

INTRODUCTION

These outlines are of talks entitled Truth, Freedom, Tradition, Frontiers: Presentations on American Catholic History, which were given at Our Lady of the Valley Church in Luray, Virginia in the Spring of 2019. They are an effort to present the history of the Catholic Church in America from colonial days to the 21st century in a fashion that shows the struggles and triumphs of American Catholicism and how the faith has brought out the best of this nation. They begin with a reflection on the connection between the Catholic faith and this country, arguing that the interaction, if conducted faithfully and wisely, benefits both sides. In the third lecture, the outlines are in two parts. The first part describes the history of the Catholic Church in each era. The second part then describes the lives of four (or in one case five) American Catholics who exemplified the faith as lived out in America during those times. The effort involves both painting broad pictures and also focusing on specific people who can be inspirations to us now.