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# New Jersey Catholic Records Newsletter, Vol. 19, No.1

New Jersey Catholic Historical Commission

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# New Jersey Catholic Records Newsletter

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AUTUMN 1999

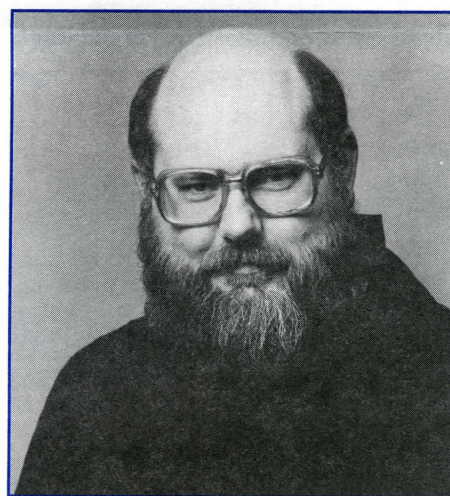
## Commission to Publish Bibliography of New Jersey Catholicism

The New Jersey Catholic Historical Records Commission will publish *New Jersey Catholicism: An Annotated Bibliography* before year's end. Compiled by Father Augustine Curley, O.S.B., a member of the Commission, and published in part with a grant from the New Jersey Historical Commission, this will be the first publication containing a reasonably complete listing of materials written about the experiences of Catholics in the state.

Catholics have been in New Jersey since early colonial times but in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries they were a very slight and unwelcome presence. In 1680 the colonial Assembly, meeting at Elizabeth, refused to seat William Douglas, newly-elected representative from Bergen, because he was a

Catholic and therefore ineligible to serve. A few years later Colonel Thomas Dongan, a Catholic appointed governor of New York by James Duke of York (later James II), brought two Jesuit priests from England and these priests visited Catholics in New Jersey for a time. This practice ceased when James II was overthrown by the "Glorious Revolution" of 1688 and for a time anti-Catholic laws were more stringently enforced. When East and West Jersey were merged into one royal colony in 1702 royal instructions excluded Catholics from political rights.

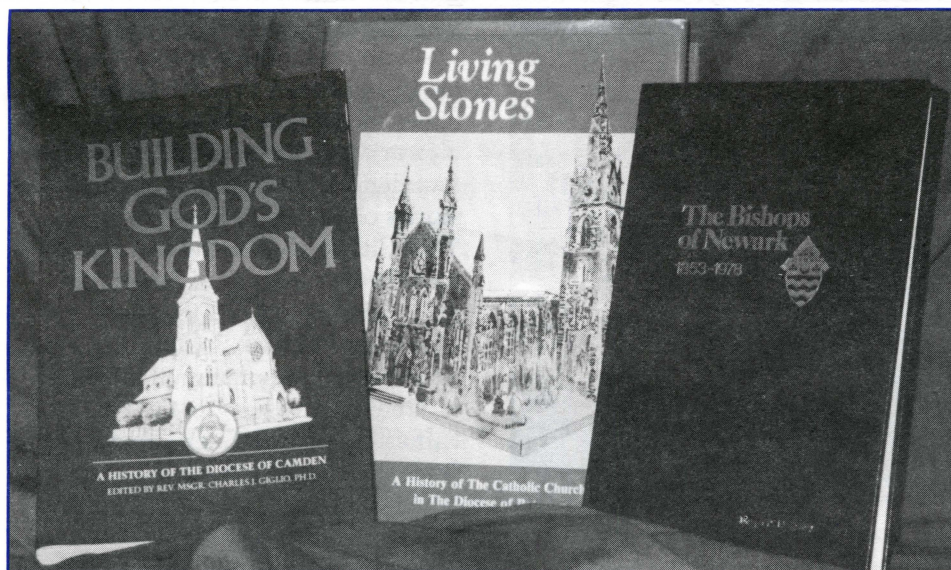
Nonetheless, the eighteenth century saw a gradual increase in the number of Catholics in New Jersey, and eventually a fairly regular missionary circuit by Jesuits from Philadelphia to serve the clusters of



Reverend Augustine J. Curley, O.S.B

their co-religionists scattered through the territory. If there was a widespread practical tolerance of Catholics, however, the laws did not change, and even the Constitution of 1776 declared Catholics ineligible for public office, although they were granted the vote on the same basis as Protestants. Not until 1844 did a new state constitution remove the religious restriction on office-holding. By then, the number of Catholics had increased substantially, and the state, like the nation, was on the verge of unprecedented immigration which would radically alter the position of Catholics in American society.

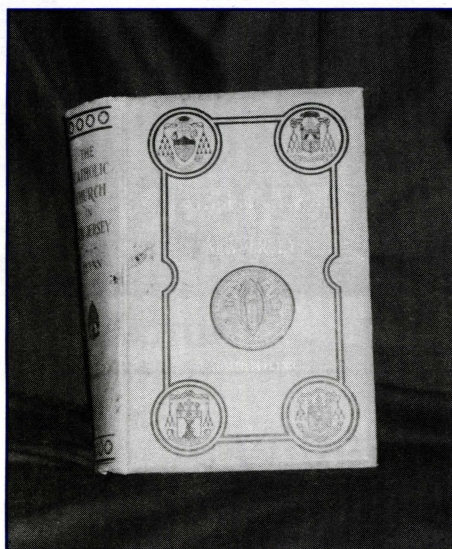
Given the circumstances, it is not surprising either that Catholics in New Jersey produced little written material about their experiences before the nineteenth century or that their neighbors wrote little about



Three of the more recent diocesan histories

continued on page 2





A well-worn copy of Father Joseph Flynn's *The Catholic Church in New Jersey*

them. The masses of Irish (most of them Catholic) and German (about one-third of them Catholic) immigrants who poured into the country beginning in the late 1840s occasioned a great deal of writing about Catholics and Catholicism and the presses have been running ever since.

Many publications in the first spate of activity sought to alert the nation to the dangers Catholics allegedly posed to the federal constitution and to the freedoms of Americans. James K. Cook delivered two addresses in December 1854 and January 1855 in Jersey City to the local chapter of the Order of United

Americans opposing foreign immigration and the Catholic Church.

They found their way into print, and now into the new bibliography. Catholics responded to such charges and a cottage industry developed in the publication of such controversies.

Catholics did not confine their publications to controversy. Fairly soon they began to record their experiences and to string together their history. One of the earliest attempts to deal with the topic, "Early Annals of Catholicity in New Jersey," appeared in *The Catholic World* in 1875, but the best-known appeared only in 1904. This was Joseph M. Flynn's *The Catholic Church in New Jersey*, which he compiled from data and narratives supplied by pastors of parishes throughout the state.

Two years later Father Walter T. Leahy published *The Catholic Church of the Diocese of Trenton, NJ*, a work very similar to Flynn's but focused on the southern 14 counties of the state. In 1938 Nelson R. Burr published "Religious History of New Jersey's Roman Catholics" in the Proceedings of the New Jersey Historical Society and John T. Catoir privately published in 1965 *A Brief History of the Catholic Church in New Jersey*.

Understandably, histories of individual dioceses have tended to supplant statewide studies. In 1978 *The Bishops of Newark* commemorated the 125th anniversary of the establish-

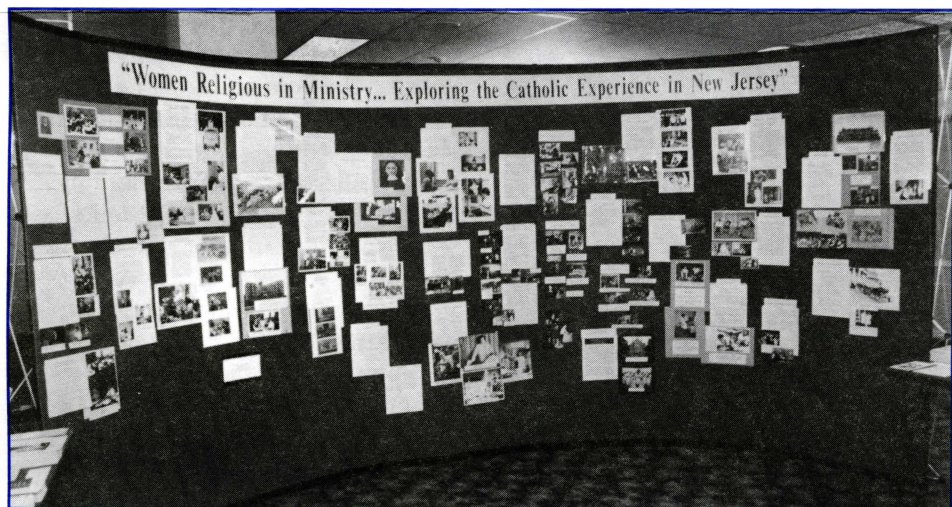
ment of the first diocese in the state. The year 1987 saw publication of two diocesan histories: *Building God's Kingdom*, a history of the Diocese of Camden compiled by Monsignor Charles Giglio and *Living Stones*, Monsignor Raymond J. Kupke's history of the Paterson diocese. Most recently, Monsignor Joseph C. Shenrock has edited *Upon This Rock*, a new history of the Diocese of Trenton.

The writing of the history of Catholics and Catholicism in the state has not been confined to studies of the higher administrative structure. Parish histories probably account for the largest number of publications. Educational institutions, too, have been a focus of study. The bibliography includes writings about ethnic groups that were largely Catholic, biographical studies, and a variety of other materials.

To our knowledge, there has been no previous effort at a complete bibliography. We are sure, moreover, that this effort to be as thorough as possible will not attain completeness. There are almost certainly items already published which have not come to our attention and there will certainly be additional publications in the future. We will try to notice these in the *Newsletter*, add them to the computer file, and publish a revised edition when that is justified. This first edition will be paperbound.

Father Augustine Curley, O.S.B. has compiled the bibliography. He developed his interest in New Jersey Catholic history at first from traditions handed down in his family. He was born in Livingston to a family long-established in north Jersey. His maternal ancestors lived in the Newark area before St. John's was founded and he grew up hearing stories of having to travel to New York City to receive the sacraments at Saint Peter's in Barclay Street. His great-grandmother's brother, Monsignor Patrick F. Connolly, was a prominent clergyman in the diocese of Trenton, and his great uncle, Father Thomas McEnery, founded Saint Philomena's in Livingston.

Father Augustine attended parochial schools in Livingston and Belleville, high school at St. Benedict's Prep and St. Peter's Prep,



A display of materials pertinent to the theme of the Commission's public program "Women Religious in Ministry: Exploring the Catholic Experience in New Jersey" suggests the broad range of published materials.



gained his baccalaureate degree at Assumption College in Worcester, Massachusetts and his doctorate at Boston College. He entered the Benedictine community at Newark Abbey in 1982 and was ordained in 1988. He teaches at St. Benedict's Prep, serves as school and abbey librarian and archivist, and is secretary to the abbot.

In his preparation of the bibliography Father Augustine consulted the previous efforts at compiling a bibliography of New Jersey Catholicism, the catalogs of numerous reference libraries, and other bibliographies. Particularly helpful were the archivists and librarians around the state who, as they routinely do, applied their expertise to facilitate the project. Special thanks go to Donald A. Sinclair for his continuing help, but particularly for pointing the way. The Commission also owes a special debt of gratitude to Charles Cummings of the Newark Public Library and to Stuart L. Spier for their meticulous examination of the whole text in order to prepare the index.

*New Jersey Catholicism; An Annotated Bibliography* should be available for shipment by Thanksgiving, which means it could be a fine Christmas present for that Jerseyan on your list who has everything. The book measures 8 1/2" by 11", has approximately 110 pages and is soft-bound. It will sell for \$15 per copy, plus tax where required, and \$1.10 for shipping and handling.

## Archbishop Gerety Honored

Archbishop Emeritus Peter Leo Gerety has always manifested a keen appreciation of the pastoral value of ecclesiastical history as well as of its inherent interest to those who study any aspect of the Catholic Church. He opened the Archdiocesan archives to competent researchers and played a key role in establishing the New Jersey Catholic Historical Records Commission. He also established the Gerety Lectures in Church History, the first of which was given by the late Monsignor John Tracy Ellis in November 1986. To stimulate interest in church history among

seminarians, he initiated an annual prize for the best essay on a topic of church history written by a seminarian at Immaculate Conception Seminary. After his retirement, Gerety chaired the Commission for several years.

At its September meeting, the Commission honored the retired Archbishop by presenting him with a plaque citing his contributions to furthering the study of church history in the state. Several of his fellow bishops and many former members of the Commission joined the current members in honoring Gerety.



*At the luncheon honoring Archbishop Emeritus Peter Leo Gerety (left to right) Archbishop Gerety, Bishop Frank J. Rodimer of Paterson, Monsignor William N. Field of Seton Hall University, who served as master of ceremonies, Bishop Dominic A. Marconi, Auxiliary Bishop of Newark and chair of the Commission, and Bishop Emeritus C. John Reiss of Trenton.*

### ORDER FORM

Please send me \_\_\_\_\_ copy (ies) of *New Jersey Catholicism: An Annotated Bibliography* @ \$15 per copy, plus \$1.10 handling and postage. New Jersey residents add six percent sales tax. Enclosed is my check for \_\_\_\_\_.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Send orders to: New Jersey Catholic Historical Records Commission  
ATTN: Professor Joseph F. Mahoney  
Department of History  
Seton Hall University, South Orange, NJ 07079-2687



*Two former members of the Commission, (left to right) Mrs. Teddy Murphy and Monsignor Edwin V. Sullivan, examine the plaque presented to Archbishop Gerety.*



# Save the Date! March 25, 2000

On September 11, 1899, six young women, composing the first freshman class of the new College of Saint Elizabeth at Convent Station, inaugurated Catholic higher education for women in New Jersey. Indeed, since Saint E's, (as the American penchant for shortening names christened the new institution) was the first college for women in New Jersey, the six were the pioneers of the entire enterprise of higher education for women in the state.

Throughout the academic year 1999-2000 the College will mark its centennial with a series of academic and cultural events. The New Jersey Catholic Historical Records Commission is pleased to sponsor one of those events on March 25, 2000, "One Hundred Years of Catholic Higher

Education for Women in New Jersey." Professor Barbara Bari of the College history department will begin the day's program with an examination of the developing role of Saint Elizabeth's over the past century. When the New Jersey Sisters of Charity started the college at Convent Station there were only a handful of women's colleges in the nation, and all colleges were single-gender institutions. Institutions of higher education proliferated in the United States during the first half of the twentieth century, and co-educational colleges became familiar on the academic scene.

Until the 1960s the number of women's colleges also continued to increase, to nearly 300 across the nation. But in the 1960s and 1970s

social and economic pressures led many colleges, whether male or female, to go co-ed, or to close their doors. Now there are only 78 women's colleges in the country. Three of them—Saint Elizabeth's, Georgian Court and Douglass College of Rutgers University—are in New Jersey.

The practical disappearance of all-male colleges (according to a recent article in the *Sunday Star-Ledger* only three remain in the country) and the dramatic decline in the number of women's colleges will be examined by a panel of historians and administrators from the four-year Catholic colleges in New Jersey. The panel will discuss the reasons why institutions went co-ed or remained women's colleges, what they hoped to attain by doing so, and how the results have met or failed to meet their expectations.

Further details about the program, as well as registration forms and directions, will appear in the next issue of this *Newsletter*. In the meantime, be sure to save the date. The program will be both enlightening and enjoyable!

Published by the New Jersey Catholic Historical Records Commission,  
Seton Hall University, South Orange, New Jersey 07079-2687

Most Reverend Dominic A. Marconi, D.D., *Chairman*; Reverend Monsignor Joseph C. Shenrock, P.A., *Vice Chairman*; Barbara Bari; JoAnn Cotz; Reverend Augustine Curley, O.S.B.; Reverend Daniel A. Degnan, S.J.; Reverend Monsignor William N. Field; Reverend Monsignor Charles J. Giglio; Reverend Michael G. Krull; Reverend Raymond J. Kupke; Joseph F. Mahoney; Sister Margherita Marchione, M.P.F.; Elizabeth Milliken; Reverend Monsignor Robert G. Moneta; Allan Nelson; Sister Irene Marie Richards, O.P.; Mark W. Rocha; Sister Thomas Mary Salerno, S.C.; Reverend Monsignor Francis R. Seymour; Reverend Joseph D. Wallace; Peter J. Wosh. Joseph F. Mahoney, *Newsletter Editor*

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