

TRUTH, FREEDOM, TRADITION, FRONTIERS:  
PRESENTATIONS ON AMERICAN CATHOLIC HISTORY  
PART I: THE FAITH AND THE NEW WORLD  
THE CATHOLIC CHURCH FROM THE BEGINNINGS OF AMERICA

I. In the course of American history, the Catholic Church has ever faced the challenges of bringing the one faith to a new land, remaining true to our common traditions, but also contributing to the unique character of this nation.

A. There is a unique aspect to America, with such things as her optimism, her commitment to democracy, and her value of creativity and hard work.

1. Alexis de Tocqueville described a vision of this country in his classic work Democracy in America, published in two volumes 1835 and 1840; in those books, he described well many defining characteristics of Americans including our defense of the liberty and dignity of each person and a desire that each person have an opportunity to succeed and participate in society.

2. Father John Courtney Murray, in his famous 1960 book We Hold These Truths focused upon how America was founded upon certain principles, including: (1) the notion that nations and governments are under a higher law; (2) that that law can be discerned by reason, and thus is available to anyone regardless of faith; (3) that human rights and dignity are a part of that law; (4) that the democratic vision, which involves the participation of all people in all walks of life, can work; and (5) that, in the long run, a free people must be a virtuous people.

3. Professor Patrick Allitt, a British professor at Emory University in Atlanta, pointed out in his lectures entitled *The American Identity* that “Certain characteristics and attitudes do appear, especially to outsiders, as distinctly American, including a lack of fatalism, an energetic approach to problem-solving, faith in human equality and democracy, belief in the boundless possibilities of economic growth, and a dedication to making education and literacy available to every citizen.”

4. Likewise, the English historian Paul Johnson dedicated his book The History of the American People (1998) “to the people of America – strong, outspoken, intense in their convictions, sometimes wrongheaded, but always generous and brave, with a passion for justice that no nation has ever matched.” At the end of that book he concluded, “Americans are, above all, a problem solving people. They do not believe anything in this world is beyond human capacity to soar and dominate. Full of goodwill to each other and to all, confident in their inherent decency and democratic skills, they will attack again and again the ills in their society until they are overcome or at least substantially redressed.”

B. Thus this nation stands for a glorious vision, but a vision that involves the challenge of balancing competing values. A few of the aspects of America, along with the challenges, include:

1. A strong belief in the dignity and rights of each person and a conviction that these rights come from God Himself.

- The Declaration of Independence based the Revolution on “the laws of nature and of nature’s God” and the inalienable truths that “all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with inalienable rights, that among these rights are the rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, that to secure these rights governments are established among men.” Thomas Jefferson said in Notes of the State of Virginia, “Can the liberties of a nation be thought secure when we have removed their only firm basis, a conviction in the minds of people that these liberties are a gift of God? That they are not to be violated without His wrath?”

2. Adding to this defense of human right is a great value placed upon all people, and especially a desire to see the underdog win. We think of Emma Lazarus’ famous poem about the Statue of Liberty,

"Keep, ancient lands, your storied pomp!" cries she  
With silent lips. "Give me your tired, your poor,  
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,  
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.  
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,  
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!"

3. Likewise, there is the idea, which Alexis de Tourqueville so much emphasized, that every person has the potential to succeed and should be given the ability to do so. We think of the rags to riches stories that so often inspire Americans, whether factual such as those of Benjamin Franklin or Abraham Lincoln, or the fictitious stories such as those of Horatio Alger. Other cultures have such figures, but they are more prominent here.

4. Connected to that idea is the notion that education should be available to everyone. As Professor Allitt points out, the idea that no one should drop out of high school, of no child left behind, is a very American one.

5. There is also a great value placed on hard work, based upon the idea that the path to success should be through dedication and labor, rather than advantages or noble birth.

6. There is also, as Professor Allitt and Paul Johnson note, a supreme confidence that all problems can be overcome. One rarely, if ever, hears a politician, or anyone else, say of a problem, that we cannot solve it.

7. Connected to the idea of labor and the potential to succeed is the entrepreneurial spirit, the idea that people should be able to try new things, whether business or technology, or writing books and speeches, the value of creativity. One can compare our system of education, at all levels, to the more traditional and/or European systems. The latter arrangements mostly value learning the material and being able to recite it, while in America expressing creativity and one's own thoughts are considered central.

8. There is similarly native to this land a frontier spirit, a desire to find new lands and try new things. Frederick Jackson Turner so famously gave his frontier speech in 1893, saying that the closing of the physical frontier marked a new time in American history, for the frontier was ever a part of the American spirit. And yet, even with the physical frontier closed, that fascination with new things still drives America.

9. Connected to the frontier spirit is the idea of this nation as being a melting pot of many cultures. Once again, we think of the image of the statue of liberty, or the phrase on the nations seal, "E pluribus unum." There is also the notion of freedom of religion that allows for a great variety of religions and that competition and independence makes religions stronger. As Alexis de Touqueville noted almost two centuries ago, faith is deeper in America than in the rest of the western world, not despite, but perhaps because, of the fact that there is no state religion.

10. And yet there are tensions. Thus, for example, we value the equality of all people, and yet want those who work hard and innovate to be rewarded and thus do better than average. We value new things, and yet the nation is based upon the timeless truths expressed in our history, as for example, demonstrated by the references of the founding fathers to enduring rights given by God. We value hard work, and yet we look forward to the Golden Years of retirement, making that time a crowning glory. We value all nations, and yet there is a notion of American exceptionalism. We value religious diversity, and yet there is a confidence that the one God is knowable and gives us our rights. Resolving these tensions is a part of the American spirit, and the great American Catholics have worked to do so.

C. The Catholic Church in this country has both upheld these values, and yet been in tension with them. She has wanted to maintain both her distinctness and yet also be fully American.

1. Thus the Church in America has sought to uphold the rights of all people, and especially the rights of religious liberty. That view is consistent with the Catholic tradition of human rights; but there is a tension between America's notion of the equality of religions and the Catholic teaching that the Catholic Church is the one established by Jesus.

2. Likewise, one of the glories of the Catholic Church in American has been the care for the poor; but there can be a temptation to conform to the world's demands and become more of a social relief institution.
3. American Catholicism has also emphasized the participation of all people in parishes and communities. The laity probably have more roles in the church in America than any other nation. There can be some tension with the hierarchical nature of the Church.
4. The Catholic Church has also established a very successful network of schools in this country. There has been both a glory of Catholic education and the question of how to relate with the public school system and other private schools, as well as the government when it offers assistance.
5. The Catholic Church in America has also benefited by the dedication of many hard working laity, sisters and clergy in building up our parishes and institutions. American Catholics have some of the most active parishes and missions in the world. There can be a tension with the contemplative aspects of our faith
6. There has also been a fundamental confidence in American Catholicism that problems (e.g., lack of education, curing of diseases, struggles with the poor and migrants) can be solved. There has sometimes, however, been a tendency to paper over problems in order to make everything appear well and to try to get along with the world too much.
7. Joining hard work and optimism, American Catholics have often demonstrated the entrepreneurial spirit, both in businesses themselves (e.g., Charles Carroll or Thomas Monaghan) or in establishing new enterprises (e.g., missions, schools, television networks.) The question is how to do so, consistent with our common traditions and unity of the faith.
8. American Catholicism has also shown the frontier spirit very well with her missionary ventures. Many great American Catholics (e.g., St. John Neumann, St. Rose Marie Durocher, St. Frances Xavier Cabrini) came to this land as a new frontier and themselves set off to new frontiers. There has ever been the question, here and in missions around the world, of how to keep the frontiers united to the rest of the Church.
9. Another of the glories of the Church in America has been her ability to join many different types of people into one. The Catholic notion of universality and unity dovetails well with this nation's ideal of being a melting pot, and in fact the Church in America has been largely an immigrant Church. There have, however, in the Church as in America, sometimes been struggles in maintaining harmony among all of the groups, old and new.

10. American Catholics have, from Charles Carroll among the Founding Fathers to Father John Courtney Murray to the modern educators emphasized that we are fully American, in the face of critics in American culture who have described the faith as an outside force or a threat to her values. The Church has rightfully tried to bring out the best of this nation. But there can also be a question of how to maintain good relations with society, but not be captured by it, how to be in the world but not of the world. Russell Shaw discusses this theme in his 2013 book American Church: The Remarkable Rise, Meteoric Fall, and Uncertain Future of Catholicism in America.

II. In the colonial era, French and Spanish settlers established missions in their territories, which opened the way to missionary activity. Catholics in the English colonies were based largely in Maryland and later Pennsylvania,

III. Spain established the earliest missions in what is now American. After some early setbacks, there were more permanent settlements in Florida and what is now the southwestern United States. These settlements brought the Catholic faith to these lands.

A. During the first six decades of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, there were several initial efforts by Spanish explorers at colonizing what is now the southern part of the United States. These first efforts were themselves unsuccessful, but brought the Spanish more knowledge of the region and a desire to bring the faith to this land.

1. Ponce de Leon tried to establish colonies in what he would name Florida in 1513 and 1521. But after he died from battlefield injuries, the colonies faltered.
2. In 1526, The Spanish king and Holy Roman Emperor Charles V sent Vasquez de Ayllon to explore the east coast of what is now the United States. His mission was meant to be above all else to bring the faith to this portion of the new land. And so he took three Dominicans with him, who included Antonio Montesinos, who would later be known for his defense of the rights of the Indians. They established a settlement with 600 men close to where Jamestown would later be placed. However, the harsh conditions reduced their number to 150, and they returned to Hispaniola, now the Dominican Republic and Haiti.
3. In 1527, the explorer Panfilo de Narvaez tried to establish a colony in what is now Tampa Bay, and he likewise brought missionaries. However, he was undiplomatic, and the resulting fights with the Indians destroyed the settlement. One of the few survivors Cabeza de Vaca brought back information about Florida, and spurred interests in further exploration.
4. The most extensive early exploration was done by Hernando de Soto, who had been a captain in the army of Francisco Pizarro during the conquest of Peru. He was appointed as governor of Cuba, but wanted first to explore the land to the north. And so in 1539, he set out with 620 men, he explored much of what is now the southern United States. They made extensive travels and reached

the Mississippi River. However, when he died in 1542, the group set off on a desperate return to Mexico City. Their mission did not establish any permanent settlements, but did encourage further exploration of the land and left behind some Christians among the Indians they met.

5. In 1540, Francisco Vasquez de Coronado explored what is now the southwest United States in search of both gold and the opportunity to convert some of the Indian civilizations. He returned in 1541, but some missionaries stayed behind. Unfortunately, they also died off. One of them Juan de Padilla was killed while providing time for his companions to escape from hostile Indians. The survivors, however, also encouraged further exploration.
  6. In 1549, Charles V sent another Dominican Fr. Luis de Caceres led another Spanish effort at missionary again near Tampa Bay. This time he set out without military support to emphasize their peaceful intentions. However, he was killed by natives, and the effort faltered.
  7. In 1559, the Spanish king Ferdinand II sent Tristan de Luna to Florida again to establish a colony there, and he likewise brought missionary priests who were able to make some converts among the natives. Unfortunately, a hurricane and rebellion against the authoritarian rule of de Luna doomed that colony as well.
  8. In 1570, eight Jesuits, along with a Spanish boy and a Catholic Indian guide, began a mission along the James River, which faltered due to the treachery of the guide.
    - a. Their leader was Fr. Juan Baptiste Segura and the guide was the Indian Don Louis, who had been rescued by a Spanish ship and had received Christian instruction in Spain.
    - b. Unfortunately, shortly after arrival in Virginia, Don Louis abandoned Christianity and took up pagan practices again, including having several wives. Nevertheless the mission built a school and began evangelization.
    - c. However, angry at their opposition to his pagan ways, Don Louis arranged for the murder of all of the Jesuits. The boy Alonso de Olmos was kept by the Indians, but later rescued by a Spanish team, who returned to execute several Indians for the killing.
- B. But the Spanish were finally able to build their first permanent mission and the first Catholic church in what is now the United States, at location that is now St. Augustine Florida. In 1565, the explorer Pedro Menendez arrived on Saint Augustine's Day (August 28) and so named the colony accordingly. The first priests for the colonies were Jesuits; but the Jesuit order withdrew them, and they were replaced by Franciscans in 1577. There were attacks by Francis Drake in 1586 and 1597 and conflicts with the Indian tribes that led to the martyrdom of several of the

missionaries. Nevertheless, the colony survived and prospered. By 1635, there were 44 missions and 35 Franciscans who served the colonists and 25,000 native converts. There was also unfortunately an excessive sense of contentment and even laxity developing over the course of time. And thus in 1675, the Bishop of Santiago in Cuba, who had jurisdiction over Florida, issued much stricter orders regarding catechesis and practices among the Christians.

- C. The Spanish explorer also tried to establish missions further north. However, as part of the War of Spanish Succession in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century, there were raids from the English colonies in the Carolinas on Florida, which irreparably damaged Spanish settlements, leading to the decline of the Spanish missions.
- D. Spanish explorers established other settlements in New Mexico, Arizona, Texas and California over the course of the next two centuries. Most of them were small settlements, with similarly small missions. But some of the larger settlements survived and provided the basis for many cities to this day.
  1. The first efforts at evangelization after Coronado were led by the Franciscan Augustin Rodriguez in 1581. Unfortunately, the missionaries were killed by hostile Indians and the mission ended. They were the ones who first named the territory of New Mexico.
  2. When Juan de Onate became the Spanish governor of New Mexico in 1598, he brought Franciscans who established the monastery of the Holy Faith (Santa Fe in Spanish.) This operation was successful for a time; the new settlers established prosperous ranches and, with some notable exceptions, generally got along with the locals. As a result, the missions to the Indians brought in a number of converts, including 8000 by 1608. There were, however, many reports that the Indian converts, and even some settlers, were continuing practicing pagan rites and holding pagan beliefs. When the secular and religious authorities tried to crack down on this paganism, there was a revolt in 1680 among the natives led by an Indian ironically named Pope. The revolt briefly drove the settlers and Christianity away. But in 1692 the Spaniards and allied natives returned to reconquer the area, which was done easily.
  3. In 1718, the Spanish government sent Antonio de Bexar to what they called the territory of San Antonio de Valero. Franciscan missionaries accompanied the settlement and quickly established a series of five mission churches, the first of which (also called San Antonio) is now known as the Alamo. The missions faltered and became secular in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century when the Spanish government withdrew its support. However, the Alamo would become the most famous battleground in the Texas War of Independence; and all five missions are maintained as historical sites to this day, with Masses being celebrated in some of them.

4. Particularly with the efforts of Saint Junipero Serra (1713 – 1784), the Franciscans established 21 missions in California between 1769 and 1833, creating the basis for such cities as Los Angeles, San Francisco, San Jose and San Diego. The discipline could be strict, but they gave the Indians protection against oppression by Spanish overlords. The Spanish government took over the property of the missions with the Spanish secularization act of 1833. But their influence continued and the settlements they established have become the basis for many cities in California.

IV. The French colonized Canada and the area around the Mississippi River, largely for trading purposes. With the French influence, missionaries (particularly Jesuits) were also able to establish a Catholic presence and bring conversions among the natives.

- A. . The French Empire initially gained control of what is now Canada and much of what is now the eastern Midwest of the United States. Their interest was more in trade with the natives than in large scale settlements. However, French missionaries, and particularly the Jesuits, brought the faith to the Indian population, in addition to maintaining the faith among the mostly Catholic settlers.
- B. There were a few efforts at exploration under Denis de Honfleur , Thomas Aubert and Giovanni de Varrazano in the early 16<sup>th</sup> century. But it was Jacques Cartier who launched lasting French colonization in the New World, with his mission beginning in 1534 and the first permanent settlement in 1541. However, the wars with Spain prevented many more settlements from being established until about 1600.
- C. About the year 1600, French Jesuits established missions in Nova Scotia, but the British destroyed the effort. In 1608, Samuel de Champlain established the first permanent French colony in Quebec. He sided with the Hurons in their wars against the Iroquois, which unfortunately turned the Iroquois tribes against the French and, by implication, in general against the Catholic Church. The Huron tribes would decline from about 40,000 to about 12,000 from the early 17<sup>th</sup> century to the mid 18<sup>th</sup> century, and thus became less effective as allies. And the enmity with the Iroquois would cause difficulties in gaining converts to the Church in the 13 British colonies.
- D. By 1615, Franciscan friars were promoting missions among the Indian people in Quebec. But it was the Jesuits, with their more flexible style, who would spearhead the missionary work, starting in 1625. The Sulpicians, an order primarily dedicated to seminary formation, also came over and established missions in addition to trying to educate clergy here.
- E. A Jesuit priest Jacques Marquette (1636-75) began establishing missions around the Great Lakes in 1668. He travelled with the great French explorer Louis Jolliet down the Mississippi River in 1673; and upon his return, Fr. Marquette continued bringing missions into what is now called Illinois.

- F. Jesuits also brought missions to what is now called Ontario and upstate New York, which met with initial success, followed by persecution, and then growth again afterward.
1. Led by St. John de Brebeuf, Jesuits came to the area in 1625 and were initially rather successful. There was a setback in 1629 as the English gained control of the region and forced them to leave. But the Jesuits came back in 1632 with more assistants including the priest St. Isaac Jogues. A large number of local natives did convert and begin practicing the faith.
  2. However, in 1639, diseases and warfare again began devastating the local Huron tribes; and they turned against the Jesuits. Part of the problem was that the Jesuits had been persuasive in part because of their medical abilities; but when diseases broke out, they also received the blame. Between 1642 and 1648, most of the Jesuits were martyred for the faith and are now known as the North American martyrs. St. Isaac Jogues was captured, tortured, and escaped. But then he returned to the French colonies, and was captured again, and this time killed. However, their great courage impressed many natives and set the stage for future conversions.
  3. There were also efforts to convert members of the Iroquois tribes, which was difficult due to suspicions of the French. However, some of the local Indians did come over to the Catholic faith. Saint Kateri Tekakwitha (1656 – 1680), who was a Mohawk Indian and a convert to the faith, became a particularly strong inspiration.
- G. England gained control of Canada after the Seven Years' War of 1756 – 1763, known in America as the French and Indian War. The British government, although generally unfavorable to Catholics, realized that most of Canada was Catholic. And so, to keep the peace, it allowed freedom of religion in Canada through the Quebec Act, which some American colonists oddly believed was a threat to the Protestant presence in the American colonies to the south. The dominance of the British did, however, limit the support for the missions even in Canada, and all but prevented missionary work in the 13 colonies that would become the United States.

V. In the British colonies south of Canada, there were generally very few Catholics. But there was a strong Catholic presence in Maryland and Pennsylvania.

A. As noted above, the first such venture was sponsored by the Emperor Charles V and led by Vaquez de Ayllon in 1526. After the following missions in what is now the United States were established by Jesuit missionaries along the James River, where English colonists would later build Jamestown.

1. The first British-commissioned explorer to the New World was John Cabot (1450 – 1500), who was naturally Catholic because this exploration preceded Martin Luther's break from Rome. He sponsored three missions to the New World, landing in what is now either Maine or Newfoundland. King Henry VII commissioned him to bring the faith to people who "in whatsoever part of the world paced, which before this time were unknown to all Christians." John Cabot

guided three journeys in 1497 and 1498. It appears that Franciscan missionaries did accompany them on the third journey and established a mission in Newfoundland. Unfortunately, it soon vanished and John Cabot himself died during or shortly after the third voyage, leading to the end of this effort.

2. The Catholic Sir Humphry Gilbert did try to bring 260 Catholics and others who were not Anglican to the coast of Maine to start a colony there in 1584. The intent was to found a place where religious liberty would be respected. However, when a storm destroyed most of their supplies, they were forced to return to England.

B. At first, Maryland was the colony that Catholics could most easily live in. However, the situation changed after the so-called Glorious Revolution of 1688, in which Parliament gave the throne of England to William and Mary.

1. In 1624, a prominent Englishman named George Calvert became Catholic and was thus forced to resign his post as Secretary of State, as well as his seat in Parliament. However, King James I favored him, appointed him as Lord Baltimore and granted him a charter for a new colony. The colony was to be named Maryland after the future Charles I's wife Maria Henrietta, who was Catholic; there was probably also a subtle connection of the name to Marian devotion.

2. The initial intent was to establish a colony called Avalon (after the name of the court of King Arthur) in Newfoundland. But difficulties with the French and poor weather led him to try to reestablish the colony near Jamestown. But then hostility there led him to look elsewhere. He sailed back to England, where he died. After his death, Charles I appointed George Calvert's son Cecil, the new Lord Baltimore, to be the Proprietor of the new colony; and he in turn appointed his brother Leonard to be the Governor, who would actually live in the colony. Leonard Calvert brought the new colonists, Catholics, Anglicans and nonconformist Protestants, to Maryland with the two ships named the Ark and the Dove. And they established a colony that would respect religious liberty. They allowed Jesuit missionaries into the colony, did not give them support. For they believed that the missionaries, like all the colonists, should support themselves.

3. When the colony began, most of the wealthier colonists were Catholics, and their indentured servants were generally Protestant. However, when the four year indentures ended, the Protestants got their own land, and became the majority of the colony.

4. There were efforts to convert the few Indians who lived in Maryland, an effort that met with some success. One of the Indian queens, called the "Empress of the Piscataway" came over to the faith and tried to give the Jesuits some land, until Cecil Calvert insisted that the land belonged to him. The Indians in Maryland generally intermarried with the colonists and thus mostly ceased to be a distinct group.

5. When Oliver Cromwell took power in England in 1642, the government of Virginia briefly took over Maryland and forced the Calverts, the Jesuits and many Catholics out of Maryland. However, Maria Henrietta accused Cecil Calvert of supporting the overthrow of Charles I and sent a mission to take over the colony. This move paradoxically made Oliver Cromwell favorable to the Calverts; and so he put them back in charge and they allowed the Catholics back in. And when Leonard Calvert died in 1647, Cecil Calvert appointed a Protestant governor to keep good relations with the Protestants. In 1649, Maryland officially promulgated the Toleration Act, which allowed all Christian faiths, a continuation of the former policy.

6. The Revolution of 1688, through Parliament overthrew the Catholic King James II and invited William and Mary to be king and queen, dramatically changed the situation in Maryland and other colonies as well. Maryland soon revoked the Toleration Act and placed Catholics under many legal disabilities, including forbidding Catholic education and prohibiting Catholics from holding public office. In order to maintain his title, the fourth Lord Baltimore joined the Anglican Church, a further blow to the Church. The legal disabilities would continue until the American Revolution. And in fact, the situation got worse to the point of threatening imprisonment of Catholic priests until 1702, when Queen Anne insisted that the colony not go that far.

7. The situation for Catholics in Maryland did improve from 1715 – 1751 and the Jesuits and Catholic schools returned. After that, however, the Maryland legislature imposed more severe laws again, for example, by closing the Catholic schools once more.

C. Most other colonies also had statutes discriminating against Catholics, enacted either originally or after the Revolution of 1688.

1. For example, in the early to mid-17<sup>th</sup> century, New York mostly respected religious liberty. However, after 1688, New York imposed disabilities on Catholics and even forbade priests from celebrating Mass, with punishments up to death. At one point the New York colony offered to pay the Iroquois Indians if they turned over Catholic priests; since there were no Catholic priests among them, they turned over John Ury, a nonconformist Anglican clergyman, accusing him of being a Catholic priest.

2. New Jersey allowed religious liberty until 1688, but then put Catholics under civil disabilities including the holding of public offices.

3. Massachusetts always had disabling laws, initially forbidding Catholic from holding office and Catholic priests from residing in the colony. Some Irish Catholics immigrated to the colony in the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century. But the laws were still very harsh and became worse after 1688, even to the point of likewise imposing the death penalty for a priest celebrating Mass.

3. Rhode Island did offer religious liberty. But, starting with their founder Roger Williams, there was a popular bias against Catholics there. As a result, few Catholics settled in that colony. Likewise, Delaware allowed religious liberty, but very few Catholics resided there. There were no Catholic churches in either colony.

4. In Virginia, Catholics were forbidden from holding office, voting or being witnesses in trials. Starting in 1661, Catholics were fined and priests were forbidden from staying in the colony. There were two Catholic priests arrested in 1687.

D. Pennsylvania then became the best place for Catholics in the English colonies.

1. In 1681, King Charles II granted William Penn, a charter for the land that would become known as Pennsylvania, in part to pay off debts owed to the Penns.

2. William Penn was a Quaker, whose traditions and beliefs largely descended from the Baptists. Being under civil disabilities in England, the Quakers believed very strongly in religious liberties. And so William Penn established religious liberty as the law in Pennsylvania. As a result, it became the best homeland in the British colonies for Catholics, as well as for Jews. Philadelphia in particular became a trading center, where religions and ideas of all kinds could be discussed.

E. With the disabilities, the number of Catholics in the 13 colonies was relatively small. Some of the Catholics came to the new land as servants to Englishmen, or to try a new life here. In addition, because England controlled Canada, some Catholic French descendants from that land came to the 13 colonies as well. Ironically, some Catholics, including the Carrols of Maryland, prospered in finance and trade because they were forbidden from public office. By the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century, there were probably about 25,000 Catholics in the 13 colonies, with the majority in Maryland or Pennsylvania. Their parishes were under the “vicar apostolic of London” who was effectively the Catholic bishop of England, Wales and the 13 colonies.