

American Catholic Historical Society

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



FALL 2021

From Our President

When I go back and read my letter from Fall 2020, there was a feeling that the adjustments that we all had to make with quarantines and shutdowns would last only a few months at most. Now in Fall 2021, just as things are beginning to return to normal, COVID waves and variants are once again threatening a return to masking and social distancing. There is still hope that we will all continue to act responsibly and be able to gather with friends and families in person.

As a lover of history and all that it can teach us, I found myself searching back through old issues of the *Records of the American Catholic Historical Society* to see how the past presidents and ACHS boards discussed the Spanish Influenza. I found that the presidents' annual letters, although written in a much more academic prose that I can only hope for, did not address the pandemic directly. There was, however, an insightful article in the March 1919 issue by Villanova professor Francis E. Tourscher, OSA entitled "Work of the Sisters During the

Epidemic of Influenza, October 1918," which chronicled how sisters and the Catholic community answered the call. Theirs is an inspiring story of sacrifice that speaks powerfully to us today.

In thinking about our current situation, one advantage we possess, besides the obvious advances in science and medicine, is the ability of organizations, like ours, to communicate rapidly with members, and how online meeting and streaming services have allowed us not only to continue our activities, but also to include many more participants from a much wider area. This will now be the new normal.

We will come out of this pandemic, as we did in 1920, with our faith strengthened and our Society stronger.

Michael H. Finnegan
President, ACHS



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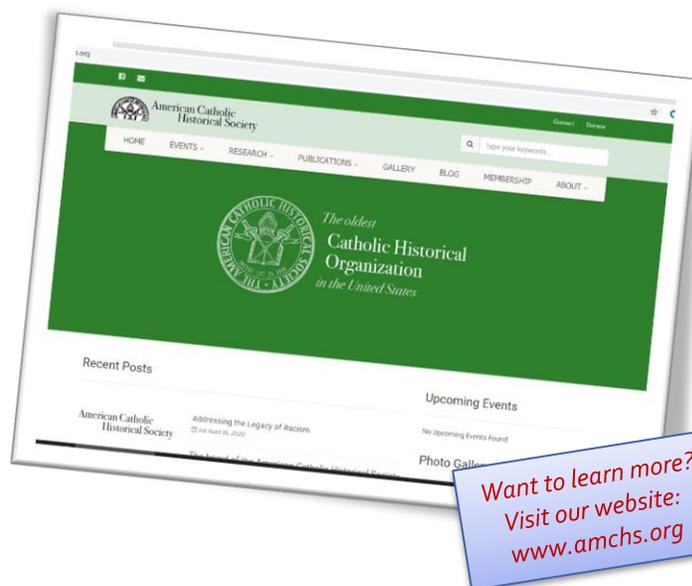
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About the ACHS

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*, with free online access to back issues.
- 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.
- Knowledge that you support the ongoing mission of the Society!

Digitization of the *Catholic Standard & Times*, 1944-1963

Every lover of history knows the value of old newspapers. They offer a window into the past and provide a treasure-trove of information to researchers. For that reason, it is imperative that they be preserved and made accessible. More than ever, that means investing in digitizing materials previously available only in print or on microfilm.

Recognizing the immense value of our own local archdiocesan newspaper, *The Catholic Standard & Times*, the ACHS board decided in May 2020 to provide a \$10,000 grant to the Catholic Research Resources Alliance (CRRA) to support the ongoing digitization of the paper for inclusion in the CRRA's Catholic News Archive. With issues of the *CS&T* from the Vatican II era (1963 - 1968) having

already been scanned, the ACHS grant enabled the CRRA to expand its holdings by digitizing almost another twenty years' worth of issues, from October 1944 to 1963. These fully text-searchable materials are now available for free to everyone. For access, visit: <https://thecatholicnewsarchive.org>.

We believe that these newly digitized materials will be particularly valuable to students, especially those in Catholic schools, who will now be able to consult them for research projects. They are also a great resource for parishes looking for information about their history or community groups looking to learn about their neighborhoods. They are also great for anyone from the region who might wish to take a trip down memory lane!

Members can support this project in a number of ways. First and foremost, spread the word among family and friends that these materials are now available. They are there to be read! (And higher usage statistics help the CRRA make a case to its donors for continued support.) Second, help find and fix mistakes. The character-recognition software used in scanning the paper is great, but not perfect, especially if the original microfilm had imperfections. If you spot an error, the news archive enables readers to enter corrections. Please do! Finally, we invite you to alert us and the CRRA of any research that has benefitted from the news archive. We want to document and celebrate the history you discover!

Laetare: Dr. Flick and the ACHS



Dr. Lawrence F. Flick

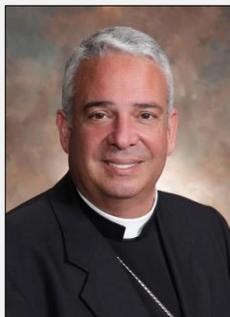
In 1910, the University of Notre Dame bestowed its Laetare Medal upon Dr. Lawrence F. Flick (1856-1938), one of the founders of the American Catholic Historical Society. The medal, one of the most prestigious honors in American Catholicism, has been awarded annually since 1883 to recognize a Catholic layperson who has made an outstanding contribution to the church and society. The award takes its name from the fact that its recipient is announced every year on Laetare Sunday, the Fourth Sunday of Lent.

On Sunday, May 16, 2021—101 years after Dr. Flick received the medal—the ACHS recalled that earlier honor with a special ceremony of its own, held to recognize the donation of his medal to the Society by members of the Flick family. With members of the family in attendance, ACHS board members Dr. Rodger Van Allen and Dr. Thomas Rzeznik delivered a joint lecture that provided a history of the Laetare Medal and reflected on the life and legacy of Dr. Flick, who received the medal in honor of his work as a medical doctor in the crusade against tuberculosis.

The ceremony included the formal dedication of Dr. Flick's Laetare Medal, which now occupies a place of honor in the upstairs parlor, where it hangs alongside the portrait of Dr. Flick that graces the room. In his blessing, Father Tom Betz, OFM Cap, a friend of the Flick family, recalled Dr. Flick's witness to the love of Christ through his care for the sick and the suffering, a message that speaks powerfully to us today as we continue to cope with the current pandemic.

Having Dr. Flick's medal on display in the ACHS house is particularly fitting since it was initially conferred upon him not at Notre Dame, but at the ACHS house itself (back when the Society was headquartered at 715 Spruce Street) at Dr. Flick's request. As the Society's journal recorded at the time, it was hoped that the exercises would "stimulate renewed interest" in the noble work of the Society. In that same spirit, the ACHS expresses its gratitude to the Flick family for honoring us with the gift of Dr. Flick's medal and entrusting it to our care. We are proud to be able to have it on display as a reminder of Dr. Flick's tremendous contributions to the ACHS, to the church, and to the world.

BARRY AWARD DINNER – 2021



Save the date! The Society's annual Barry Award Dinner will be held on Friday, December 3, 2021 at the Union League of Philadelphia. We are delighted to honor Archbishop Nelson J. Perez for his ongoing contributions to the church and society.

Long-time Barry attendees will know that the dinner has regularly been held in November. This year's event is two weeks later than usual because of unavoidable scheduling conflicts.

We look forward to having our members, friends, and benefactors join us on December 3 as we celebrate the work of the ACHS and honor Archbishop Perez.

Sally Flick (at podium), members of the Flick family, and Father Tom Betz, OFM Cap (far left) at the lecture and dedication ceremony.



Online Access to ACS



The Society is pleased to announce a new benefit of membership: all members are now eligible to request free online access to our award-winning journal, *American Catholic Studies*. This benefit, made possible through our partnership with Project Muse, provides individual subscribers with the ability to access not only the present issue, but also the full run of back issues from 2011 onward.

Members interested in receiving online access to the journal are asked to e-mail us at info@amchs.org to make the request. After we confirm that your membership is up-to-date, we will direct you to the log-in page and provide you with the password. You will then be taken to the ACS page in Project Muse, where you can read issues online or print and download material for personal use.

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!

Schools, libraries, and other institutions looking to obtain online access to *American Catholic Studies* are able to purchase a single-title subscription to the journal by contacting our subscription manager, Sheridan Press, at (717) 632-3535. We offer electronic access and a print+electronic bundle at very reasonable rates.

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 wide-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 received numerous awards from the Catholic Press Association over the years, including First Place for General Excellence among scholarly journals on several occasions, including this past year.

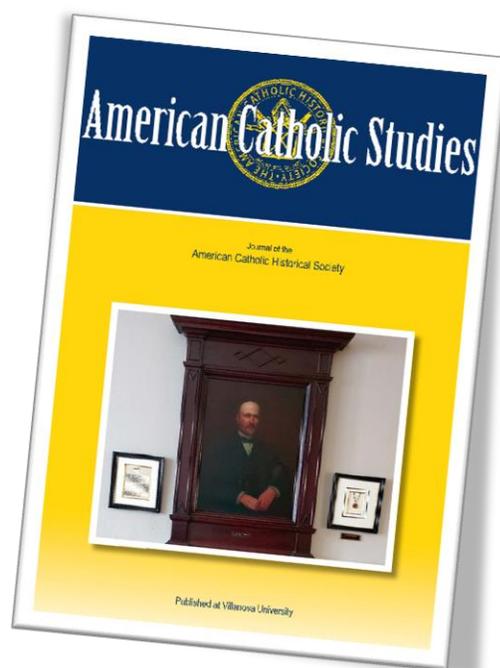
Consistent excellence in topics, editing, design, and presentation. This publication...attracts solid scholars who offer relevant topics of current interest.

– 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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ACHS News and Notes

The past year has been one of adjustment for everyone as we have dealt with Covid-related restrictions, remote work, and the need to 'pivot' quickly as circumstances change. We have also learned how to harness the power and possibility of new technology while coming to a deeper appreciation of in-person contact and connections.

Things have been no different for the ACHS. Over the past year, we have responded nimbly and creatively in order to maintain our programming and activities. We are pleased that so many people were able to join us for our online lectures and webinars, including a good number from beyond the local area who would not otherwise have been able to attend. The recordings of our talks have also proven to be tremendously popular, making our events available for sharing and repeat viewing. We are currently investigating the technology necessary to enable us to continue to live-stream events once we return to in-person events in the fall.

The pandemic has also invited us to take stock of our work and reflect on what we envision for the Society in the years ahead. To that end, the board decided that it was time to embark on a strategic planning process to review our goals and objectives, identify our organizational strengths and weaknesses, and establish concrete priorities, both short-term and long-term. We have been assisted in the process by Sister Mary Helen Beirne, SSJ, a trained historian and accomplished educational leader with extensive strategic planning experience. She has worked closely with our four-person strategic planning committee – Patrick Hayes, James Fitzsimmons, Kathleen Kahlau, and Nicholas Rademacher – to plan our sessions and structure the process. Over the past several months, the board has met four times via Zoom to discuss our broader vision for the Society and determine what needs to be done to achieve it. One of the principal tasks has been to review the ACHS mission statement and determine how it might be revised to reflect the nature and purpose of the ACHS as it stands today. To help inform the strategic planning process, we also sent out a short survey to members and friends of the Society to gain information about your interests and what you value about the ACHS. We look forward to sharing the results of the strategic planning process as they unfold and bear fruit.

In other news, we are pleased to announce that *American Catholic Studies* has once again received several awards from the Catholic Press Association, including first place for general excellence, first place for best feature article among

scholarly magazines, and second place for best book reviews section. We offer our congratulations to our authors and reviewers for their fine work, as well as the journal's editors for all they do to make the journal a recognized leader in its field.

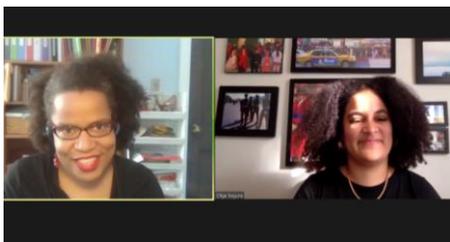
Congratulations also go out to the winners of the academic awards that the ACHS sponsors. At St. Charles Borromeo Seminary, this year's Monsignor James P. McCoy Award in Church History was awarded to Eric Sanchez, a member of the Vincentians. Regretfully, the Monsignor Richard Bolger Award for Field Education was not awarded this year because Covid-related restrictions limited work in that area. At Villanova, the Rodger Van Allen Award was given to theology masters student William G. Kuncken, whose thesis examined reactions to Pope Francis's encyclical *Laudato Si'* within the American Catholic community. Mr. Kuncken will continue his studies in the fall as part of Villanova's Ph.D. program.

In personnel news, two members of our board have recently taken up new professional positions. Earlier this year, Dr. Tia Pratt was appointed Director of Mission Engagement and Strategic Initiatives at Villanova University, where she also serves as affiliate faculty in the Department of Sociology and Criminology. In her new role, Dr. Pratt implements the Office of Mission and Ministry's commitment to inclusion and diversity, works to develop partnerships across the university, and helps strengthen outreach to the local church, especially the local Black Catholic community. Meanwhile, this August, Dr. Nicholas Rademacher joined the Religious Studies Department at the University of Dayton. We are pleased that he will continue to serve on the ACHS board and maintain his position as co-editor of *American Catholic Studies*. We wish them both well in their new roles.

One of the slides from the ACHS strategic planning process.



Recap of Our 2020-2021 Events



Dr. Tia Pratt speaks with Ms. Olga Segura about her research on the Black Lives Matter movement and the Catholic Church.



Dr. Barbara Klaczynska Schmidt presents on the history of Little Flower High School and Catholic girls' education in Philadelphia.



Dr. Rodger Van Allen delivers reflections on Dr. Lawrence Flick and the ACHS.

The pandemic may have prevented us from hosting in-person events at the Society's house, but it did not put a stop to our activities. Like so many other organizations, we were able to 'pivot' to online platforms, hosting our lectures on Zoom and streaming them through Facebook. To our delight, the move online enabled us to increase our audience significantly, attracting more than 100 participants for several events! The online format also allowed us to record our talks and make them available for sharing and future viewing. You can find them archived on our website, www.amchs.org.

Fall 2020

Moved by the killings of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and Ahmaud Arbery, the ACHS board decided to focus our fall schedule on the history of race and racial justice within the church. We began the season with a local history talk by Angelina Lincoln of Villanova University, who spoke about her ongoing research on the Moulden family, the school's "forgotten benefactors." Although the Moulden name graces one of the university's residence halls, few know the story of William Moulden, the child of enslaved parents, who donated a significant parcel of land to the university at a critical time in its early development. The following month, the ACHS welcomed Father Maurice Nutt, CSsR to speak on the life and witness of Sister Thea Bowman, one of the most inspiring figures in American Catholic history. Drawing on his recently published biography of Bowman, he discussed her personality, her passion, and her mission as an African American woman and religious sister. Then, in November, ACHS board member Dr. Tia Pratt hosted a conversation with Olga M. Segura, author of *Birth of a Movement: Black Lives Matter and the Catholic Church* (Orbis Books, 2021). Based on her reporting of the Black Lives Matter movement, the book encourages Catholics to listen to and learn from the voices of those speaking out against racial injustice.

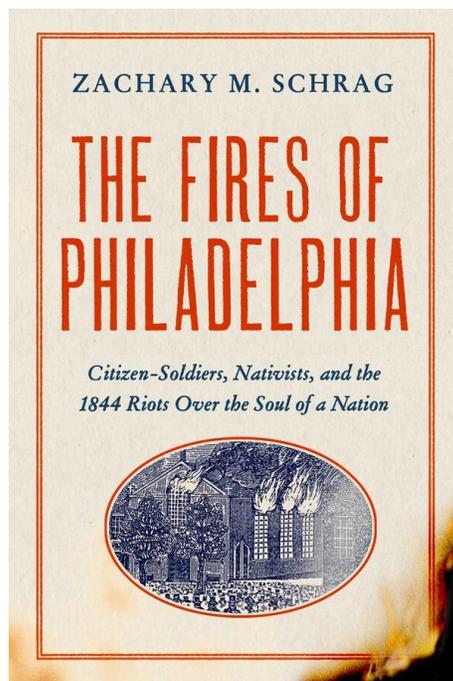
Spring 2021

Our spring season featured three talks that had been postponed from the previous year. In February, Dr. Barbara Klaczynska Schmidt spoke on the history of Little Flower High School and Catholic girls' education in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. Planned initially to coincide with the school's 75th anniversary, her talk drew our largest audience of the year, with more than 150 in attendance and more than 250 views. Then, in April, we were pleased to host Dr. William Portier of Mount St. Mary's University, who spoke on the life of Father Thomas Judge, the Vincentian priest who established the Missionary Cenacle, an early lay missionary apostolate. We were pleased that many members of the Cenacle family from across the country were able to tune in for the event. The season ended with a lecture on "Dr. Lawrence Flick and the ACHS" by two of our board members, Dr. Rodger Van Allen and Dr. Thomas Rzeknik. The talk coincided with the donation of Dr. Flick's Laetare Medal to the ACHS by members of his family. (See page 3 for the full story.)

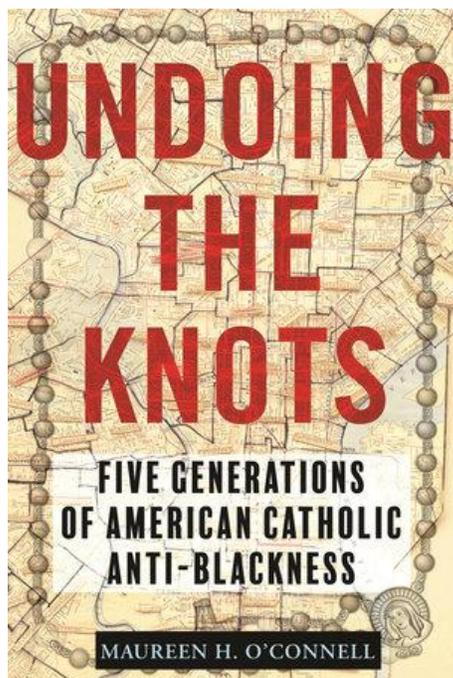
These local history events are a reminder that the ACHS strives to provide a space and an opportunity for parish historians, amateur scholars, and other community members who are passionate about history to share their work with an appreciative audience. Those who are interested in sharing their research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

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

2021 - 2022 Calendar of Events



Our fall lecture will feature Dr. Zachary Schrag, who will speak on the Nativist Riots of 1844.



Our spring lecture will feature Dr. Maureen O'Connell, whose forthcoming book examines her own family's history over five generations in Philadelphia.

Sunday, September 26, 2021 @ 2pm

Sr. Roseanne McDougall, SHCJ and Emily Siegel
The Society of the Holy Child Jesus in the U.S., 1862-Present
Free and open to the public

Tuesday, October 19, 2021

5pm social hour | 6pm dinner | 7pm lecture
Dr. Zachary Schrag, George Mason University
The Nativist Assault on Catholic Philadelphia, 1844
\$20 members / \$30 non-members

Sunday, November 14, 2021 @ 2pm

Dr. Peter Cajka, University of Notre Dame
Follow Your Conscience: The Catholic Church and the Spirit of the Sixties
Online via Zoom

Friday, December 3, 2021

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

Friday, December 10, 2021

Annual Christmas Party
\$25 members / \$35 non-members

Sunday, February 20, 2022 @ 2pm

Madeline Gambino, Ph.D. candidate, Princeton University
Institutional Decline and Demographic Change in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia
Free and Open to the Public

Friday, March 11, 2022 @ 6pm

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

Tuesday, April 19, 2022

5pm social hour | 6pm dinner | 7pm lecture
Dr. Maureen O'Connell, La Salle University
Undoing the Knots: Five Generations of American Catholic Anti-Blackness
\$20 members / \$30 non-members

Sunday, May 1, 2022 @ 10am

Annual Memorial Mass for deceased members of the ACHS
Old St. Mary's Church, with a reception to follow at the ACHS house

Sunday, May 15, 2022 @ 2pm

Dr. Andy Waskie, Temple University
Philadelphia's Catholic Volunteer Soldiers in the Civil War
Free and Open to the Public

Friday, June 3, 2022 @ 6pm

Annual Garden Party
\$25 members and non-members

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 style="text-align: center;">Please remit to: American Catholic Studies PO Box 465 Hanover PA 17331-0465</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>You can also join online at:</i> www.amchs.org/membership/index.html</p>
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American Catholic Historical Society

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