered by a small group of salaried personal, but most of the physicians volunteered at the locations on a part-time rotating basis. In the late twentieth-century, as the Archdiocese of San Antonio recognized, the willingness of many physicians to volunteer their time was decreasing due to a number of reasons. First, the cost of medical school, like that of college in general, was slowly creeping upwards, meaning physicians needed to spend their efforts in earning money to pay off any debt they might have acquired when pursing higher education. Second, the medical field was becoming less of a helping profession; if people couldn't afford the services, they were not helped.[82]

The USCCB, concerned by this trend of declining physician volunteerism had since at least the mid-1970s called for a national health insurance system. The idea of a national health

[82]"Healthcare on Agenda," *Today's Catholic* Collection, April 11, 1980, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX.

care system was not novel or new by the 1970s, because it had been on the progressive agenda since the 1910s; nevertheless, among national institutions, the Catholic Church was one of the first to advocate for it. A point of contention, however, were the divisions among those who supported a national health insurance system. Supporters of such a program were primarily on the liberal-leaning side of the political spectrum, which in most cases meant they supported abortion as a healthcare "right," which neither the Archbishop Flores, nor Archbishop Salatka would ever have endorsed. Further, the USCCCB was adamant that the national Church would never encourage its adherents on a pro-national health care option if it included abortion funding, rather they would encourage the laity to pressure the government against such a program.[83]

Not only did the Church threaten to withhold support from government programs that funded abortion, it also requested that its adherents not contribute to charities and non-profits that in some manner were connected to abortion. In a couple of instances Church officials in Corpus Christi, Charleston, and other locations called on the laity to not fund United Way, because that organization supported Planned Parenthood, a group at odds with Catholic social teaching.[84]

Abortion, henceforth, by the 1980s played a key role in Church positions, at both the local and national levels.[85] Since the Supreme Court decision in Roe V. Wade (1973), the Catholic Church had been focusing significant attention on that issue, which meant that other issues were becoming less important, and receiving less coverage in the *Sooner Catholic* and *Today's Catholic.* An important connection between the Church, Mexican Americans, and

[83]Jim Lackey, "National Health Insurance and Lackey," *Today's Catholic* Collection, May 9, 1980, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX.
[84]"Catholics Asked to Shun United Way Due to Planned Parenthood Activity, *Today's Catholic* Collection, November 20, 1981, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX.
[85]Richard Daly, "The Hatch Amendment," *Today's Catholic* Collection, January 22, 1982, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX.

abortion is the fact that the Church viewed Mexicans and Hispanics in general as more traditional and family orientated. The importance lies in the support of the Hispanic community overall, but specifically, those of Mexican ancestry to the Church in its stance against abortion. While Americans to a large degree were becoming less religious, Mexican families, especially many of the newer immigrants, could be counted on to show up at anti-abortion rallies and meetings.[86] Of course not all Mexican-origin people were actively involved; nonetheless, as liberal views gained ground in the country, the Church could count on Mexican-origin people remaining more traditional.

Although labor appears to have taken a backseat with regard to coverage in official newspapers published by the Archdioceses of Oklahoma City and San Antonio, that does not imply that the Church in those regions was less interested in the struggles of Mexican-origin farmworkers than they had been in the past. Moreover, the UFW, the Texas Farm Workers Union, and the Church started to focus more on one aspect of the labor struggle for farmworkers in the 1980s. In the past the labor strikes and upheavals were aimed at a broad range of farmers; however, in the present, worker demands were made against large corporate farms, while trying to form alliances with small family farmers. Even though small farmers might try to take advantage of workers, in addition to hiring undocumented individuals, their hold on the regional economy was not as strong as it had once been. Therefore, Archbishop Flores called on farm workers and family farmers to work together to pressure the federal and state governments to provide farm subsidies and "increases in aid to families with dependent children."[87]

[86]"The Right to an Abortion," *Today's Catholic* Collection, July 3, 1981, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX.
[87]"Farmers Advised to Work Together," *Today's Catholic* Collection, February 8, 1980, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX.

Changes in perceptions about labor unions and farm workers occurred because of the rise of agribusiness and the decline of family farms in many regions of the country, including the Rio Grande Valley. Farmworkers, argued Msgr. George C. Higgins, needed to set the example of working together with a segment of the employers for common goals[88]. It was normal for farmworkers and unions, on the one hand and employers on the other to view each other with enmity, because of the past harassment suffered by many laborers, and their use of local law enforcement to enforce their will. Additionally, the Texas Farm Workers Union, Archdiocese of San Antonio, and Diocese of Brownsville agreed that White Americans were not necessarily the enemy and that many Mexican Americans were willing to take advantage of their less fortunate brethren.[89]

The "troqueros" were a group of Mexican American who the Church identified as taking advantage of Mexican-origin farm laborers. They would hire individuals to harvest crops for farmers, and who would then keep most of the earnings and not report any of the farmworker's earnings to the rightful authorities. Essentially, even if the worker was an American citizen, there was no record of them being employed because everything was a cash transaction, which the Church and social justice activists contended was immoral and illegal.[90]

Furthermore, the Archdiocese of San Antonio alongside the Diocese of Brownsville maintained its moral support for the Texas Farm Workers Union, which was still struggling to achieve collective bargaining rights for all agricultural workers in the state. The support by the 1980s had become largely moral and vocal, but funding for strikes had dried up from either

[88]"Farmworkers Set Example in Unions," *Today's Catholic* Collection, February 29, 1980, J.E. and L.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX.
[89]"The Growers Use Tricks to Exploit Workers," *El Cuhamil,* June 15, 1978, Chicano Collection-Edinburg Campus – University Library and Special Collections – The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, Edinburg, TX.
[90]Ibid.

Brownsville or San Antonio. Individually parishes, priests, and other religious organizations did provide food pantries for workers who might be adversely affected by strikes, or the seasonal nature of the agricultural business, but the process was no longer top-down directed as had been the case with Archbishop Lucey and Archbishop Furey in a previous era.[91]

Although the era of radicalism within the Archdiocese of San Antonio came to an end in the early 1970s, the relationship between the Church and Mexican Americans in the greater south Texas region remained positive and mutually beneficial. Simultaneously the relationship between Mexican Americans and the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City remained on friendly terms. The difference was that in the latter, there was never an era of radicalism, as with San Antonio during Archbishop's Lucey's tenure and Fr. Sherrill Smith's activism in the Rio Grande Valley. During the 1980s, the main focus of the encounters between the Church and Hispanics was on Church advocacy for immigration reform that benefited a wide range of nationalities including Mexicans, Central Americans, Asians, and Europeans.

Additionally, the Church itself was divided on the matter of supporting or opposing the Reagan Administration. The USCCB and Archbishops Flores and Salatka viewed Reagan's opposition to abortion as representative of Catholic social values, because for them social justice extended to the unborn. On these views the Church could count on an almost solidly pro-life Mexican-origin community to support them. However, throughout the Reagan Presidency, the Church stood in opposition to his cuts in social spending.

A shift in the Catholic perception of Mexican-origin people, one more visible in Oklahoma City than in San Antonio, was the acceptance of a multicultural Church. The San Antonio region had always had a larger Mexican presence, meaning multiculturalism in that

[91]"The Difference Between the TFW and UFW Unions," *El Cuhamil,* October 1982, Chicano Collection-Edinburg Campus – University Library and Special Collections – The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, Edinburg, TX

region was not a new aspect of the relationship between Church and Mexican-origin people. Meanwhile, the new multiculturalism sought by Archbishop Salatka in his archdiocese was not a result of the demands made by previous Chicano/a generation activists, instead the Church itself realized that changes needed to be made and took the initiative on the issue.

Overall, the Catholic Church, locally and nationally played the leading role in advocating for Mexican American rights throughout the 1980s. Furthermore, the Church was the first institution that increasingly included Mexican-origin people in its leadership ranks, whether in secular positions or as Archbishops like Patrick Flores of San Antonio. It was the Church that fought the day-to-day battles to help Mexican-origin people as they had with other immigrants in past decades. Yes, it is true that secular organizations were pivotal in getting legislation such as the Immigration Reform and Control Act enacted, however, it was the Church at the local level through its parishes and volunteers that guided hundreds of thousands of Mexican-origin people to achieve the dream of becoming American citizens. Furthermore, the Catholic Church during this period in both the archdioceses of Oklahoma City and San Antonio continued to provide English-language instruction to newcomer adults, emergency food relief, and other essential forms of aid. The Church has been a consistent advocate for Mexican-origin people beginning as early as the 1930s in Texas and as early as the 1920s in Oklahoma City, so it should come as no surprise that those dedicated advocacy efforts continued during the conservative Reagan years, when funding for social services for the poor was being systematically reduced through federal policies.

Epilogue

Although the Catholic Church does not hold sway over Mexican-origin people quite as strongly as it did in the decades prior to 1990, it still plays a very influential role in the Mexican-origin community in the United States. The relationship between the two has mostly been positive, with the Church providing aid to Mexican-origin people when it has been most needed. This aid has included food, medical, educational, and immigration services. Mexican-origin people are not quite as impoverished, or as confined to agricultural pursuits as was the case for much of the twentieth century, which means that the Church's efforts on their behalf are not quite as prevalent or as noticeable as they were in the past. However, the continuing influx of Mexican and other Hispanic immigrants has necessitated that the Church remain involved with the newer immigrants and be a voice for them in this country, including in the Archdiocese of San Antonio and the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City.

At the national level, Mexican-origin people are fast becoming the dominant segment within American Catholicism in terms of membership; however, the number of Hispanic Catholics has seen a steady decline in the 2010s. The growth of the Church still is maintained by the many Hispanic immigrants but conversion to Protestantism has been on the rise. In 2010, the proportion of Hispanics who are Catholics was sixty-seven percent, yet that number declined to fifty-five percent in a mere three years. In 2013, approximately twenty-two percent of Hispanics self-identified as members of Protestant Churches, especially the evangelical Protestant groups such as the Pentecostalists and other charismatic groups.[1]

[1]Michael Paulson," Even as U.S. Hispanics Lift Catholicism, Many are Leaving the Church Behind," *New York Times*, May 8, 2014, https://login.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/login?url=https://www-proquest-com.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/docview/1942789253?accountid12964, accessed October 2, 2020.

Despite the high number of Hispanics leaving the Roman Catholic Church, Mexican-origin people have remained more faithful than other Hispanic groups. Mexican-origin people's allegiance to the Catholic Church is attributed to that group's devotion to the Virgin of Guadalupe, which anchors the faith. As American-born Catholics, including higher-educated Mexican Americans, abandon the Church, the Mexican-origin working-class and Mexican immigrants continue filling the pews of Churches across the nation. Many traditionally Anglo-Catholic Churches which were heading for extinction have found new life as Mexican immigrants have increased in numbers. While most of those recent immigrants are impoverished and contribute only a relatively small amount of the financial support to the Churches, they volunteer their labor in many ways including construction, lawncare, and housekeeping services, which the Churches used to pay for, but which now have become largely free. Therefore, even though Church finances might be strained, outgoing funds have also decreased. At the same time, those parishes have become more oriented toward social services including assisting Mexican-origin people in applying for government programs and advocating for immigrant rights, while actively working to "recruit seminarians from among Mexican immigrants."[2]

Additionally, the Church across the nation has for the most part remained committed to social justice for all, including immigrants. The Church continues to lobby and pressure government officials at the national, state, and local levels to garner public funding for social welfare issues. Simultaneously, Church leaders still support workers' rights, although those issues are less prevalent in many Catholic publications, including the Oklahoma's *Sooner Catholic* and San Antonio's *Today's Catholic*. Congress, while remaining a Protestant

[2]Kirk Semple, "Mexicans Fill Pews, Even as the Church is Slow to Adapt," *New York Times*, March 26, 2011, https://login.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/login?url=https://www-proquest-com.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/docview/1634264164?accountid=12964, accessed on October 3, 2020.

stronghold has become home to a large Catholic minority which by 2019 had reached over thirty percent. [3]

Bishops and priests from around the nation attempt to use the high percentage of Catholic Congressmen and women in support of immigration reform. In 2013, for example, bishops and priests from major dioceses nationwide took to the pulpits to preach about the necessity of immigration reform, especially for those who had American-born children and had lived in the country for years. The stated goal was to catch the attention of Catholic Congressional representatives and lead them to pressure their non-Catholic colleagues in favor of at least partial reform.[4]

Other areas of activism in which the Church has become highly involved include anti-abortion and anti-homosexuality stances. In these areas, the Church, for the most part, still retains the strong support of Mexican-origin people and other Latinos. Indeed, it seems to be the case that within the Latino population in the United States, Mexican-origin people have stronger pro-life attitudes than other groups.[5]

The relationship between Mexican-origin people and the Catholic Church, locally and nationally, remains in good standing, and even though the percentage of Mexican-origin Catholics might decrease, overall numbers likely will not do so because as long as the flow of

[3]Michael J. O'Loughlin, "How Many Members of the New Congress are Catholic?" *America Magazine/The Jesuit Review*. https://www.americamagazine.org/politics-society/2019/01/03/how-many-members-new-congress-are-catholic#:~:text=Catholics%20now%20make%20up%2030.5%20percent%20of%20Congress%3B,House%20Nancy%20Pelosi%2C%20are%20more%20likely%20than%20 (accessed October 3, 2020).
[4]Michael D. Shear, Ashley Parker, "Catholic Push to Overhaul Immigration Goes to Pews: A Coordinated Message to Pressure Lawmakers," *New York Times,* August 22, 2013, https://login.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/login?url-https://www-proquest-com.ezproxy.lib.ou.edu/docview/1814915618?accountid=12964. (Accessed October 3, 2020)
[5]Sean M. Bolks and Diane Evans, Jerry L. Polinard, and Robert D. Wrinkle, "Core Beliefs and Attitudes: A Look at Latinos." *Social Science Quarterly*, Vol. 81, No. 1, "Hispanics in America at 2000" (March 2000): 257.

immigration continues the number of Catholics entering the United States will remain steady. While the current administration (2017-2021) has severely restricted the level of immigration, the nation's labor needs suggest that this will be more a short-term aberration than a long-term trend. Additionally, Mexican-origin people who leave the Church usually do so in later generations; the first and second generations residing in the United States tend to remain loyal to the faith. Moreover, the Church continues to support and fight for social justice, labor rights, and immigrant rights as evidenced by the policies espoused by Pope Francis II, whose "liberal" policies have aroused concern and even anger among more conservative members of the Church.

Nonetheless, the Archdioceses of San Antonio and Oklahoma City remain today, as they were for most of the twentieth century, sources of social support as well as spiritual uplift for the Mexican-origin communities they serve. The centrality of their role should cause us to broaden and reconsider the history of social reform movements and the role of the Catholic Church in twentieth-century America.

Bibliography

Primary Sources:

Archives of the Archdiocese of San Antonio
Robert E. Lucey Collection
Sherrill Smith Collection

Archives of the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City
Bishop Francis C. Kelley Collection

Benson Latin American Collection, University of Texas
Ben Garza Collection
LULAC: Oliver Douglas Weeks Collection

University and Special Collections – The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley
Chicano Collection
San Antonio Express Collection

J.E. and M.E. Mabee Library, University of the Incarnate Word
Today's Catholic Collection

Louis J. Blume Library, St. Mary's University
Alamo Messenger Collection
Alamo Register Collection

Newspaper Collection, Oklahoma History Center
Sooner Catholic Collection

Texas Collection, Baylor University
Southern Messenger Collection

Newspapers and Periodicals

Alamo Messenger
Alamo Register
Catholic Home
Chicago Daily Tribune
Los Angeles Times
New York Times
San Antonio Express News
Sooner Catholic
Southern Messenger
Southwest Courier
Today's Catholic
Wall Street Journal
Washington Post

Papal Encyclicals

John XXIII, *Mater et Magistra,* 1961

_____, *Pacem in Terris,* 1963

Leo XIII. *Rerum Novarum,* 1891

Paul VI, *Populorum Progressio*, 1967

_____, *Octogesima Adveniens*, 1971

Pius XI. *Quadragesimo Anno*, 1931

Statements of United States Catholic Bishops

A Decade after "Economic Justice for All:" Continuing Principles, Changing Context, New Challenges, 1996.

Brothers and Sisters to Us, 1979.

Economic Justice for All, 1986.

Everyday Christianity: To Hunger and Thirst for Justice, 1998.

Sharing Catholic Social Teaching: Challenges and Directions, 1998.

Statement on Comprehensive Immigration Reform, 2012.

Strangers no Longer: Together on the Journey of Hope, 2003.

The Family, 1976.

Welcoming the Stranger Among Us: *Unity in Diversity*, 2001.

Books

Aquinas, Thomas. *Summa Theologica*. Translated by Fathers of the English Dominican Province. New York: Benziger Brothers, 1995; originally published in 1485.

Catholic Church. *Pastoral Care of the Sick = Cuidado Pastoral de los Enfermos*. San Antonio: Mexican American Cultural Center, 1986.

Mueller, Franz. *The Church and the Social Question*. Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute, 1984.

Pesch, S.J., Fr. Heinrich. *Ethics and the National Economy.* Translated by Rupert Ederer. Norfolk: IHS Press, 2004; originally published in 1917.

Tawney, H. Richard. *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism.* New York: Harcourt Brace and Company, 1948; originally published in 1926.

Taylor, Paul S. *An American-Mexican Frontier: Nueces County, Texas.* New York: Russell and Russell, 1934.

_____. *Mexican Labor in the United States: Dimmit County, Winter Garden District, South Texas*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1930.

Schunk, J. Michael. *That They Be One: The Social Teachings of the Papal Encyclicals, 1740-1989.* Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 1991.

Weber, Max. *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism.* Translated by Talcott Parsons. New York: Alexander Street Press, 2011; originally published in 1905.

Wogaman, J. Philip. *Economics and Ethics: A Christian Inquiry.* Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986.

Secondary Works:

Books

Acuna, Rodolfo. *Occupied America: A History of Chicanos*, 3rd Ed. New York: Harper-Collins, 1988.

Adler, Jr., Gary, Tricia C. Bruce, and Brian Starks, eds., *American Parishes: Remaking Local Catholicism.* New York: Fordham University Press, 2019.

Alba, Richard, Albert J. Raboteau, and Josh DeWind, eds. *Immigration and Religion in America: Comparative and Historical Perspectives*. New York: New York University Press, 2009.

Aleman, Richard. *The Hound of Distribution: A Solution for Our Social and Economic Crisis.* Charlotte: Saint Benedict Press, LLC., 2015.

Almaraz, D. Felix. *The Mexican Borderlands*. Manhattan: Sunflower University Press, 1985.

Allsup, Carl. *The American G.I. Forum: Origins and Evolution*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1982.

Andreas Peter. *Border Games: Policing the U.S.-Mexico Divide.* Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2009.

Avella, M. Steven. *Sacramento and the Catholic Church: Shaping a Capital City.* Reno: University of Nevada Press, 2008.

Avila, Charles. *Ownership: Early Christian Teaching*. Maryknoll: Orbis, 1983.

Bailey, James. *Rethinking Poverty: Income, Assets, and the Catholic Social Justice Tradition*. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2010.

Balderrama, E. Francisco and Raymond Rodriguez. *Decade of Betrayal: Mexican Repatriation in the 1930s*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1995.

Baldillo, David. *Latinos and the New Immigrant Church.* Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2006.

Barger, W.K., Ernesto M. Reza, and Baldemar Velásquez. *The Farm Labor Movement in the Midwest: Social Change and Adaptation among Migrant Farmworkers.* Austin: University of Texas Press, 1994.

Barrera, Albino. *Modern Catholic Social Documents and Political Economy*. Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2001.

Barry, Tom, Harry Browne, and Beth Sims. *Crossing the Line: Immigrants, Economic Integration, and Drug Enforcement on the U.S.-Mexico Border*. Albuquerque: Resource Center Press, 1994.

Baum, Gregory, John Aloysius Coleman, and Marcus Lefebure. *The Church and Racism*. New York: Seabury Press, 1982.

Bayer, C. Richard. *Capitalism and Christianity: The Possibility of Christian Personalism*. Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 1999.

Benne, Robert. *The Ethic of Democratic Capitalism: A Moral Reassessment*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1981.

Blank, M. Rebecca. *Is the Market Moral? A Dialogue on Religion, Economics, and Justice.* Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2004.

Blanton, K. Carlos. *The Strange Career of Bilingual Education in Texas, 1836-1981.* College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2004.

Bloomquist, Karen L., and John R. Stumme. *The Promise of Lutheran Ethics.* Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1998.

Bowman, P. Timothy. *Blood Oranges: Colonialism and Agriculture in the South Tex*as *Borderlands*. Texas A&M University Press, 2016.

Bromley, G. David. *Vatican II and U.S. Catholicism.* Greenwich: JAI Press, 1991.

Bronder, E. Saul. *Social Justice & Church Authority: The Public Life of Archbishop Robert E. Lucey*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1982.

Brown, G. Peter and Henry Shue. *The Border That Joins: Mexican Migrants and U.S. Responsibility.* Totowa: Rowman and Littlefield, 1983.

Budde, L. Michael and Robert W. Brimlow. *The Church as Counterculture*. Albany: State University Press of New York Press, 2000.

Byrnes, A. Timothy. *Catholic Bishops in American Politics*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991.

Calavita, Kitty. *Inside the State: The Bracero Program, Immigration, and the I.N.S.* New York: Routledge, 1992.

Camin, Hector Aguilar, and Lorenzo Meyer, *In the Shadow of the Mexican Revolution: Contemporary Mexican History, 1910-1989.* Austin: University of Texas Press, 1993.

Cardoso, Lawrence. *Mexican Emigration to the United States: 1897-1931*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1980.

Carroll, J. Patrick. *Felix Longoria's Wake: Bereavement, Racism, and the Rise of Mexican American Activism.* Austin: University of Texas Press, 2003.

Casarella, J. Peter and Raul Gomez. *El Cuerpo de Cristo: The Hispanic Presence in the U.S. Catholic Church*. Lima: Academic Renewal Press, 2003.

Cenker, William. *The Multicultural Church: A New Landscape in U.S. Theologies*. New York: Paulist Press, 1996.

Chavez, R. John. *The Lost Land: The Chicano Image of the Southwest.* Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1984.

Chavez, Leo. *Shadowed Lives: Undocumented Immigrants in American Society*. Fort Worth: Harcourt Brace College Publishers, 1998.

Cohen, Deborah. *Braceros: Migrant Citizens and Transnational Subjects in the Postwar United States and Mexico*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011.

Cole, Stephanie and Alison M. Parker. *Beyond Black and White: Race, Ethnicity, and Gender in the U.S. South and Southwest.* College Station: Texas A&M Press, 2004.

Con Davis-Undiano, Robert. *Mestizos Come Home! Making and Claiming Mexican American Identity.* Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2017.

Curran, Charles. *Catholic Social Teaching, 1891-Present: A Historical, Theological, and Ethical Analysis*. Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2002.

_____ and Leslie Griffin. *The Catholic Church, Morality, and Politics*. New York: Paulist Press, 2001.

De Leon, Arnoldo. *They Called them Greasers: Anglo Attitudes Toward Mexicans, 1821-1900.* Austin: University of Texas Press, 1983.

Del Castillo, G. Richard. *World War II and Mexican American Civil Rights.* Austin: University of Texas Press, 2008.

Doty, L. Roxanne. *The Law into Their Own Hands: Immigration and the Politics of Exceptionalism*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2009.

Ederer, J. Rupert. *Economics as if God Matters: More than a Century of Papal Teaching.* Lanham: The Scarecrow Press, 2011.

Emmet H. John. *The Church and the Liberal Society.* Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1961.

Espin, O. Orlando. *Building Bridges, Doing Justice: Constructing a Latino/a Ecumenical Theology*. Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2009.

Espinosa, Gaston and Mario T. Garcia. *Mexican American Religions: Spirituality, Activism, and Culture*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2008.

Fanfani, Amintore. *Catholicism, Protestantism, and Capitalism.* Fwd. by Charles M.A. Clark, Int. by Giorgio Campanini. Norfolk: IHS Press, 2003.

Feuerherd, Peter. *The Radical Gospel of Bishop Thomas Gumbleton.* Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2019

Fields, Bryan. *The Catholic Ethic and Global Capitalism*. London: Taylor and Francis, 2018.

Finn, K. Daniel. *The Moral Economic of Markets: Assessing Claims About Markets and Justice*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006.

_____. *The True Wealth of Nations: Catholic Social Thought on Economic Life.* New York: Oxford University Press, 2010.

_____. *Christian Economic Ethics: History and Implications.* Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 2013.

Flores, William and Rita Benamoyer, Eds., *Latino Cultural Citizenship: Claiming Identity, Space, and Rights.* Boston: Beacon Press, 1998.

Flores, H. John. *The Mexican Revolution in Chicago: Immigration Politics from the Early Twentieth Century to the Cold War*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2018.

Foley, Neil. *Mexicans in the Making of America.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2014.

_____. *Quest for Equality: The Failed Promise of Black-Brown Solidarity.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010.

Forbes, Jack. *Aztecas del Norte: The Chicanos of Aztlan.* Greenwich: Fawcett Publications, 1973.

Galarza, Ernesto. *Merchants of Labor: The Mexican Bracero Story, an Account of the Managed Migration of Mexican Farm Workers in California, 1942-1960*. Charlotte: McNally and Loftin, 1964.

Garcia, M. Ignacio. *Hector P. Garcia: In Relentless Pursuit of Justice.* Houston: Arte Publico Press, 2003.

_____. *United We Win: The Rise and Fall of La Raza Unida Party*. Tucson: University of Arizona, Mexican American Studies Research Center, 1989.

_____. *Viva Kennedy: Mexican Americans in Search of Camelot*. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2000.

Garcia, Jerry. *We are Aztlan: Chicanx Histories on the Northern Borderlands.* Pullman: WSU Press Washington State University Press, 2017.

Garcia, R. Juan. *Operation Wetback: The Mass Deportation of Mexican Undocumented Workers in 1954*. Westport: Greenwood Press, 1980.

_____. *Mexicans in the Midwest, 1900-1932*. Tucson: University of ArizonaPress, 1996.

Garcia, T. Mario. *Mexican Americans: Leadership, Ideology, and Identity, 1930-1960.* New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989.

_____. *Catolicos: Resistance and Affirmation in Chicano Catholic History*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2008.

_____. and Sal Castro. *Blowout! Sal Castro and the Chicano Struggle for. EducationalJustice*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011.

Garcia, Matt. *A World of Its Own: Race, Labor, and Citrus in the Making of Greater Los Angeles, 1900-1970.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001.

Gibson, David. *The Coming Catholic Church: How the Faithful are Shaping a New American Catholicism*. San Francisco: Harper, 2003.

Gillis, Chester. *Roman Catholicism in America*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2020.

Gomez, Laura. *Manifest Destinies: The Making of the Mexican American Race.* New York: New York University Press, 2007.

Gonzalez, G. Manuel. *Mexicanos: A History of Mexicans in the United States.* Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 1999.

Gremillon, Joseph. *The Gospel of Peace and Justice: Catholic Social Teaching since Pope John.* Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1976.

Gutierrez, G. David. *Walls and Mirrors: Mexican-Americans, Mexican Immigrants and the Politics of Identity.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995.

_____ ed. *The Columbia history of Latinos in the United States Since 1960.* New York: Columbia University Press, 2006.

Hacsci, A. Timothy. *Children as Pawns: The Politics of Educational Reform*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001.

Hart, M. John. *Border Crossings: Mexican and Mexican-American Workers*. Wilmington: SR Books, 1998.

Heine, Joy, and Cynthia Brook, eds. *A Worker Justice Reader: Essential Writings on Religion Labor*. Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2010.

Hinojosa, M. Gilberto, Jay P. Nolan, Eds. *Mexican Americans and the Catholic Church, 1900-1965.* Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1994.

Hitchcock, James. *Abortion, Religious Freedom, and Catholic Politics.* New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2016.

Hernandez, A. Jose. *Mutual Aid for Survival: The Case of the Mexican American.* Malabar: Krieger, 1983.

Holland, Joe. *Modern Catholic Social Teaching: The Popes Confront the Industrial Age, 1740-1958*. New York: Paulist, 2003.

Hollenbach, David. *Justice, Peace, and Human Rights: American Catholic Social Ethics in a Pluralistic World.* New York: Crossroad, 1988.

_____. *The Common Good and Christian Ethics*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002.

Hondagneu-Solelo, Pierrette. *Religion and Social Justice for Immigrants*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2007.

Houck, W. John and Oliver F. Williams. *Co-Creation and Capitalism: John Paul II's Laborem Exercens.* Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, 1983.

Issel, William. *Church and State in the City: Catholics and Politics in Twentieth-Century San Francisco*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2013.

Jenkins, Craig, J. *The Politics of Insurgency: The Farm Worker Movement in the 1960s.* New York: Columbia University Press, 1985.

Jenkinson, Michael. Tijerina: *Land Grant Conflict in New Mexico.* Albuquerque: Paisano Press, 1968.

Jimenez, R. Tomas. *Replenished Ethnicity: Mexican Americans, Immigration, and Identity.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010.

Johnson, H. Benjamin. *Revolution in Texas: How A Forgotten Rebellion and Its Bloody Suppression Turned Mexicans into Americans.* New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003.

Johnson, V. Tyler. *Devotion to the Adopted Country: U.S. Immigrant Volunteers in the Mexican War*. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2012.

Kanstroom, Daniel. *Deportation Nation: Outsiders in American History*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007.

Kaplowitz, A. Craig. *LULAC, Mexican Americans, and National Policy*. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2005.

Laham, Nicholas. *Ronald Reagan and the Politics of Immigration Reform*. Westport: Praeger, 2000.

Lampe, E. Philip. *Hispanics in the Church: Up from the Cellar*. San Francisco: Catholic Scholars Press, 1994.

Landes, Ruth. *Latin Americans of the Southwest.* New York: McGraw-Hill, Inc., 1965.

LeMay, C. Michael. *Anatomy of a Public Policy: The Reform of Contemporary American Immigration Law.* Westport: Praeger, 1994.

Long, D. Stephen. *The Goodness of God: Theology, church, and the Social Order*. Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2001.

MacLachlan, M. Colin and William H. Beezely, *El Gran Pueblo: A History of Greater Mexico.* Upper Saddle River: Prentice Hall, 2004.

Martinez, Deidre. *Who Speaks for Hispanics? Hispanic Interest Groups in Washington.* Albany: SUNY Press, 2009.

Martinez, J. Oscar. *Troublesome Border.* Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 2006

_____. *Mexican-origin People in the United States: A Topical History.* Tucson: University Arizona Press, 2001.

Marquez, Benjamin. *Constructing Identities in Mexican American Political Organizations: Choosing Issues, Taking Sides.* Austin: University of Texas Press, 2003.

_____. *LULAC: The Evolution of a Mexican American Political Organization.* Austin: University of Texas Press, 1993.

Massa, S.J., Mark S. *The American Catholic Revolution: How the Sixties Changed the Church Forever*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2010.

Matovina, Timothy. *Latino Catholicism: Transformation in America's Largest Church.* Liguori: Liguori Publications, 2013.

_____. Guadalupe and Her Faithful: Latino Catholics in San Antonio, from Colonial Origins to Present. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2005.

McGreevy, T. John. *Catholicism and American Freedom: A History*. New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2003.

McGuinness, M. Margaret, and James T. Fisher, Eds. *Roman Catholicism in the United States: A Thematic History*. New York: Fordham University Press, 2019.

McKenna, E. Kevin. *A Concise Guide to Catholic Social Teaching.* Notre Dame: Ave Maria Press, 2002.

Meir, Matt and Margo Gutierrez, Eds., *Encyclopedia of Mexican American Civil Rights Movement*. Westport: Greenwood Press, 2000.

Miller, Tom. *On the Border: Portraits of America's Southwestern Frontier*. New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1981.

Miller, D. William. *A Harsh and Dreadful Love: Dorothy Day and the Catholic Worker Movement*. Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 2004.

Misner, Paul. *Social Catholicism in Europe: From the Onset of Industrialization to the First World War*. New York: Crossroad, 1991.

Moore, Joan W. and Harry Pachon. *Mexican Americans*. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1976.

Munoz, Carlos. *Youth, Identity, Power: The Chicano Generation.* New York: Verso, 1989.

Murray, Andrew. *Humility: The Beauty of Holiness*. Abbotsford: Aneko Press, 2016.

Montejano, David. *Anglos and Mexicans in the Making of Texas, 1836-1986.* Austin: University of Texas Press, 1986.

Montwieler, H. Nancy. *The Immigration Reform Law of 1986.* Washington, D.C.: Bureau of National Affairs, 1987.

Mota V. Josefina, and Felipe Galindo. *Nosotros Los Dreamers: Historias de Vida Mas Alla de la Frontera.* Mexico City: Grijalbo, 2016.

Nabokov, Peter. *Tijerina and the Courthouse Raid*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1971.

Najera, R. Jennifer. *The Borderlands of Race: Mexican Segregation in a South Texas Town.* Austin: University of Texas Press, 2015.

Navarro, Armando. *Mexican American Youth Organization: Avant-Garde of the Chicano Movement in Texas*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1995.

Nepstad, E. Sharon. *Catholic Social Activism: Progressive Movements in the United States.* New York: New York University Press, 2019.

Nevis, Joseph. *Operation Gatekeeper: The Rise of the "Illegal Alien" and the Making of the U.S.-Mexico Boundary*. New York: Routledge, 2002.

Newton, Nina. *Illegal, Alien, or Immigrant: The Politics of Immigration Reform*. New York: New York University Press, 2008.

Ngai, Mai M. *Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004.

Noonan, John Thomas. *A Church That Can and Cannot Change: The Development of Catholic Moral Teaching*. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2005.

Novak, Michael. *The Catholic Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. New York: Free Press, 1993.

O'Toole, M. James. *The Faithful: A History of Catholics in America*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2008.

Oboler, Suzanne, ed., *Latinos and Citizenship: The Dilemma of Belonging.* New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006.

Olivas, Michael, Ed., *Colored Men and Hombres Aqui: Hernandez v. Texas and the Rise of Mexican American Lawyering.* Houston: Arte Publico Press, 2006.

Omi, Michael and Howard Winant. *Racial Formation in the United States: From the 1960s to the 1980s.* New York: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1987.

Oropeza, Lorena. *Raza Si! Guerra No! Chicano Protest and Patriotism during the Vietnam War Era*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005.

Orozco, E. Cynthia. *No Mexican, Women, or Dogs Allowed: The Rise of the Mexican American Civil Rights Movement.* Austin: University of Texas Press, 2010.

Ortiz, Manuel. *The Hispanic Challenge: Opportunities Confronting the Church*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1993.

Pabst, Adrian. *The Crisis of Global Capitalism: Pope Benedict XVI's Social Encyclical and The Future of Political Economy*. Cambridge: James Clarke and Co., 2012.

Pardo. F. Osvaldo. *The Origins of Mexican Catholicism: Nahua Rituals and Christian Sacraments in Sixteenth-Century Mexico*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2004.

Perea, F. Juan, Ed. *Immigrants Out! Nativism and the Anti-Immigrant Impulse in the United States.* New York: New York University Press, 1997.

Perkins, Clifford Alan. *Border Patrol: With the U.S. Immigration Service on the Mexican Boundary, 1910-1954*. El Paso: Texas Western Press, 1978.

Phan, C. Peter and Diana L. Hayes. *Many Faces, One Church: Cultural Diversity and the American Catholic Experience*. Lahman: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2005.

Pitti, M. Gina. "*A Ghastly International Racket:" The Catholic Church and the Bracero Program in California, 1942-1964.* Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2001.

Plascencia, Luis. *Disenchanting Citizenship: Mexican Migrants and the Boundaries of Belonging.* New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2012.

Ramirez, A. Jose. *To the Line of Fire: Mexican Texans and World War I.* College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2009.

Ramos, A.J. Henry. *The American G.I. Forum: In Pursuit of the Dream, 1948-1983.* Houston: Arte Publico Press, 1998.

Ritenour, Shawn. *Foundations of Economics: A Christian View*. New York: Wipf and Stock, 2010.

Rodriguez, E Jaime and Kathryn Vincent, Eds. *Common Border, Uncommon Paths: Race, Culture, and National Identity in U.S.-Mexican Relations*. Wilmington: Scholarly Resources, 1997.

Rodriguez, S. Marc. *The Tejano Diaspora: Mexican Americans and Ethnic Relations in Texas and Wisconsin*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011.

Rodriguez, Richard. *Brown: The Last Discovery of America*. New York: Viking, 2002.

Roohan, E. James. *American Catholics and the Social Question, 1865-1900*. New York: Arno Press, 1976.

Rosales, F. Arturo. *Chicano! The Mexican American Civil Rights Movement*. Houston: Arte Publico Press, 1997.

Rosales, Francisco, ed., *Testimonio: A Documentary History of the Mexican American Struggle for Civil Rights.* Houston: Arte Publico Press, 2000.

Sanchez, J. George. *Becoming Mexican American.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1995.

San Miguel, Jr., Guadalupe. *"Let All of Them Take Heed": Mexican Americans and the Campaign for Educational Equality in Texas, 1910-1981.* Austin: University of Texas Press, 1987.

_____. *Brown, Not White: School Integration and the Chicano Movement in Houston.* College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2001.

Schuck, H. Peter. *Citizens, Strangers, and In-Betweens: Essays on Immigration and Citizenship* Boulder: Westview Press, 1998.

Seitz, C. John and Christine F. Hinze. *Working Alternatives: American and Catholic Experiments in Work and Economy*. New York: Fordham University Press, 2020.

Shadle, A. Matthew. *Interrupting Capitalism: Catholic Social Thought and the Economy.* New York: Oxford University Press, 2018.

Shapira, Harel. *Waiting for Jose: The Minutemen's Pursuit of America.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013.

Silk, Mark and Patricia O'Connell Killen. *The Future of Catholicism in America*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2019.

Sniegocki, John. *Catholic Social Teaching and Economic Globalization: The Quest for Alternatives.* Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 2009.

St. John, Rachel. *Line in the Sand: A History of the Western U.S.-Mexico Border.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011.

Steele, J. Thomas, Paul Fisher Rhetts and Barbe Await. *Seeds of Struggle/Harvest of Faith: The Papers of the Archdiocese of Santa Fe Catholic Cuarto Centennial Conference: The History of the Catholic Church in New Mexico*. Albuquerque: LPD Press, 1998.

Steiner, Stanley. *The Mexican Americans*. London: Minority Rights Group, 1979.

Strum, Philippa and Andrew Selee. *The Hispanic Challenge: What we Know about Latino Immigration.* Washington, D.C., Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, 2004.

Sue, Christina and Edward E. Telles. *Durable Ethnicity: Mexican Americans and the Ethnic Core.* New York: Oxford University Press, 2019.

Telles, E. Edward and Vilma Ortiz. *Generations of Exclusion: Mexican Americans, Assimilation, and Race.* New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2008.

Tergel, Alf. *Church and Society in the Modern Age*. Uppsala: Uppsala University Press, 1995.

Thompson, Jerry. *Cortina: Defending the Mexican Name in Texas.* College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2007.

Tichenor, J. Daniel. *Dividing Lines: The Politics of Immigration Control in America*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002.

Torres, L. Theresa. *The Paradox of Latina Religious Leadership in the Catholic Leadership in the Catholic Church: Las Guadalupanas of Kansas City*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2013.

Trevino, R. Roberto. *The Church in the Barrio: Mexican American Ethno-Catholicism in Houston*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006.

Tropman, E. John. *The Catholic Ethic and the Spirit of Community*. Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2002.

Tuck, D. Ruth. *Not with the Fist: Mexican Americans in a Southwestern City.* New York: Harcourt Brace, 1946.

Urbina, G. Martin. *Ethnic Realities of Mexican Americans: From Colonialism to 21st Century Globalization*. Springfield: Charles C. Thomas Publisher, Ltd., 2014.

Valencia, A. Richard. *Chicano Students and the Courts: The Mexican American Legal Struggle for Educational Equality*. New York: New York University Press, 2008.

Varacalli, A. Joseph. *The Catholic Experience in America*. Westport: Greenwood Press, 2006.

Vargas, Zaragosa. *Proletarians of the North: A History of Mexican Industrial Workers in Detroit and the Midwest, 1917-1933*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993.

_____. *Labor Rights Are Civil Rights: Mexican American workers in Twentieth-Century America*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013.

_____. *Crucible of Struggle: A history of Mexican Americans from Colonial Times to the Present Era*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2017.

Vasquez M. Jessica. *Mexican Americans Across Generations: Immigrant Families, Racial Realities*. New York: New York University Press, 2011.

Vigil, B. Ernesto. *The Crusade for Justice: Chicano Militancy and the Government's War on Dissent.* Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1999.

Villanueva, Nicholas, Jr. *The Lynching of Mexicans in the Texas Borderlands.* Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2017.

Warner, R. Stephen and Judith G. Wittner. *Gatherings in Diaspora: Religious Communities and the New Immigration*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1998.

Webb, Walter Prescott. *The Texas Rangers: A Century of Frontier Defense*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1965.

Weigel, George and Robert Royal. *Building the Free Society: Democracy, Capitalism, and Catholic Social Teaching*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993.

Wilkinson, Richard G., and Katie Pickett. *The Spirit Level: Why Greater Equality Makes Societies Stronger.* New York: Bloomsbury, 2010.

Wong, Carolyn. *Lobbying for Inclusion: Rights, Politics, and the Making of Immigration Policy.* New York: New York University Press, 2006.

Woods, Jr. E. Thomas. *The Church and the Market: A Catholic Defense of the Free Economy*. Lanham: Lexington Books, 2015.

Yarskinke, W. Amy. *All for One and One for All: A Celebration of 75 Years of the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC).* Virginia Beach: Donning, 2004.

Zamora, Emilio. *The World of the Mexican Worker.* College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1995

Peer-Reviewed Articles

Avella, M. Steven. "Catholicism in the Twentieth-Century West: The Next Frontier." *Catholic Historical Review* Vol. 97, No. 2 (2011): 219-249.

Burns, J. Jeffery. "Prelude to Reform: The Church in San Francisco Before the Council." *U.S. Catholic Historian* Vol. 23, No. 4 (2005): 1-15.

McCreery. "Catholics, Democrats, and the GOP in Contemporary America." *American Quarterly* Vol. 5, No. 3 (2007): 669-681.

Odem, E. Mary. "Our Lady of Guadalupe in the New South: Latino Immigrants and the Politics of Integration in the Catholic Church." *Journal of American Ethnic History* Vol. 24, No. 2 (Fall, 2004): 26-57.

Trevino, R. Roberto. "Facing Jim Crow: Catholic Sisters and the "" Mexican Problem"" in Texas." *Western Historical Quarterly* Vol. 34, No. 2 (Summer, 2003): 139-164.