
by

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In September 1955, the front page of the *Dallas Morning News* reported, against the school’s wishes, that two African American Catholics had enrolled in Jesuit High, a boys’ school, thereby making it the only desegregated school in Dallas. George Allen, the father of one of the boys, had Bishop Thomas K. Gorman of Dallas’s active support for his son Arthur’s application. A prominent Catholic and businessman, Allen subsequently played an important behind the scenes role in negotiating desegregation of the city’s buses and other public accommodations. Another African American lay Catholic, Clarence A. Laws organized and led civil rights protests in the city as the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)’s Southwest regional director, and he also worked with the Catholic Interracial Council of Dallas. White Sisters also contributed to racial change. Even before the United States Supreme Court ruled public school segregation unconstitutional in *Brown v. Board of Education* in May 1954, the Sisters of St. Mary of Namur, without publicity, admitted African Americans to a white girls’ school, Our Lady of Victory, they staffed in Fort Worth, making it the first desegregated school in the city.¹

Despite numerous scholarly and popular accounts of Dallas and its environs, including studies of civil rights and desegregation by W. Marvin Dulaney and Brian D. Behnken and Michael Phillips’s account of race, ethnicity and religion, historians have neglected the desegregation of Catholic institutions in the Diocese of Dallas, which were nevertheless also part of the struggle for racial equality. Insofar as they consider religion and the African American civil rights movement, historians of the movement in Dallas, and often more widely in the South, focus on African American Protestant ministers. This article contributes to an emerging historiography about Catholics and desegregation in the United States that has nevertheless neglected Dallas, and it provides further evidence in support of a
developing recognition that Catholics made significant contributions to the southern civil rights movement. By examining Catholics, so often ignored or mentioned only very briefly in the city’s history, it also enhances our understanding of the process of racial change in Dallas. Whereas historian Rachel Devlin has recently emphasized the role of African American girls in desegregating public schools, Jesuit High School provides a case study of the Catholic experience and a reminder that black boys also played an important part in school desegregation.2

In his study of the civil rights experience, Behnken argues that “To maintain the positive image of the city and to promote business growth, Dallas’s leaders proved willing to negotiate with blacks and implement desegregation measures.” Although the civil rights movement had to adopt litigation and direct action protests to force white leaders to act, peaceful negotiated change was the “Dallas way.” After the federal courts ordered public school desegregation in 1961, city officials produced a widely shown thirty minute film Dallas at the Crossroads to promote peaceful compliance as a matter of law and order. Historian William Brophy observes that city newspapers did not report civil rights protests lest they inflame white opinion and produce a violent white response. Dallas thereby escaped the segregationist mobs seen in Little Rock and New Orleans when their public schools first desegregated and, unlike in some southern cities, there were also no attacks on sit-in protesters at segregated lunch counters.3

Unlike Dallas’ businesses and city authorities, Bishop Gorman and Catholic institutions were not subject to desegregation protests or litigation. Nevertheless, in an effort to realize the Church’s claims to universality, they shaped their own form of the Dallas Way that focused on gradual, consensual change, implemented peacefully with minimal public notice to protect Catholic clergy, sisters and laity, and students in Catholic education. Unlike
some other Catholic prelates in the South and Southwest, such as Archbishop Robert E. Lucey of San Antonio and Bishop Vincent S. Waters of Raleigh, Gorman did not make public statements about segregation or issue pastoral letters announcing desegregation of churches and schools to be read in Catholic churches. Gorman, and often the Catholic religious orders that staffed many schools and churches in the diocese, quietly formulated, supported and implemented desegregation policies without fanfare or publicity that might arouse segregationist opposition from within or and outside the Church’s ranks and divide Catholics. Providing they did not conflict with the church’s teachings, the Vatican allowed prelates to run their dioceses as they saw fit according to local conditions and had long permitted the operation of separate churches and schools for African Americans and Mexican Americans as a means of spreading and perpetuating the faith.4

Unlike most Catholic dioceses in the South, Catholic schools in the Diocese of Dallas desegregated ahead of public schools. However, like other dioceses, Catholic school desegregation in the Diocese of Dallas was mostly one-sided, involving a few African Americans enrolling in previously white schools with little or no support, or preparation for what they would encounter. Similarly, white Catholic schools generally did not prepare their students, parents and teachers for desegregation. As public accommodations in Dallas began to desegregate in the early 1960s and especially when blacks and Mexican Americans moved to formerly white areas, Anglo Catholic churches began to accept African Americans and Mexican Americans, who had mostly attended distinct racially or ethnically defined parishes. However, blacks and Mexican American migration also led to Anglo flight to other areas that limited church desegregation. In the late 1960s, the diocese and religious orders began to close black Catholic schools and churches that were in close proximity to Anglo equivalents. Nevertheless, they maintained black and Hispanic churches, and sometimes schools, in areas
that remained largely African American or Hispanic, and they increasingly opened new churches and schools to cater for the diocese’s growing Mexican and Latino population that resulted from immigration.⁵

Although state segregation laws did not apply to the Catholic Church, as a private institution, the Diocese of Dallas established separate churches, missions and schools for African Americans and Mexican and Mexican Americans in the first half of the twentieth century and thereby conformed to and expanded segregation that was commonplace in the South and Southwest. By contrast, Anglos attended geographically defined territorial parishes. In 1905, at the request of an African American couple Valentine and Mary Jordan, the diocese built its first African American Catholic parish, St. Peter the Apostle Church in Dallas. Three years later, it added a school the Sisters’ Institute, later renamed St. Peter’s Academy. More African American Catholic churches, missions and schools followed, including Our Mother of Mercy Church in Fort Worth in 1929 and St. Anthony Church in Dallas in 1938.⁶

In 1914, Manuel de Francisco, a Spanish priest and Vincentian Father, began Our Lady of Guadalupe parish in Dallas as a storefront church for Mexicans who, like him, had fled the upheaval that followed the Mexican Revolution of 1910. The church, taken over by the Discalced Carmelite Fathers in 1915, twice moved to new locations to accommodate a growing Mexican and Mexican American population in the Little Mexico neighborhood, and it also added a school staffed by the Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul. Segregation laws categorized ethnic Mexicans as white, but they suffered segregation and discrimination in multifarious ways, sometimes related to their skin color, which differed markedly according to their racial heritage that usually included white and Indian descent, and, in some cases, a combination that included African roots. Many Mexican Americans also regarded
themselves as white and shared the segregationist views of most Anglos toward African Americans. The diocese’s few churches, missions and schools for the Spanish speaking, such as St. Teresa’s Church established in West Dallas in 1928 and San Mateo Mission, begun in Fort Worth in 1941, catered mostly to poor Mexican American and Mexican immigrants.\(^7\)

Whereas diocesan priests, who had been ordained for and belonged to the diocese, pastored many of the diocese’s Anglo churches, members of religious orders staffed all of the diocese’s African American and Mexican churches and missions, as well as some Anglo churches. Based in Baltimore, Maryland, the Society of St. Joseph of the Sacred Heart (Josephites), an overwhelmingly white order of religious priests, and the Fathers of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, an entirely white order, served most of the diocese’s black churches. Religious orders of clergy and nuns taught in Catholic schools. In 1942, the Southern Province of the Society of Jesus (Jesuits), a white order, opened Jesuit High School in Dallas. By the 1940s, the Western Province of the Sisters of St. Mary of Namur, which trained teachers at its headquarters at Our Lady of Victory College in Fort Worth, taught in twenty-one Catholic schools in the Diocese of Dallas and other Catholic dioceses in Texas. The Sisters Servants of the Holy Ghost and Mary Immaculate of San Antonio, a white order, taught in African American schools attached to St. Peter’s Church and St. Anthony’s Mission in Dallas. In September 1945, the Sisters of the Holy Family, an Afro-Creole and black order based in New Orleans, opened Holy Spirit School for African American children in Marshall.\(^8\)

In response to their growing population, the diocese established more missions for the Spanish speaking in the 1940s, such as Epiphany Mission in Italy in 1948. Father Aloysius Dot, C.M.F. (Christian Missionaries), pastor of San Jose, Fort Worth’s only Hispanic mission, brought the Hermanas Catequistas Guadalupanas (the Guadalupanas Catechist
Sisters) to the city from Mexico in 1952 to minister to five Hispanic communities. Our Lady of Guadalupe in Dallas became a national parish for Mexican and Mexican Americans, akin to the linguistically-defined national parishes that northern Catholic dioceses had created for European immigrant groups in the nineteenth century as a means of assimilation into American life. By contrast, African American Catholics in the Diocese of Dallas attended racially-defined special parishes and missions, which numbered nine by 1945 and implied a permanent separation.⁹

Dallas had been a center of Ku Klux Klan activity in the 1920s, with the largest chapter in Texas, and the city, like other places in the diocese, rigidly segregated African Americans. During the 1940s, defense industries led to a wartime employment boom, Business expansion continued in the decades that followed the war, and saw a rapid growth in population that drew migrants from rural Texas and other parts of the nation. African Americans and Mexican Americans were confined to different segregated public schools in Dallas. However, many Mexican Americans identified as white. They sought the privileges associated with whiteness and did not make common cause with the far more numerous black population against segregation and discrimination. In 1950 and 1951, the Dallas homes of some African Americans, who had moved into formerly white neighborhoods, were bombed with two Mexican Americans among ten suspects arrested. No convictions followed.¹⁰

The Diocese of Dallas stretched across northeast Texas. White Catholic migration from rural Texas and the North of the United States to Dallas and Fort Worth accounted for most of the growth in the number of Catholics in the diocese from 75,000 (3.3 percent of the total population) in 1945 to 157,500 (5 percent) in 1966, despite the loss of territory with the establishment of the Diocese of Austin in 1947 and the Diocese of San Angelo in 1961. The diocese created new territorial parishes to serve the growing white Catholic population.¹¹
Appointed the diocese’s co-adjutor bishop in 1952, after serving as the first bishop of the Diocese of Reno since 1931, Gorman was a newcomer to the Diocese of Dallas and Jim Crow. A native of Pasadena, California, born in 1892, he had studied at St. Patrick’s Seminary in Menlo Park, St. Mary’s Seminary in Baltimore, the Catholic University of America, and the University of Louvain, Belgium. The Vatican vetted the racial attitudes of those, like Gorman, it considered for episcopal appointment to exclude segregationists. However, while favorable to desegregation, Gorman did not initiate it in his new diocese as he took over administrative control from Bishop Joseph P. Lynch, who was in declining health.12

Although the diocese had a largely segregated Catholic school system, segregation was not absolute in Catholic schools. The orders that taught in them had discretion in admissions. Segregated in Dallas’s public schools, Mexican Americans attended Catholic high schools with whites in the city. The Sisters of St. Mary of Namur desegregated their schools in Fort Worth by admitting African Americans in the early 1950s before the Brown ruling. Sister Teresa Webber, the Provincial, made the decision, which made Our Lady of Victory the first school, public or private, to desegregate in Fort Worth. Some white parents withdrew their children when the school admitted African Americans. One mother, who telephoned the school and threatened to enroll her daughter in public school, declared “if she loses her soul because she didn't get a Catholic education, it’s your fault.” A sister replied, “Your daughter will not lose her soul because she didn’t get a Catholic education. If you choose not to send her to a Catholic school, that’s your choice. If we don’t admit black girls, that’s our choice - and that’s sinful.”13

Desegregation of the order’s other schools in the city also led to white withdrawals. Many white parents, like other segregationists, feared that school desegregation would lead to
racial intermarriage and mixed race children. Sister Jane recalled, “There was a lot of fear and animosity here in Fort Worth. Fear mainly [that] if you go to school with [African American] students, you’re going to marry them; that was the ultimate conclusion instantly. We lost a lot of [white] students. Parents really were afraid for their younger students.” Public schools did not begin desegregation in Fort Worth until September 1963.14

A month after the Brown ruling, St. Paul Hospital, run by the Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul, became the first white hospital in Dallas to allow African American doctors to admit patients, when its 300 white physicians voted unanimously in favor of the change. However, the black physicians could not become hospital staff members because the Texas Medical Association restricted its membership to whites. Five African American doctors, chosen by and from among eighteen black doctors in Dallas, were permitted to admit up to thirty-two African Americans to a segregated ward, but they could not treat white patients. Dr. Emmett J. Conrad, an African American surgeon who relocated to Dallas a year later, noted that “Saint Paul opened its doors before the hospitals in Chicago, New York, San Francisco, and all the so-called bastions of liberty…. You know, it was done quietly, without fanfare.” This quiet approach exemplified the Dallas Way. In April 1955, the Texas Medical Association voted to remove white from its membership requirements, and in 1956 St. Paul accepted African American physicians as staff members, although the hospital remained segregated. Dallas’s other white hospitals continued to exclude black doctors.15

Insulated to some extent from direct pressure from local segregationists, other religious orders, which often had headquarters outside the diocese, were also sometimes willing to depart from southern white norms. In the early 1950s, the New Orleans Province of the Society of Jesus, which included Texas, addressed segregation in its institutions. At a meeting of thirty-six leading Jesuits in Grand Coteau, Louisiana, in August 1952, the
province rejected segregation because the unity of humanity required that “all men … enjoy the same fundamental human dignity and rights”; “All men have been redeemed by Jesus Christ and enjoy the same supernatural dignity and rights as members of the Mystical Body of Christ”; and the United States Constitution and Bill of Rights guaranteed “the same human and civil rights” for all citizens.¹⁶

Although the meeting agreed in principle that all Jesuit institutions in the province should desegregate, its recommendations allowed local Jesuit superiors discretion in implementation, required the support of local bishops for desegregation, and would desegregate Jesuit high schools only in areas where there was not “a Catholic high school for Negroes in the vicinity.” The meeting agreed that its deliberations and recommendations, which were subject to approval from John B. Janssens the Jesuit Father General in Rome, should receive no publicity but be subject to discussion among Jesuits. However, A. William Crandell, the provincial, did not send a draft policy statement on desegregation to Rome until January 1954. In a favorable response, Janssens pondered whether the Brown ruling, issued in May, served to “earnestly admonish us to proceed very promptly and decisively?” and he urged a positive embrace of desegregation.¹⁷

Issued under Crandell’s name in September, the province’s policy statement condemned racial segregation as “morally evil.” Yet, at a time when many segregationists made just such a claim, it countenanced “temporary separation of the races,” based not on race itself but on “a notable difference in the intellectual, moral or cultural attainment levels of the groups.” By gradually eliminating such supposed differences, Crandell continued, “we will … be making the Negro more acceptable to the white population” and paving the way for the removal of segregation. By advancing “the principle of voluntary association,” Crandell sought to defuse segregationist fears that desegregation would inevitably lead to
interracial dating and sex. He affirmed that “There is no law of God imposing universally …
close personal intermingling” between the races. Crandell declared that the province would
accept applicants to the novitiate regardless of race and eliminate segregation in church
services. Regarding admission of African Americans to the province’s high schools in
Dallas, Tampa, Florida, and New Orleans and Shreveport in Louisiana, Jesuits would “work
toward the time when the abolition of separate schools will be possible.” The province’s
policy, Crandell cautioned Jesuits, should be implemented with “a minimum of formal
publicity” to enhance “the prospect of solid achievement.”

In December 1954, Father Michael P. Kammer from Jesuit High School in Dallas,
attended a meeting of the New Orleans Province’s school principals. Father D. R. Druhan,
who chaired the meeting, suggested that Kammer’s school should desegregate first because
“the populace would be fairly agreeable, the students have become prepared for it by various
events held conjointly (debates, sodality meetings, etc), the Bishop would favor it, and the
number of Negroes (Catholic and academically qualified) would be few.”

This was not the first time that Kammer had faced the issue. In early 1954, a group of
Dallas leaders that included Stanley Marcus, president of Neiman-Marcus, and surprisingly,
given his subsequent public defense of segregation, W. A. Criswell, pastor of First Baptist
Church, met to discuss how the city could desegregate public schools peacefully if, as they
expected, the United States Supreme Court outlawed segregation in the Brown case. They
believed that if Jesuit High School desegregated successfully, it could set a peaceful
precedent for public school desegregation in the city, and failure would reflect only on Jesuit
High. Subsequently, they broached the idea with Father Thomas J. Shields, the president of
Jesuit High School, and Kammer. Initially, the two men refused because they feared they
would lose white students and their tuition fees. In response, the city leaders offered to pay
the double the tuition lost for every student who withdrew. However, that still left the question of which students would desegregate Jesuit High School.\textsuperscript{20}

Early in 1955, George Allen accepted an invitation from the city’s white businessmen to join the board of Community Chest, a fund-raising group for local projects. Born in 1908 and originally from New Orleans, Allen had settled in Dallas after studying at Xavier University, Southern Methodist University and the University of Southern California. He had set up his own successful insurance and public accounting businesses. Allen broke the color line by joining Community Chest. Marcus, another board member, and Allen discussed Allen’s youngest son, Arthur, doing the same by enrolling at Jesuit High School.\textsuperscript{21}

It seems likely that Marcus, or another of his group of city leaders, also discussed the idea with, or suggested it to, Gorman, who had established close ties with white business leaders. Gorman became bishop in August 1954, following the death of Bishop Joseph Patrick Lynch, and demonstrated his support for desegregation in September when the renamed (at his suggestion) Diocese of Dallas-Fort Worth announced that diocesan controlled schools would accept African American Catholics when space was available. The announcement made by Father Thomas Tscheope, diocesan chancellor, and Father Edwin R. Maher, Jr., assistant superintendent of schools, signaled intent, rather than imminent change, because, as the Catholic press, reported “Most of the 70 schools in the 63-county diocese are already full now, and it is estimated that enrollment in the 13 Dallas schools will swell to more than 8000.” By permitting only African American Catholics to attend formerly white parochial schools, the diocese ensured that, even if space became available, the numbers involved would be small since a large majority of those who attended black Catholic schools were not Catholic, and there were only 920 black Catholic adults and children in the diocese.\textsuperscript{22}
Although the diocese’s announcement of desegregation was more symbolic than a practical change, it nevertheless marked a departure from public school policy because in July 1954 the State Board of Education had voted to continue segregation in Texas public schools. All of Dallas’ private and public schools remained segregated during the 1954-1955 school year, but Marcus and his group still hoped that Jesuit High School would lead the way at the start of the next school year. Gorman was also ready to proceed. In March 1955, he asked Shields to consider admitting Arthur Allen, the “son of the most prominent Catholic Negro in the diocese.” Encouraged by the support of the New Orleans Province and reassured by the city leaders’ offer of generous financial compensation for any lost tuition income and the diocese’s public support for Catholic school desegregation, Shields replied that he, Kammer and the rest of the school’s administrative staff “had already decided to admit negro students.”

While adults planned his future, Arthur Allen, who was enrolled in St. Anthony’s, a Catholic school in South Dallas, “didn’t want to attend [Jesuit High School].” He recalled that “my family’s decision caused an alienation between my father and me that lasted for many years. I didn’t know anyone at Jesuit, and it wasn’t near my neighborhood.” Nevertheless, bowing to his father’s wishes, Allen applied, “took the pre-school tests,” and secured a place. Concerned that if Allen had any academic difficulties, it might discredit integration, school officials also sought a more academically “talented” black Catholic student. They settled on Charles Edmond, recommended by a sister who was his principal at St. Peter’s Academy in Dallas. Edmond remembered, “I was mild-mannered and academically capable. They thought I would not create any problems.” Offered a scholarship by Jesuit High, he agreed to transfer to Jesuit High for his sophomore year
“mainly because I wanted to play in the band and I couldn’t afford an instrument. Jesuit would let me use one of theirs.”

In September 1955, Jesuit High School officials admitted the two boys without publicity, while white public schools refused to admit twenty-eight African American applicants. However, a disgruntled white mother contacted the media after learning of the school’s desegregation from her son, who had been at freshman orientation with Allen. Although the school tried successfully at first to keep the story out of the media, fearing that it would adversely affect enrollment, the Dallas Morning News reported it on the front page the next day. Unable to suppress the story, Shields and Kammer issued a statement, reported in the paper, to explain the school’s action. In justification, they cited the Constitution, federal law and patriotism. They declared:

Jesuit High School understands that integration is a vexing problem for many people. On the other hand, it is our conviction that all citizens of this country should obey the Constitution and the laws as they are interpreted by the Supreme Court.

The will of the Court in this case is clear. While the decree does not extend to private institutions, its spirit plainly does.

Jesuit High School, although not a public but a private educational institution of the Catholic Church, is thoroughly American and is committed to thorough adherence to the government of the United States and its Supreme Court.

The school’s desegregation did not lead to mass withdrawals or protests. Jack Eifert, a teacher at Jesuit High, remembered that “There were two families that withdrew their sons from Jesuit, and one of them came back.” Two weeks after the boys’ admission, Shields
informed Crandell “The [white] boys accepted the two negro students in a wonderfully fine spirit,” and there had been “no difficulty whatever.”

However, desegregation did not occur as smoothly as Shields suggested. Two days after the media broke the story, Arthur Allen recalled that he was watching television with his parents “when we heard a loud boom. A stick of dynamite had hit the house, bounced off, and landed on our neighbor’s porch, knocking it off its foundation.” Some parents and faculty at Jesuit High made “snide remarks” about Allen. “The adults in the school,” he observed, “had the same prejudices as the general population. Many made it known to me that they weren’t happy I was there, but others accepted me.” When he returned to his African American neighborhood after school, he also “got some heat from some of the neighborhood for attending Jesuit. They’d ask me: ‘You too good for us? You going to talk white, now?’”

Shields and his staff did not prepare Allen and Edmond for the experiences they would face as the school’s first black students, or prepare white students and their parents and teachers for desegregation. Catholic teachers were primarily concerned with how the African American students would behave and did not appreciate the burdens and weight of expectations that desegregating a white school placed on them. After Edmond agreed to enroll in Jesuit High School, a sister, who was the principal of St. Peter’s Academy, advised him to “keep quiet, focus on academics, create no problems, avoid trouble, and avoid any situation that would create public scrutiny.” When he arrived at Jesuit High, Edmond received no welcome or instructions, other than for Kammer to say that Edmond should talk with him if problems arose. In 2012, Joseph Murphy, one of Allen’s white classmates, commented that “I realize now that Arthur put up with a lot of bull I never realized [at the time].”
The school also made compromises with the segregationist sentiment of some of its white parents and the wider white community. In September, Shields wrote Crandell “both boys went out for football practice, the one for the Freshman team, the other for the ‘B’ team. They were fully accepted by team mates; again, no problem whatever. Both were told, however, that in the event we are playing a school which refuses to play against a team with a negro on it, they will not be on the bench or in game.” Although Shields claimed that “Both boys fully understood,” Allen later recalled the pressure that he had felt. He explained “Some schools wouldn’t play Jesuit if I even suited-up with the team. Since Jesuit didn’t want to forfeit a game, I didn’t participate. Usually the priests would ask me to make the decision, which was, of course, a huge responsibility to put on a young boy. On Friday before a football game I’d hear an announcement calling me to the principal’s office. I would be given the choice to sit out the game or have the team forfeit. After these meetings I would go downstairs to the locker room and cry. Then, I would come back up.”

Even when he played, Allen often encountered hostility. He remembered, “Sometimes a school’s junior varsity would be willing to play with me when the varsity wouldn’t. Then I would play with the junior varsity. Often during the games I played[,] the other school’s crowd would hurl obscenities, throw Coke on me, and spit at me.” Nevertheless, he made friends among his teammates, and also increasingly his classmates, and was accepted by other students at his school.

In another compromise with segregation, Shields wrote Crandell “The negro boys may join any and all societies and activities, but they have been informed, and fully understand, they will not be invited to dances or such social activities.” Despite Shields’s assessment, Allen recalled that exclusion upset him. Pressured by some white parents, Kammer told Allen that he could not attend the Junior Prom for fear that a white boy might
ask his African American date for a dance or “God forbid, I would ask someone else’s [white] date for a dance.” Barred from attending, Allen went to Lincoln High School’s prom in his neighborhood. Despite his negative experiences, Allen reflected, “I liked my athletic prowess and my public speaking talent and the affirmation they gave me with my peers.” He concluded that Jesuit High School “taught me how to deal with people, to make friends, to form partnerships.”

Because they entered Jesuit High a grade apart, Edmond recalled, with regret, that he and Allen never became friends. “We never bonded even though I knew of him, and I knew his father was a well-to-do person, but we never associated, and very seldom did I see him.” Edmund initially did not make friends because he was quiet and had joined as a sophomore by which time other students had already established friendship networks. He felt isolated in school and on the segregated bus that took him to and from school. Edmond recollected, “Here were students that I knew and associated with at school, and I had to sit apart like I didn’t know them.” Nevertheless, other students accepted him in school and elected him a sophomore class vice-president. However, his contact with students outside the classroom was almost entirely confined to band practice.

Edmond was raised by his mother who did not attend any school-related social events because she felt “uncomfortable.” According to Shields, the school’s Mother’s Club had decided that “The negro mothers are to be accepted as full members of the Club with all rights and privileges, but the Lady President is to inform the negro mothers in a private conversation that they should not expect invitations to events held in hotels, for the hotels do not admit negro people. In the event of social events held in the homes of members, the negro mothers are not to expect invitations unless the hostess, i.e. the lady of the house, should issue the invitation.”
Edmond felt isolated throughout his studies. By 1957, Jesuit High School had admitted three more African Americans, but, as they were freshman, he did not bond with them. When he graduated in 1958, Edmond was not permitted to attend any graduation celebrations. As his mother had hoped, he went on to college where he studied English and then math at Grambling State, a black university, in Louisiana. Edmond became a math teacher in St. Louis, Missouri, and retired as an assistant high school principal. He looked back at his experiences at Jesuit High with mixed feelings. On the one hand, he explained that “My neighborhood was of low income, 100% black, and there were gangs. Jesuit was like a safe haven because I left home in the morning and I was there in the afternoon because I was in band. I’m glad that pulled me out of the neighborhood for a while because I think I would have had problems going to other schools in the neighborhood.” On the other hand, Edmond never felt part of the school. Nearly fifty years after graduating, he declared, “I have never returned to Jesuit … nor reunions not because I have not wanted to, but because of the isolation I felt while being the first. I still, to this day, do not feel a kinship to the establishment or the classmates.” Although contacted by Sheryl Row, the school archivist, in 2006, for several years Edmond declined her entreaties to revisit the school, which had moved to a new campus in 1963 and been renamed the Jesuit College Preparatory School of Dallas in 1969. Eventually, in April 2012, Edmond returned and received a warm reception.34

Unlike Edmond, in adult life Arthur Allen remained active in the school after completing his studies at Marquette University in Milwaukee and becoming a businessman back in Dallas. During Allen’s enrollment at Jesuit High School and also in the early 1960s, his father George Allen was engaged in efforts to end segregation in Dallas’s public accommodations. After the Dallas Youth Council of the NACCP, led by Juanita Craft,
organized pickets of the Melba Theater and the Texas State Fair in 1955 in an unsuccessful
effort to desegregate them, Dallas Mayor Robert L. Thornton met several times with Craft
and Allen to discuss desegregating public accommodations. As a result of the talks, African
Americans tested desegregation at downtown stores, although they made no inroads. In
response to the Montgomery Bus Boycott of 1955-1956 and the United States Supreme Court
ruling in Browder v. Gayle in December 1956 that ended the boycott by declaring bus
segregation unconstitutional, Allen told Thornton that he would launch a boycott of Dallas’s
segregated buses. In response, Thornton ensured that the city’s buses desegregated. 35

Anxious to avoid controversy and unwilling to risk exposing the Church and
Catholics to segregationist criticism, Bishop Gorman made no public comment about bus
segregation. He was also silent when Texas state attorney general John Ben Shepperd
defended public school segregation and hamstrung the NAACP’s activities in the state by
obtaining an injunction against its operations between September 1956 and May 1957 and
charging it with barratry and failing to meet state documentation requirements. Although the
NAACP eventually defeated the charges in court, the association did not regain its vitality in
Texas for over three years. Clarence A. Laws, a Catholic and Opelousas, Louisiana native,
who had moved to Dallas in 1955 to take up a position as the NAACP’s Southwest regional
director, was frequently named in lawsuits against the association. 36

Gorman did not involve himself in the NAACP’s difficulties, but he quietly continued
to support desegregated Catholic institutions. In 1955, he agreed that the diocese would
assume sponsorship for the opening of the University of Dallas on a 1,000 acre campus in
Irving, which would be coeducational, desegregated and open to all faiths. The new Catholic
university opened in September 1956, with faculty initially provided by the Cisterian Order,
the Sisters of St. Mary of Namur, the Franciscans and laymen. Gorman served as chancellor.37

Gorman cautiously supported a collective response to segregation by the nation’s Catholic bishops that comported with his views while shielding him from proclaiming his thoughts in public. In September 1958, Sulpician Father John F. Cronin, the assistant director of the National Catholic Welfare Conference (NCWC)’s Department of Social Action, circulated a proposed statement on race relations for the American Catholic hierarchy to consider at its annual meeting held in Washington, D.C. in November. Gorman welcomed the statement’s “moderate approach” and wrote Cronin, “Personally, I think some such statement by the bishops might help, but we do have some extremists among us on both sides of the controversy who might not think so.” Gorman thereby implicitly equated segregationists with civil rights activists who sought to exercise their constitutional rights. Issued by the administrative board of the NCWC on behalf of the Catholic bishops of the United States, the statement expressed the hope that “responsible and sober-minded Americans of all religious faiths, in all areas of our land, will seize the mantle of leadership from the agitator and the racist.” Although it condemned racial discrimination and legal segregation, the statement did not address these practices within the Church. The bishops also cautioned that “Changes in deep-rooted attitudes are not made overnight” and warned against a “rash impetuosity that would sacrifice the achievements of decades in ill-timed and ill-considered ventures.”38

Nevertheless, thousands of young African Americans in the South were impatient for change and ready to take direct action to achieve it. The southern sit-in movement began in February 1960 when four African Americans sat in at a lunch counter in Greensboro, North Carolina, that denied them service. In March, the Dallas NAACP Youth Council initiated
interracial lunch counter sit-ins. In response, the Dallas Citizens Council created a Committee of 14, evenly divided between African Americans and whites, to discuss desegregation. Local blacks chose Allen and Craft among the black committee members, but negotiations were slow, and the protests continued.\(^3\)\(^9\)

Bishop Gorman did not offer any public comment on the sit-ins, but, in a published letter to the *Dallas Morning News*, Sister Mary Ignatius, based in Irving, was forthright in her rejection of segregation. She wrote: “Why cannot Dallas, progressive in every other way, be a leader during this critical time? If, without putting up any signs, we simply served graciously every customer who came to the lunch counter – just as we sell merchandise to anyone who patronizes a store – there would be no need for demonstrations. Perhaps, then, we could read portions of the Declaration [of Independence] and Constitution without blushing, stammering and rationalizing.” Although the sister did not identify her order, she was a Sister of St. Mary of Namur on the faculty of the desegregated University of Dallas. Juanita Craft later recalled that Catholic religious were in the forefront of whites who supported the NAACP in Dallas. She observed “Most of them had served all over the world … and they didn’t have the racial prejudice.” Many of the sisters and clergy who served in the diocese were not from the area it encompassed or from the South, and some came from other countries, such as Hungary and Poland. As Craft noted, some orders also gave their members experience abroad. The Sisters of St. Mary of Namur, for example, assigned sisters to the Belgian Congo.\(^4\)\(^0\)

Some African American Catholic laity were active in the NAACP. Clarence A. Laws married another NAACP activist, Ann Louise Parnell German, a Jamaica native who had been a teacher at St. Anthony School. A few Catholic laity also worked together to address racial discrimination. At the end of March 1960, a small group of African American and
white male and female laity in Dallas asked Gorman’s permission to form a Catholic Interracial Council. They explained that they had met informally for the past year under the spiritual guidance of Monsignor William F. O’Brien, the diocese’s Vicar General and pastor of Sacred Heart Cathedral, Father Paul Ortner, S.S.J. (Josephites), and Father James Hubert C.I.C.M. (Missionhurst Congregation of the Immaculate Heart of Mary) “to explore means whereby we, as Catholics, can take positive action to insure that all men are given their God-given rights and treated with the dignity due to a child of God.” The group assured Gorman that it would not be “militantly aggressive” and, in a Catholic version of the Dallas Way, would assist him “by working quietly to chip away at the indignities accorded the Negroes” without courting public controversy. It justified its low-key approach, and also implicitly suggested the reason for Gorman’s avoidance of public comment on secular discrimination, by observing that “The Catholic Church in this diocese being in such [a] minority, is always subject to criticism.”

The nascent council’s description of its activities indicated that it would address both Catholic and secular discrimination. It had “integrated the ushers at the Christ the King Day procession at Memorial Auditorium,” an annual parade that included all of the parishes, schools and Catholic organizations in Greater Dallas. The lay group was “presently conducting a survey of job opportunities for the negro in the community,” and it had been “instrumental in obtaining a scholarship for a negro graduate of Jesuit High School to a northern Catholic University,” most likely for Arthur Allen’s studies at Marquette University. The group indicated that some white Catholic schools were not taking effective steps to attract black applicants, despite the diocese’s school desegregation policy. The group had “contacted Ursuline Academy and learned of the non-discrimination in admission policies and conveyed this information to the negro community.” Gorman swiftly gave permission
for the Catholic Interracial Councils’ formation and assigned O’Brien as its moderator and spiritual adviser. Although the council met regularly, it functioned initially primarily as a fellowship group and did not develop an organization and program.42

Many whites remained opposed to desegregation. In August 1960, the Dallas school board organized a referendum in which 30,324 voted in favor and 7,416 against public school integration. However, the NAACP successfully pursued school desegregation in federal court. As a result, in 1961, the school board adopted a grade a year desegregation plan that began with the first grade in September when eighteen African Americans enrolled in eight formerly all-white grade schools. Desegregation occurred peacefully without public protests.43

Desegregation of Catholic school and other institutions in the diocese remained incomplete, although the diocese continued to make advances. Between 1961 and 1963, it built three new high schools in Dallas and Fort Worth, all of which were desegregated. In 1961, the Josephites, with Gorman’s approval, closed three African American missions so that they could be “integrated with the local [territorial] parishes,” although other black and Mexican American churches continued. In November, Henry A. Cabirac Jr., the white director of the Southern Field Service of the National Catholic Conference for Interracial Justice, an unofficial Catholic body comprised of affiliated Catholic interracial councils, visited the Catholic Interracial Council of Dallas. He concluded that Gorman “has apparently acted vigorously and desegregated, by and large, the majority of the facilities in the Catholic community with the minor exception of certain spots … in the hospital.” Although St. Paul Hospital in Dallas claimed to have desegregated its facilities in 1959, it continued to restrict African Americans to a single ward. There were also other instances of segregation. In December, Father Ernest G. Langenhorst, the Dutch pastor of St. Alice Church, Fort Worth,
informed Cabirac that “our Grade School” was not integrated. Langernhorst added that the two Retreat Houses and Catholic organisations in Fort Worth were also not desegregated.44

The gradual but incomplete desegregation of Catholic institutions mirrored that of secular Dallas. In January 1961, sit-ins and pickets of segregated stores returned to Dallas when protesters tried once more to pressure businesses to desegregate. In February, Craft organized stand-in protests at segregated theatres. According to Behnken, the threat of an Easter Day boycott of downtown stores “proved enough to force the local government and the Committee of 14 to act.” As a member of the committee, “George Allen pressed forcefully for change.” In June, the local government and the Dallas Citizens Council revealed a plan for partial desegregation, and in August forty businesses desegregated peacefully. In January 1963, Martin Luther King Jr. addressed a NAACP rally in Dallas. Following his visit, and after negotiations, the local government desegregated parks and swimming pools in June. The Reverend Earl Allen, a Methodist minister and leader of the Dallas Congress of Racial Equality chapter, and Clarence A. Laws organized picketing of the school administration building to protest the slow pace of public school desegregation in the city.45

Catholic proponents of civil rights took heart from Pope John XXIII’s encyclical Pacem in Terris (Peace on Earth). Issued in April 1963, the encyclical declared that “racial discrimination can in no way be justified” and those refused their rights had a duty to claim them. Encouraged perhaps by the pope’s words, in June Gorman wrote to Catholic schools asking how they sought to “meet the integration problem.” In response, Mother Borgia, O.S.U. [Ursuline Nuns], the principal of Ursuline Academy in Dallas, wrote the bishop in June “if we have not to date had any colored students that … is not because we did not want to take them.” She added, “we do have a colored child registered for our grade school.”
Although African Americans had enquired about high school entry, Borgia said transportation issues had been insurmountable. She stated that “there are no colored families near us at all that we know of,” although she also admitted “we have not gone out to look [emphasis in the original] for a few [African American] students.” Gorman did not press Borgia any further. He replied “I fully understand the problems involved, and I know you will try to find some solution of them once you find suitable, prospective students.” Residential segregation made Catholic school desegregation difficult to achieve in some other areas and entailed the transportation issues that Borgia identified, but, in other places, such as Marshall, their proximity to each other meant that dual schools were unnecessary.46

Gorman was reluctant to press for the practical implementation of desegregation in private Catholic institutions that were controlled by religious orders, rather than by the diocese. When pressed by the Catholic Interracial Council of Dallas, he refused to urge St. Paul Hospital to desegregate because it was an autonomous institution operated by the Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul. In 1963, council members picketed the hospital when it refused to allow African Americans to visit a white patient. Although the hospital opened in a new facility in December, it continued to segregate African American patients.47

At the beginning of the summer of 1963, the council had only thirty-three members. During the summer, however, it gained new vitality when twenty or thirty more people joined, including for the first time “a large contingent of nuns and priests.” In December, the council sponsored a home visit program in which whites visited African American homes in an effort to foster interracial understanding and dispel negative racial stereotyping and prejudice. Clarence A. Laws, who had joined the council, argued that “such meetings have an important place in changing racial attitudes and behaviors.” With Gorman’s permission, in 1964 Catholics in Fort Worth formed an interracial council that John P. Sisson, Cabirac’s
successor, judged “ineffective” because it had “no outreach into the community at all” and was kept under “very close supervision” by its chaplain, Monsignor Thomas Tschoepe.48

The Dallas council reported that it received a “tepid” response from pastors it visited seeking their “permission to appear before parish organizations to explain our work.” Its impact was also limited outside Catholic circles. In December 1964, supported by the school’s principal and president, debating coach Father Patrick Hunter, S.J. withdrew Jesuit High School from a competition when public school officials refused to allow an African American member of its team to participate. Desegregation had not yet reached the city’s public high schools. In vain, the Catholic Interracial Council of Dallas protested the decision to W. T. White, the superintendent of the Dallas Independent School District (DISD). Two other Catholic high schools, Ursuline Academy in Dallas and Nolan High School in Fort Worth, also withdrew from the debating tournament in protest.49

Although Catholic high schools were desegregated, their desegregation remained token. Change in other Catholic institutions was also piecemeal and incremental. In 1964, Gorman reported that the pastors of the diocese’s African American Catholic churches had noticed “a tendency on the part of some of their parishioners to transfer to the territorial parishes in which they live.” A year later, the bishop noted that “There has been and continues to be an accelerating integration of colored Catholics in the parishes and parochial schools where they live.” Gorman stated that six priests worked full time in black churches, serving 1,153 African American parishioners, and he added that there were “1,628 children in Negro schools, of whom only 216 are Catholics.”50

In late 1964, Father William L. Lane, a New York City native, became the first African American to pastor a church in the diocese, when Gorman promoted him from assistant pastor to pastor of Holy Cross Church in Oak Cliff, Dallas. Established in 1956 in a
white neighborhood, Holy Cross was in racial transition. Whites began moving away after
Bishop College, a black institution, relocated there from Marshall in 1960, and blacks and
Mexican Americans moved into the neighborhood. By 1964, the church had 400 African
American, Mexican American and Anglo families. Lane, who had been in the diocese since
1951 after an itinerant career, was one of only two African American priests among 300
Catholic clergy in the diocese. The other priest taught in a parochial school. Soon after his
appointment as pastor, Lane was admitted to supposedly desegregated St. Paul Hospital for a
heart problem, where he was given the bishop’s room after the sisters told them that the black
ward was full. In 1967, he resigned his pastorate because of ill health and “served as the
associate chaplain at St. Joseph Hospital in Fort Worth … until his death in 1968.”

African American Catholic churches were otherwise pastored by white members of
religious orders, who regarded blacks as a missionary field and sometimes treated them with
paternalism. In a discussion panel at the Southern Catholic Leadership Conference,
organized by the NCCJ in Atlanta in 1965, Clarence A. Laws called for an end to special
parishes for African Americans, which he regarded as “discriminatory and divisive.” He
quoted from a letter he had received from Mrs. O. J. Cansler, a Dallas Catholic, who wrote “I
am especially concerned that missionaries STOP demanding that we be grateful for what they
did a hundred years ago for the Negro. They should find some other objectives for their
vocations.” African American Catholics who attended mostly white churches also
complained about the discrimination they experienced within them. Laws stated that black
parishioners at an unnamed church in Dallas complained that they were excluded from
activities, such as the church’s twenty-fifth anniversary banquet, and allowed no say in
decision making.
Gorman did not attend the conference and expressed disapproval when John P. Sisson commended Laws’s and other “outstanding” presentations and sent him a copy. The bishop said he did not see much of Laws and added dismissively, but also accurately, that “Mr. Laws is a divorced and remarried Catholic.” Gorman concluded his brief response scathingly: “I probably would have been interested at the Atlanta conference, but if the rest of the outstanding presentations were as outstandingly inaccurate and untruthful as Mr. Laws’, I am afraid I didn’t miss much.” When Sisson tried to make an appointment with Gorman six months later on a visit to Dallas, the bishop declined to see him.  

Gorman was characteristically silent when Archbishop Robert E. Lucey of San Antonio praised the Selma, Alabama, demonstrations for voting rights in 1965 led by Martin Luther King and condemned the murder of James J. Reeb, a Boston Unitarian minister, who had joined the protests. However, Clarence A. Laws organized a sympathy march of several thousand people in Dallas to provide, he explained, “moral and inspirational support to the voter registration drive in Alabama and elsewhere.” At the march rally, held at Ferris Plaza, J. H. Kultgen Jr., chairman of the Catholic Interracial Council of Dallas, read a statement that referenced the United States Catholic hierarchy’s 1958 condemnation of racial discrimination and declared the council’s wholehearted support for “every peaceful effort anywhere to secure equal rights for all men.”

Sisson subsequently reported to the NCCIJ, which had coordinated the involvement of hundreds of Catholic clergy, sisters and laity in the Selma protests, “While Bishop Gorman is one of the most conservative [Catholic bishops] in the country, the diocese has desegregated its schools and many of its health and other institutions.” Gorman also sought to end dual school situations in which black and white Catholic schools existed in close proximity, but desegregation usually came at the cost of closing black schools and
transferring their students to other Catholic schools. Accordingly, in 1966, the diocese closed Immaculate Heart of Mary School and Holy Cross School, which had become largely black, in Dallas and assigned their students to white schools at St. James (for kindergarten through the fifth grade) and Blessed Sacrament (for grades six through eight), renaming the combined schools, John XXIII School. However, Blessed Sacrament School’s facilities became increasingly dilapidated. In response, in 1969 the diocese assigned the school’s seventh and eighth grades to a resurrected school at Holy Cross, and the sixth grade to St. James School, with the schools known collectively as John XIII School. Within a few years, it moved all grades into what had been St. James School.  

Black and white Catholic schools existed close to each other in Marshall, where the Sisters of the Holy Family continued to teach at Holy Spirit School, and the Sisters of the Holy Cross taught at St. Joseph, an entirely white school. Situated in East Texas, close to Louisiana, Marshall’s population was 50 percent African American and rigidly segregated, including in public schools. For reasons that are unclear, but may have been a result of a decline in vocations or a desire not to perpetuate segregation, the Holy Cross Sisters notified Gorman they would withdraw. In response, Gorman decided that the two schools should merge and their students taught by the Sisters of the Holy Family, but at the St. Joseph site because the fire department had recently condemned Holy Spirit School as hazardous. Gorman sent Sister Caroleen Hensgen, S.S.N.D. (School Sisters of Notre Dame), the diocese’s Superintendent of Schools, and Monsignor Robert Rehkemper, the Vicar General and a former pastor of St. Joseph, to Marshall to explain his plan at a meeting with parents from both schools. Hensgen recalled that at the meeting “One half of the gym was occupied by black people. The other half of the gym was occupied by white people. Neither spoke to each other.” Historian Sister Mary Brian Bole, S.S.N.D., explains “the racial divide could
not be bridged.” Consequently, St. Joseph School closed in 1968 with the withdrawal of the
Sisters of the Holy Cross, and the Sisters of the Holy Family “remained with their students in
the dilapidated building.”

In the ensuing year, two Catholic laymen, Dr. Isodore Lamothe Jr., an African
American doctor, whose children attended Holy Spirit School, and Carlos J. Cacioppo, a
white businessman, successfully worked on behalf of integration, with the result that in 1969,
“St. Joseph’s school opened as an integrated school, with the Sisters of the Holy Family in
administration and faculty positions, and with both white and black faculty members.”
Although, as in other cases, Catholic school desegregation had occurred at the cost of the
African American school, here, uniquely in the diocese, African American sisters ran the
desegregated school that resulted.

When Bishop Gorman retired in 1969, there were five African American Catholic
churches and four black Catholic schools in the diocese. In the same year, George Allen won
election to the Dallas city council and served three terms, during which he ensured the
passage of open housing and public accommodations ordinances. On Gorman’s
recommendation, the Vatican divided the diocese on his retirement into the dioceses of Dallas
and Fort Worth. In 1971, the two parishes in Marshall, still within the Diocese of Dallas,
merged under the name of St. Joseph parish, ending the last vestige of church segregation.
Elsewhere, Bishop Thomas Tschoepe of Dallas and John J. Cassata of Fort Worth, Gorman’s
successors, retained four historically African American churches that were located in African
American neighborhoods: St. Anthony, St. Peter and Immaculate Heart of Mary in Dallas,
and Our Mother of Mercy in Fort Worth. The prelates regarded them as agents of evangelism
and a continuing service to their communities, although black Catholics, like other Catholics,
could attend different Catholic churches. The Diocese of Dallas asked both the Josephites
and the Society of the Divine Word, another order that served African American churches, to take over Holy Cross which had become a de facto black parish, but, with beset by declining vocations, neither accepted. At his request, the diocese appointed Father Timothy Gollub, a white diocesan priest, as pastor of Holy Cross. John XXIII School and St. Peter’s School served Dallas’s remaining African American parishes, and Our Mother of Mercy, located in a poor area of Fort Worth also had a school.58

In August 1971, a federal court ordered the DISD to adopt busing to address high school segregation. Busing began in September. Sister Caroleen Hensgen, S.S.N.D., recalled “Now it was our turn to assume a Christian responsibility in social justice to support this action and cooperate with the DISD.” In response to an effort by white Catholic parents to transfer their children from public schools to Catholic schools in order to avoid public school desegregation, an emergency Diocesan School Board meeting, called by Hensgen, decided that Catholic schools in the city of Dallas would not accept any transfers from within the city. Hensgen explained that “The only exceptions made were for those students who moved into the city from outside and decided to attend our schools, new first graders and ninth graders, brothers and sisters of those already enrolled in the school, or transfer students from any other Catholic school.” Implemented to support public school desegregation and in effect for seven years, the policy’s adoption also implied that many Catholic schools in Dallas were largely white, reflecting their neighborhoods, and so potentially attractive to the white parents of public school children who wanted their children educated in all white or largely white schools. Hensgen also established a trust to help low-income students, many of them from minorities, meet Catholic school tuition costs.59

By 1971, the dioceses of Dallas and Fort Worth had ended formal segregation of their institutions, although residential segregation limited desegregation in Catholic churches and
schools. However, Catholics in both dioceses could attend the church of their choice and apply to whichever Catholic schools they chose. During the 1970s, highway construction, commercial expansion and real estate speculation undermined Little Mexico in Dallas and many of the Hispanics who still lived there migrated to other parts of the city and to new suburbs. The arrival of Vietnamese refugees led to the establishment of Vietnamese ethnic missions and parishes in the 1980s and 1990s. Immigration brought a large increase in the Hispanic population in the 1990s and early 2000s, and the creation of more missions and parishes to serve them. These changing demographics ensured that national parishes still had a place in Catholicism, but, influenced by the Second Vatican Council’s reforms, these parishes, and remaining black parishes, celebrated cultural and religious distinctiveness and conducted masses in their parishioners’ first language.60

In the 1950s and 1960s, many Catholic institutions in the Diocese of Dallas adopted their own version of the Dallas Way in which they sought to desegregate quietly without publicity that might generate opposition from segregationists within and outside Catholic ranks. Unlike most dioceses in the South, such as the Archdiocese of Atlanta, Catholic schools often desegregated ahead of public schools. Dallas city leaders privately encouraged Jesuit High School and Gorman to desegregate, but the Jesuits and the Sisters of St. Mary of Namur in Fort Worth also exercised their own agency in desegregating the schools they operated. In contrast to many other Catholic prelates in the South, Gorman did not issue pastoral letters announcing desegregation, and, unlike Dallas city authorities, he did not introduce a preparatory program to promote acceptance of desegregation. Gorman quietly encouraged religious orders to desegregate the institutions they operated, but, respecting their autonomy, he did not insist on desegregation except in Marshall. Consequently, for many years, St. Paul Hospital continued de facto segregation of patients, even after it had
supposedly desegregated. With the partial exception of Marshall, Catholic school desegregation invariably involved African American students enrolling in white schools with little, if any, support and few, if any, black teachers. Although outside of southern Louisiana, civil rights histories often emphasize black Protestant leadership, the examples of George Allen and Clarence A. Laws in Dallas demonstrate that African American Catholics also made an important but underappreciated contribution to the civil rights struggle. Similarly, the stories of Arthur Allen and Charles Edmond are a reminder of the burden that desegregating white schools placed on African American boys as well as girls. The Diocese of Dallas provides further evidence that there was no typical way in which Catholic dioceses approached desegregation and that each has its own particular story.


9 Landregan, Prologue to the Future, 40; Bole, They Came to Serve, 36; Our Negro and
Indian Missions, January 1946, 17-18, ASSJ.


13 Ridgley interview by author; Bole, They Came to Serve, 11 (quotations); “History – Our Lady of Victory Catholic School – Fort Worth, TX”; Reynolds, Arms of God, 37. Sister Patricia Ridgley, S.S.M.N., recalls that a 1960 Catholic graduating class in Fort Worth had “a number of black girls,” who had been in school with white students for eight or nine years. Ridgley interview by author.


“Minutes of the Province Meeting on Interracial Relations, Grand Coteau, Louisiana, August 28, 29, 1952,” 1-6 (first, second and third quotations on p. 4, Archives of the New Orleans Province of the Society of Jesus, Special Collections and Archives, Loyola University Library, Loyola University New Orleans, New Orleans, Louisiana.


Crandell to “Reverend Fathers and dear Brothers in Christ,” September 9, 1954, 1-6;


“Arthur Allen ’59” (first, third and fourth quotations); Maher, “Part III – Charles Edmond and Arthur Allen Attend Jesuit High School” (second quotation).


Maher, “Part III – Charles Edmond and Arthur Allen Attend Jesuit High School” (first and second quotations); “Arthur Allen ’59” (third quotation).

“Arthur Allen ’59.”


Ibid.

Ibid.


Havard interview by author; Dulaney, “Whatever Happened to the Civil Rights Movement

Laws had responsibility for Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas.

Behnken, Fighting Their Own Battles, 117.


40 Sister Mary Ignatius to the Dallas Morning News, March 27, 1960 (first quotation); Phillips, White Metropolis, 134 (second quotation); Linda Smith, “First UD librarian passes away,” University News, May 6, 2013, <http://udallasnews.com/2013/05/06/first-ud-librarian-passes-away/> [Accessed December 3, 2019]; Juliet George, Fort Worth’s Arlington Heights (Charleston, S.C., Chicago, Ill., Portsmouth, N.H., and San Francisco, Calif.: Arcadia, 2010), 98; Ridgley interview by author. Steve Landregan, the former editor of the Texas Catholic, notes that “Following World War II, the diocese was blessed with the service
of many Polish priests, several of whom were survivors of Nazi concentration camps.”


quotation), folder 3, box 16, series 33, NCCIJR; Cabirac to Melun, November 28, 1961 (second quotation); Bole, They Came to Serve, 34-35; George, Fort Worth’s Arlington Heights, 98; “St. Paul Hospital Historical Timeline,” <https://library.utsouthwestern.edu/speccol/archives/SPHistTimeline.pdf> [Accessed December 9, 2019]; Steve Landregan, interview by author, October 22, 2006.


50 Our Negro and Indian Missions, 1965, 13 (first quotation), January 1966, 13 (second and third quotations), ASSJ.


52 “Statement of Clarence A. Laws, Regional Director, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People,” July 30, 1965, 1-3 (first quotation on p. 1; second quotation on p. 3), folder 5, box 84, Twomey Papers.

53 John P. Sisson to Thomas K. Gorman, August 6, 1965 (first quotation), Thomas K. Gorman to John P. Sisson, August 17, 1965 (second and third quotations), folder 1, box 16, series 33, NCCIR; memorandum, Sisson to Ahmann, Butler, Sister Mary Peter and Gibbons,


55 National Catholic Conference for Interracial Justice Southern Field Service Diocesan Profiles,” 25 (quotation); Gollob interview by author.


57 Bole, *They Came to Serve*, 34 (quotation); “History of St. Joseph Parish Marshall, Texas”; “Related Sites.”
