

American Catholic Historical Society

263 SOUTH FOURTH STREET | PHILADELPHIA, PA 19106 | WWW.AMCHS.ORG



FALL 2020

From Our President

This has certainly been a year for the history books! Little did any of us expect that we would be facing a global pandemic and struggling to adjust to quarantines, shutdowns, and related restrictions. Nor could we have imagined that churches would be temporarily closed, worship moved online, and the patterns of religious life disrupted. Future scholars of American Catholicism will no doubt study the events of this year closely, exploring the pandemic's impact on the church and society.

Although the ACHS had to adjust to temporary restrictions by cancelling some events and moving our board meetings online, we are glad that we have been able to continue our work in other ways. Publication of the Society's journal has remained uninterrupted and we have made plans for a robust series of talks and lectures for this coming year. We hope that many of you will be

able to join us for those that will take place virtually via Zoom this fall. It might even be a chance for those of you who have been unable previously to attend events in person to become more engaged in the Society and benefit from our programming.

As we look forward to the year ahead, I would like to thank everyone who contributes to the work of the Society as members, subscribers, officers, and enthusiasts. Your support allows the ACHS to carry out its mission of preserving and promoting the history of Catholicism in the United States. I invite you to read through this newsletter to find out what we've been doing and what we have in store.

Sincerely,

Michael H. Finnegan
President, ACHS



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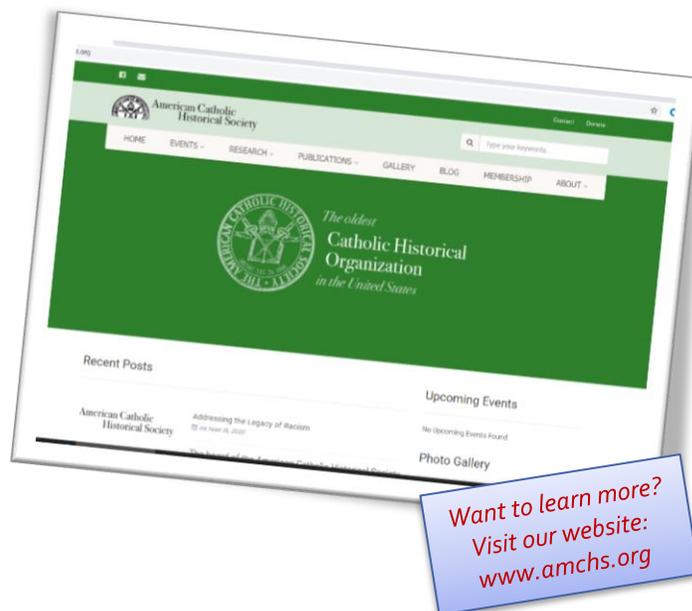
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About the ACHS

Founded in 1884, the American Catholic Historical Society (ACHS) was established for the purpose of collecting and preserving materials related to the history of the Catholic Church in the United States and for documenting the contributions of Catholics to the building of the nation. It is the oldest historical society of its kind in the United States.

An independent, non-profit organization, the ACHS continues to promote the documentation and interpretation of the history of the Catholic Church in the United States. It accomplishes its ongoing mission by publishing an award-winning academic journal, *American Catholic Studies*; sponsoring public lectures and other Society events; and supporting the preservation of its historical collections located at the Catholic Historical Research Center of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia.

Membership in the Society is open to all persons who share an interest in the history of American Catholicism.



BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP

- A subscription to the Society's award-winning quarterly journal, *American Catholic Studies*.
- Discounted pricing for the ACHS's annual lectures and other events.
- Invitation to regular social gatherings, including our annual Christmas Party, St. Patrick's Day Social, and Summer Garden Party.

Addressing the Legacy of Racism

On June 16, 2020, the American Catholic Historical Society's Board of Managers issued the following statement on the legacy of racism:

The board of the American Catholic Historical Society is appalled and grieved by the recent murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and Ahmaud Arbery. We mourn the loss of their lives and the countless others who have lost their lives as a consequence of racialized violence. Racism is a sin. We stand in solidarity with the communities who have endured centuries of racial and ethnic injustice and with those who work for justice in the city

of Philadelphia, in the United States, and in the Catholic Church.

The American Catholic Historical Society has a professional, moral, and spiritual responsibility to participate constructively in the national conversation on this topic. Recognizing the need for a fuller understanding of the historical and contemporary reality, including in our Catholic experience, we will foreground the work of Black scholars and other persons of color who work in this area on our website and through our programming, and continue to promote scholarship on this topic in our journal, American Catholic Studies.

For additional resources on the subject of race and racism, please visit the ACHS website: <https://amchs.org/>

[resources-on-the-subject-of-race-and-racism/](#)

Included among those resources is a link to the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' website, "Combatting Racism": www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/racism/index.cfm

The page also includes a link to the *#BlackCatholics Syllabus*, a resource prepared by Dr. Tia Pratt, a member of the ACHS Board of Managers. The syllabus provides resources related to Black Catholics in the United States and prioritizes the work of Blacks in order to center the voice of Black Catholics in the creation of their own narrative: <https://tiapratt.com/blackcatholics/syllabus-2/>

The 2019 Barry Award



Commodore John Barry
Father of the American Navy

Every year, the American Catholic Historical Society bestows its Commodore John Barry Award upon an individual whose professional accomplishments and contributions to the church and the community have been deemed outstanding.

This past November, the Society was pleased to honor Mr. Daniel K. Fitzpatrick, President of Citizens Bank's Mid-Atlantic Region and member of Citizens Financial Group's executive leadership group. A native of Northeast Philadelphia and a graduate of La Salle University, he is also a former chairman of the Greater Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce. Among his many board positions, he has served on the executive board of elementary education for the Archdiocese of Philadelphia and on the board of trustees for La Salle University.

The evening's celebration at the Union League of Philadelphia was a fitting tribute to Mr. Fitzpatrick, his professional accomplishments, and his generous service to the church and society. With more than 300 people in attendance, the Union League's Lincoln Ballroom was filled to near capacity. Serving as the Master of Ceremonies for the dinner program was Mr. Jerry Parsons, the chair of the dinner committee, who has served with Mr. Fitzpatrick on the archdiocese's executive board of elementary education. In keeping with a tradition started two years ago, the program included a video tribute to the honoree, recounting his personal story and allowing friends and colleagues to offer praise and congratulations. The award itself was presented by Father Joseph Campellone, OSFS, the former president of Father Judge High School, the honoree's alma mater. In his acceptance remarks, Mr. Fitzpatrick noted how fortunate he was to receive a Catholic education and how his faith has instilled in him a commitment to making the world a better place. "I'm glad to be in a position to help," was his humble and heartfelt response.

The ACHS is grateful to all those who attended the dinner or supported it as patrons and benefactors. As our sole fundraising event of the year, proceeds from the Barry Dinner help sustain the work of the Society. The donations received help us maintain our facilities, expand our public programming, support historical research, and underwrite the publication of our award-winning quarterly journal, *American Catholic Studies*.

BARRY AWARD DINNER – 2021



Because of restrictions on public gatherings related to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, the ACHS has determined that it will not be feasible to hold the Barry Award Dinner this November.

We are delighted to announce, however, that this year's selected honoree, Archbishop Nelson J. Perez, has agreed to receive the award next year, on Friday, November 19, 2021. Consider this an extra early save-the-date announcement!

We look forward to next year when we will once again be able to come together to celebrate the work of the ACHS and honor Archbishop Perez for his ongoing contributions to the church and society.



Coming Soon: Digital Access to ACS



The Society is pleased to announce that we will soon be able to offer a new benefit to our members: free digital access to our award-winning journal, *American Catholic Studies*.

The benefit is made possible through an agreement with Project Muse, the database that hosts the journal and makes it available to academic libraries across the United States and throughout the world. Until now, only those with an institutional subscription could access the journal electronically. But now we will be able to provide our members with the ability to log on and access the journal through a dedicated portal on the ACHS website.

The technical and administrative details are still being finalized, but we hope to be able to launch this new feature by the start of the new year, if not sooner. Access will allow those who request it to be able to view issues of the journal from the current issue back to 2011, which is when our partnership with Muse began. You'll also be able to download and print articles you may wish to share with others. Having digital access to the journal is a particularly valuable resource for independent scholars and others who currently lack institutional access to Muse. It's also a great benefit for our newer members, who will now be able to check out back issues of the journal and discover their great content. We'll be in touch with more details soon!

For those of you who love print, there is no need to worry. All members of the ACHS will continue to receive a print copy of the journal. We have no plans to change that!

American Catholic Studies

American Catholic Studies – the oldest, continuously published Catholic scholarly journal in the United States – is committed to encouraging research and publishing articles on the American Catholic experience. The quarterly journal features broad-ranging scholarship that contributes to our understanding of Catholicism in the American context as it intersects with history, literature, culture, politics, art and architecture, theology, and popular movements.

The journal has won numerous awards from the Catholic Press Association over the years, including First Place for General Excellence among scholarly journals on several occasions.

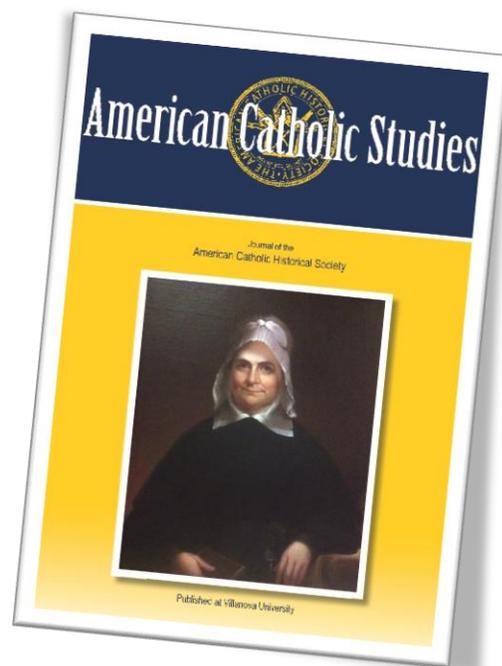
Consistent excellence in topics, editing, design, and presentation. This publication...attracts solid scholars who offer relevant topics of current interest.

– Catholic Press Association

Published at Villanova University, the journal reaches a national and international audience through our agreements with JSTOR and Project MUSE, scholarly databases that provide full-text digital access to member libraries in the United States and internationally.

Your membership in the American Catholic Historical Society automatically subscribes you to *American Catholic Studies*.

All members are subscribers, and all subscribers are members!



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Contact:

americancatholicstudies@villanova.edu

ACHS News and Notes

Even though the Covid-19 pandemic and its related lockdowns and quarantines disrupted our schedule of events for 2020, the Society remained busy throughout the year. Like so many other groups, the Board of Managers learned how to hold meetings over Zoom and conduct its business remotely. While we certainly miss the pleasures of face-to-face interaction, we embraced the opportunities that technology afforded.

Recognizing how vital digital resources have been for students and scholars over the past several months as libraries and archives shut down, the ACHS is pleased to announce an effort to assist. In May, the Board voted to provide a \$10,000 grant to the Catholic Research Resources Alliance (CRRA) to support the ongoing digitization of the *Catholic Standard & Times* for inclusion in CRRA's Catholic News Archive. The grant will allow CRRA to scan issues of the newspaper from the 1950s and add them to its online collection. The issues will be fully text searchable and freely available to audiences locally and globally via the Catholic News Archive website. The site already includes issues of the *CS&T* from 1960-1968 that were scanned as part of a project that focused on digitizing material from the Vatican II years, so this effort will link chronologically to what is already there. We believe that these newly digitized materials will be particularly valuable to students, especially those in archdiocesan elementary or secondary schools, who will now be able to consult them for research projects. They're also great for anyone from the local area who might wish to take a trip down memory lane! If all goes according to schedule, the material will be online in early 2021. We'll be sure to let everyone know when they become available.

In other technology news, some of you may have noticed the new look of the ACHS website. Earlier this spring, we switched to a new platform that provides additional features and improved functionality. Most importantly, the website now works across devices, including tablets and smartphones. We have also added a new blog feature that will allow us to have a running archive of news and notes, as well as a record of past society events. It remains a work in progress as we revise information and add new content. We're particularly excited about the new calendar feature and hope to be able to use the website to improve event registration and other members services. Visit us at www.amchs.org.



As we plan for the upcoming year, we know that state and local regulations and the need to ensure the health and safety of our members and guests will not allow us to hold events at the ACHS house this fall. The building simply does not provide adequate space for social distancing. But that's not stopping us from carrying out our programming. We are looking forward to hosting talks and lectures via Zoom, which will be free and open to the public. We hope you'll join us for those! Our schedule of events can be found on page 7 of this newsletter. We also hope that conditions allow us to resume in-person events in the spring.

With recent events drawing attention to the long history of racial injustice in the United States and its wounds on society and the church, we have decided to focus our fall programming on the topic, with particular attention to the Black Catholic experience. We hope these talks help us all better understand our shared history so that we can be better equipped to take up the work of justice and reconciliation.

On a business note, the ACHS is pleased to welcome two new members to our Board of Managers: Mr. Matthew Slutz and Mr. John J. Grogan. Matt is a religion teacher at Bishop McDevitt High School and is serving as the society's corresponding secretary. John, a Philadelphia-based attorney, was the founder and former director of the Camden Center for Law and Social Justice. We are grateful to them both for their willingness to serve on the board.

Finally, having the ACHS house empty for the spring gave us a chance to have the first and second floors repainted. Be sure to check out the spiffy new colors when the house reopens. We're looking forward to welcoming everyone back for lectures and events as soon as conditions allow!

Recap of Our 2019-2020 Events



Ms. Francesca Reznik and Ms. Adrienne Harris answer questions after the screening of their documentary films.

As with other educational and cultural institutions, our events for 2020 were disrupted by Covid-19 and its restrictions on public gatherings. But that did not stop us from having a stimulating set of talks and lectures from September through February, and we are pleased that those spring events that were cancelled have been successfully rescheduled for this coming year.

Lectures

Our fall lecture was delivered by Dr. Tom McCarthy of the U.S. Naval Academy, who spoke about his new book, *Developing the Whole Person: A Practitioner's Tale of Counseling, College, and the American Promise*. Drawing upon his father's career at La Salle College, he described how new understandings of the human person, personal development, and individual freedom were championed by counselors and other student affairs leaders within American higher education. This trend had a transformative effect on the Catholic community, he argued, as more and more Catholics took advantage of educational opportunities in the postwar era and were exposed to these new currents of thought.

Local History Talks

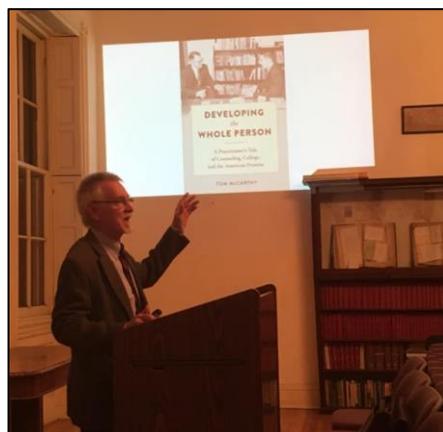
We began our fall season with a screening of two recent documentary film projects concerning historical preservation of sacred space within the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. The first captured the story of St. Peter Claver, the mother church for Black Catholics in the archdiocese, produced by the Advocates and Descendants of St. Peter Claver. It was presented by Ms. Adrienne Harris, a lifelong member of the parish who has worked for many years to collect and preserve its history. She was joined by Ms. Francesca Reznik, a 2019 graduate of the University of Pennsylvania, who shared the documentary she produced for her senior thesis on the efforts by parishioners and community activists to save St. Laurentius church in the city's Fishtown neighborhood. Among those she interviewed for the project were two members of the ACHS board, Dr. Tia Pratt and Dr. Thomas Rzeznik, so it was only fitting that she come to the Society to share her work.

In February, in our last event before Covid-19 restrictions were enacted, we welcomed Mr. John Kelly of the National Park Service to speak on the life of Commodore John Barry and his place within Philadelphia's Irish community. A passionate amateur historian, Mr. Kelly shared rich detail about Barry's personal life and his many civic contributions. He also discussed how Barry's career reveals the growing prominence of the Irish Catholic community in the city in the pre-Famine period.

These two local history presentations are a reminder that the ACHS strives to provide a space and an opportunity for parish historians, amateur scholars, and other community members who are passionate about history to share their work with an appreciative audience. Those who are interested in sharing their research are encouraged to contact us at info@amchs.org.

Parties and Socials

We missed having them this past spring! But we look forward to the chance to gather again as soon as health and safety conditions allow.



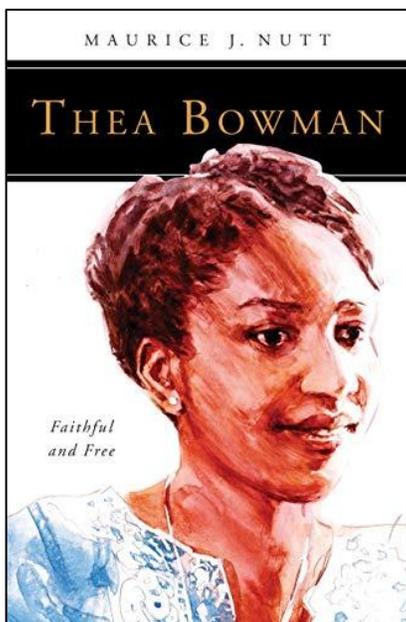
Dr. Tom McCarthy delivers the ACHS annual fall lecture on his recent book.



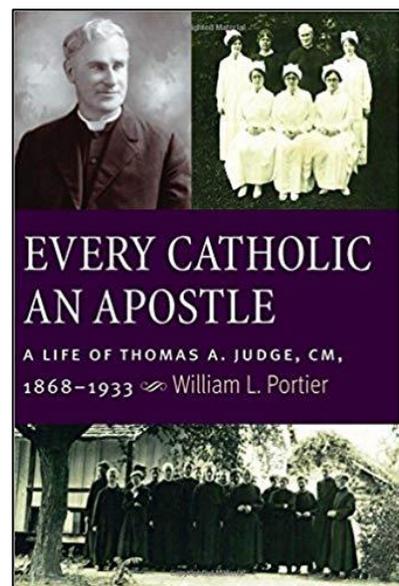
Mr. John Kelly speaks to a full house on the life of Commodore Barry.

Want to keep
informed about
our events?
Like us on
FACEBOOK!

2020 - 2021 Calendar of Events



Our fall lecture will feature Fr. Maurice Nutt, CSsR, who will speak on the life and witness of Sister Thea Bowman.



Our spring lecture, rescheduled from last year, will feature Dr. William Portier speaking on the life of Father Thomas A. Judge. (Yes, he's the one Father Judge High School is named after.)

Sunday, September 20, 2020 @ 2pm

Ms. Angelina Lincoln, Villanova University
Rediscovering the Moulden Family: Villanova University's Forgotten Benefactors
Free via Zoom

Tuesday, October 20, 2020 @ 7pm

Annual Fall Lecture
Fr. Maurice J. Nutt, CSsR
Thea Bowman: Faithful and Free
Free via Zoom

Sunday, November 8, 2020 @ 2pm

Olga Segura, Freelance Writer
The Birth of a Movement: Black Lives Matter and the Catholic Church
Free via Zoom

November 2020

Barry Award Dinner
Honoring Archbishop Nelson J. Perez
Union League of Philadelphia
Postponed until 2021

Sunday, February 21, 2021 @ 2pm

Dr. Barbara Klaczynska Schmidt
Little Flower High School and Catholic Girls' Education in Philadelphia
Free and Open to the Public

Friday, March 12, 2021 @ 6pm

Annual St. Patrick's Day Social
\$25 members / \$35 non-members

Tuesday, April 20, 2021

5pm social hour | 6pm dinner | 7pm lecture
Annual Spring Lecture
Dr. William Portier, University of Dayton
Every Catholic an Apostle: A Life of Thomas A. Judge, CM, 1868-1933
\$20 members / \$30 non-members

Sunday, May 16, 2021 @ 2pm

Dr. Rodger Van Allen, Villanova University
Laetare: Dr. Lawrence Flick and the ACHS
Free and Open to the Public

Friday, June 4, 2021 @ 6pm

Annual Garden Party
\$25 members and non-members

AND OTHER EVENTS AS THEY ARE ADDED

Your Membership Sustains the Work of the ACHS. Join or Renew Today!

<p>I'd like to join the American Catholic Historical Society. (includes a subscription to <i>American Catholic Studies</i>)</p> <p>Name: _____</p> <p>Address: _____</p> <p>Phone: _____</p> <p>Email:</p> <p>Please check one subscription option:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> \$40 Special new membership rate!</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> \$50 Regular one year membership</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> \$90 Two-year membership</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> \$120 Three-year membership (BEST VALUE and includes gift subscription for a friend!)</p> <p>Please check one payment option</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Check enclosed \$ _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Bill Me</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Charge my: __ VISA __ MasterCard</p> <p>Card No. _____ Exp. Date _____</p> <p>Signature _____</p>	<p>I have decided to take advantage of the best offer...I would like a 3-year membership in the ACHS and send my one-year gift subscription to <i>American Catholic Studies</i> at NO EXTRA CHARGE to:</p> <p>Name _____</p> <p>Address/Apt. No. _____</p> <p>City/State/Zip _____</p> <p>Email</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Please remit to: American Catholic Studies PO Box 465 Hanover PA 17331-0465</p> <p><i>You can also join online at: www.amchs.org/membership/index.html</i></p>
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