

# The Religious Practice of Maryland's First Catholics

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**Four Sources.** There were four sources or factors which influenced religious practice of Maryland's first Catholics.

**I. Catholicism in England** - Modern historical scholarship has discovered that the practice of Catholicism in England was actually fairly strong before the Reformation .

**II. The Spirituality of the Council of Trent as mediated by the English Jesuits.** The Council of Trent was a reform council of the Catholic Church which met between 1545-1563 in response to the Protestant Reformation

**III. The Recusant Experience-** A "recusant" is someone who refuses to comply with a law. The term was applied to English Catholics because of their refusal to recognize the legitimacy of the Church of England. The condition of being a small, outlawed minority had a definite impact on the religious practices of English Catholics on both sides of the Atlantic.

**IV. The Maryland Experience.** The religious practices of Catholics in Maryland were also effected by their experiences in the colony. During the 141 years that passed from the founding of Maryland in 1634 and the American revolution in 1775, Catholics were only legally free to practice their religion for about forty years (1634-1645 and 1660 to 1690).

## I. Catholicism in England before the Reformation

1. Contrary to the assertions of King Henry VIII's court propagandists and his defenders ever since, there is strong evidence that, in the words of Oxford professor Christopher Haigh, "the ordinary religion of English parishes was in a healthy and vigorous state in the early sixteenth century." Haigh's assessment is echoed by other recent historians of the English Reformation including Eamon Duffy of Cambridge University who, in his ground-breaking work, *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England 1400-1580*, stated that "late medieval Catholicism exerted an enormously strong diverse and vigorous hold over the imagination and the loyalty of the people up to the very moment of Reformation."
2. According to Duffy, the structures of Catholicism, which he defines as understanding and participation in the Mass, lay religious instruction, the inculturation of the Church's liturgical calendar into daily life, devotion to the Saints and mindfulness of the doctrines of the four Last Things,( death, judgement, heaven and hell) were quite strong. Duffy bases his assessment of the vigorous health of English Catholicism on his study of religious practices as recorded by contemporaries and the many prayer books and catechetical materials which had been flooding the kingdom since the advent of the printing press in the 1490's. Duffy has found further signs of the deep seated and heartfelt Catholic piety of the people recorded in their wills, lived out through their membership in numerous devotional societies and manifested in their arts and dramas.
3. *"The teachings of late medieval Christianity were graphically represented within the liturgy, reiterated in sermons, rhymed in verse treatises and saints' lives, enacted in Corpus Christi and Miracle plays...and carved and painted on the walls, screens, bench-ends, and windows of the parish churches....there was a remarkable degree of religious and imaginative homogeneity across the social spectrum, a shared repertoire of symbols, prayers and beliefs which crossed and bridged over the gulf between literate and the illiterate."*
4. Whether they could read or not, the English people in general on the eve of the Reformation were well catechized thanks to the energetic and persistent efforts of their bishops over the course of the previous century. The Our Father, Hail Mary and Apostles Creed were established as the essential core of instruction for the laity. These were elaborated on by a catechetical schema which included the Seven Sacraments, the Ten Commandments, the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy, as well as the seven virtues and the seven vices. The English bishops had

mandated that instruction in the vernacular on these fundamentals of the faith be given in parish churches three times a year. By the 1530's these fundamentals of Catholicism were also widely available in printed form in that was known as the "Lay Folks' Catechism."

5. With the Church's teachings permeating all areas of society, it is not surprising that there were tremendous numbers of clergy and religious. It is estimated that in England during the early sixteenth century the population of some 2.5 million souls attended Mass in some 9500 parish churches. These parishes were served by approximately 40,000 secular priests as well as 10,000 priests who were in religious orders. Thus, roughly 4% of all adult males were priests and there was one priest for every fifty people. Haigh points out that parish priests were leading members of the community despite "the stereotype of lecherous curates and idle monks." Additionally, since most served their local communities, "priests were not a race apart; they were sons, brothers, cousins." All total, with these priests taken together with the two thousand nuns and the many men in minor orders, there were 60,000 church professionals among the population at that time.
6. With the Church's teachings permeating all areas of society, it is not surprising that before the Reformation there were tremendous numbers of clergy and religious. It is estimated that in England during the early sixteenth century the population of some 2.5 million souls attended Mass in some 9500 parish churches. These parishes were served by approximately 40,000 secular priests as well as 10,000 priests who were in religious orders. Thus, roughly 4% of all adult males were priests and there was one priest for every fifty people. Historian Charles Haigh points out that parish priests were leading members of the community despite "the stereotype of lecherous curates and idle monks." Additionally, since most served their local communities, "priests were not a race apart; they were sons, brothers, cousins." All total, with these priests taken together with the two thousand nuns and the many men in minor orders, there were 60,000 church professionals among the population at that time.
7. Having surveyed the many barometers of religious practices in the early sixteenth century, Haigh concludes *Catholic Christianity before England's break with Rome was flourishing; we must not assume that the Reformations prove otherwise. For it was the break with Rome which was to cause the decline of Catholicism, not the decline of Catholicism which led to the break with Rome. Before the intrusion of political considerations which had little to do with religion, early Tudor England was not leaning toward a Reformation.*

## **II The Council of Trent and Counter-Reformation Spirituality**

8. The decrees of the Council of Trent on the doctrines of grace and justification provided a theological basis for an altered and revived Catholic spirituality. The new spiritual movements of the Counter Reformation embodied Catholic belief that grace must be freely accepted and justification yield good fruit.
9. One historian has written that *...the spirituality of the Counter-Reformation would be one in which activity of all kinds was to play a very large part; in which active striving after self-control and the acquisition of virtues would be vital; in which zeal for good works and charity, and labor for the salvation of souls, were to predominate: a spirituality which was to reflect the bustle and energy and determination of sixteenth-century man, feeling at last that he had a power over himself and over things, to be applied, in the Counter-Reformation for the greater glory of God and the revival of His Church.*
10. While Catholics during the Middle Ages adored the Host at Mass, Benediction Services, the Forty-Hours Devotion and the practice of visits to the Blessed Sacrament were all developments of the Counter-Reformation era. The Counter-Reformation also revived appreciation of the Eucharist as not only an object of adoration but also divine food. As a consequence, the daily celebration of Mass for its own sake and not simply as an offering for the dead became very widespread in the Church. Devout laymen were encouraged to receive Communion monthly and even weekly. The desire for more frequent reception of the Eucharist led naturally to equally more frequent recourse to Confession.

Additionally, the Sacrament of Penance and the opportunity for spiritual direction it provided were a means of advancing personal reform.

11. In summary, the spirituality of the Counter-Reformation focused more on individual rather than communal expressions, placed great emphasis on the sacraments, promoted devotion to the humanity of Christ, demanded continuous effort at prayer and self-reform and was humanistic in its belief that each man's eternal salvation was in his own hands to either accept or reject. This was the spirituality which was taught to English Catholics and which animated the lives of Maryland's first Catholic settlers.

### **III The Recusant Experience**

#### **The Gentrification of Catholicism**

12. The anti-Catholic measures of the 1580s led to the "domestication" of the Church within the houses of the gentry and contributed to its loss of adherents among the lower social orders. This problem was compounded by the poor distribution of clergy who tended to cling to the southeast of England where there were sufficient numbers of the Catholic gentry to shelter them. Many congregations in the traditional strongholds of the Faith in northern and western England dissolved for want of clergy as Catholicism was increasingly limited to some of the gentry and their servants.
13. The gentrification of English Catholicism was manifested in spiritual works of the late Elizabethan period as exemplified in *A Short Rule of Good Life*, published by the Jesuit priest Robert Southwell in 1595. Southwell prescribed for his readers daily prayer and meditation on waking, with the rosary at mid-morning, "if company and other more weighty matters will permit." There should be prayers before and after meals, afternoon prayers, the reading of pious books before dinner, an examination of conscience at bedtime followed by prayer and meditation until sleep. If possible, one should go to Confession twice a week and Communion every Sunday. In addition to describing a regime which could only be observed by the leisured few with ready access to a priest, the spiritual exercises encouraged by Southwell were mostly private and indicative of how Catholic life in England had been privatized as a result of being banned from the public square.

#### **Lay Leadership of the Church**

14. It is no exaggeration to say that there would have been no Catholic community in the post-Reformation period without the Catholic gentry. However, the gentry's domination of the Church was a mixed blessing. On one hand, the English Catholic laity were compelled to commit themselves to actively supporting the mission of the Church. Such commitment undoubtedly deepened their appreciation of the Faith as evidenced by their willingness to suffer for it.
15. On the negative side of the ledger, the gentry's domination of the Catholic community and the clergy's dependence on them, inhibited the Church's evangelization efforts. Once laws were enacted which made it a treasonable offense for priests to serve in England, English priests were forced to turn to the gentry not only for financial support, but also for housing and security. As most of the Catholic gentry with the means to take in priests were in the south, the clergy began to be concentrated there. Competition for the favors of the gentry exacerbated the already tense relations between the Jesuits and the secular priests.
16. The close relations of priests with the gentry led to more vocations from this group but also less contact with and therefore fewer vocations among commoners. The clergy were recruited almost exclusively from upper class families between 1610 and 1670 and tended to gravitate to their own, which compounded the problem. While Catholic congregations in the north and west of England were dying

out for want of clergy, both Jesuits and secular priests in the south complained of not having enough to do. Many were employed as tutors and translators in order to sustain themselves. Although the ratio of priests to laity never reached pre-Reformation levels, it is estimated that by 1640 there was one priest for every eighty laymen. Writing to Roman authorities in 1634, the Benedictine priest, Leander Jones, complained that too many priests were being sent to England: *Whence it happens almost of necessity that these missionaries, who have no proper residence, are forced either to wander about in other peoples', or to fall into want. So they become contemptible, and are considered practically as paid servants; and somebody is always trying to squeeze somebody else out of the place he possesses....*

17. An additional drawback to the clergy's dependence on the gentry was that the latter actively discouraged the priests from proselytizing Protestants. The mere presence of priests in their households was dangerous enough. The Catholic gentry did not wish to provoke the government through overt evangelization efforts. Still, that the English Catholic gentry and the priests they supported succeeded in preserving and passing on the Faith under very trying circumstances, was a remarkable accomplishment.

### **Faith of Our Mothers**

18. The role of the Catholic gentry in preserving the Faith brought a new prominence to English Catholic women during the periods of active government persecution. The high proportion of women among those prosecuted for recusancy seems to reflect the practice of Catholic wives maintaining the Faith while their husbands conformed to Anglicanism in order to protect the family's civil rights and social status. By this expedient a family would protect itself from fines and confiscations through the conformity of the husband, while propagating the Catholic faith through the recusancy of the mother.

Both Leonard and Grace Calvert, the father and step-mother of Maryland's founder, George Calvert, were pressured by the government to practice the state religion, it appears that she never conformed. Between 1580 and 1583 Leonard Calvert was cited four separate times for recusancy by the Yorkshire High Commission. Leonard apparently evaded compliance until 1592. Then the local authorities came down on him hard. In October of that year Leonard was forced to take out a bond to guarantee that he, his wife and family would conform. The bond forbade him to have Catholic servants or schoolmasters in his house. He was ordered to buy within a month a copy of the Church of England's *Book of Common Prayer*, a Bible in English and some Protestant catechetical books all of which "were to lie open in his home for everyone to read." He was to have "no popish books or other trumpery or reliques of popery and his children will be kept at school at York and not leave there without license from the Archbishop of York." Leonard's sons, George and Christopher, aged 12 and 10 respectively, were duly taken from their parents care and placed under the tutelage of Protestants. On December 4, 1592 the Yorkshire High Commission received a certificate attesting that Leonard Calvert had received Communion in the state church. However, his wife Grace did not. Grace Calvert was even jailed briefly in April 1593 for refusing to take communion in the Anglican church. After two more court appearances and two more 20 pound bonds, Grace was given three months to conform but there is no evidence that she ever did.

19. In "Women and the Catholic Church in Maryland, 1689-1776" (*Maryland Historical Magazine*, 94:4, Winter 1999), Dr. Beatriz Betancourt Hardy points out that, paradoxically, "the laws which excluded Catholic men from the political arena and which proscribed public worship actually provided women in the Catholic gentry with an elevated position within the Catholic community" — both in Maryland and in England where similar laws were in force. Heavy reliance on domestic chapels and Mass rooms as places of communal worship conferred religious significance on the role of the mistress of the house, for it was she who was primarily responsible for overseeing preparations for Mass, baptisms, marriages, and funerals. Between visits of a priest, domestic chapels were places in which the Blessed Sacrament was reserved. Again, it was primarily the duty of the mistress to insure observance of proper reverence and to instruct and supervise children, servants, and slaves in the daily practice of the faith.

### **The Mass**

20. As for religious practice, the minimum expectation of English Catholics before the Reformation was “regular and sober attendance at Matins, Mass and Evensong on Sundays and feasts.” Circumstances permitting, these continued to be the norms for English Catholics following the break with Rome.
21. During the Mass participants would have been expected to kneel on the floor quietly reciting their “Pater Nosters” and “Aves” while observing certain highlights of the liturgy.
22. The Mass began with a procession through the church which concluded with a prayer of exorcism over salt and water which were then mixed for the blessing of the people and the church itself. Portions of the holy water would later be taken for use in parishioners homes.
23. The priest then recited in Latin the Confiteor and the opening prayers, read the Epistle and the Gospel and recited the Creed on Solemnities. With the exception of the Gospel, for which they stood, the congregation remained kneeling through these parts of the Mass. Then, speaking in English, the priest would invite the people to pray for the pope, the bishop and king, parish needs and the dead for whom the Mass was being offered. These intercessory prayers were followed by the Offertory during which the priest received the “Mass Pennies” and prepared the bread and wine for consecration.
24. The third part of the Mass was the Canon or Eucharistic Prayer. After the consecration, the kneeling congregation was prompted by the ringing of a bell to adore the Host at the elevation, which was called “the sacring”—with both arms outstretched. In an age when few Catholics received the Eucharist often, they considered simply gazing on the Host to be a source of many blessings.
25. At the conclusion of the Eucharistic prayer the congregation would stand to recite the Pater Noster. Then, before the Agnus Dei, the priest kissed the linen cloth on which the Host rested, (the corporal) and the lip of the chalice. He then kissed the “Paxbred” which was a wooden dish bearing a sacred emblem such as the Lamb of God. This “Pax” was then taken by one of the altar servers to the congregation who kissed it as a substitute for receiving Communion.
26. Once the priest had received Communion, he said the closing prayer and gave the people the final blessing. He would then recite the first fourteen verses of the Gospel of St. John, which was called the “The Last Gospel”. Should attendees been tempted to leave church before this final reading, they would have known that indulgences were extended to those who remained.
27. Following the conclusion of the Mass the parish priest would bless a loaf of bread which parish families took turns providing. The blessed loaf would then be distributed to the congregation and was meant to be the first food eaten on Sunday. Such importance was placed on this blessed loaf that in the absence of a priest, eating the holy bread by the dying was considered a substitute for Viaticum.
28. The emphasis on the communal aspects of the Sunday Mass were intended to extend “blessing, healing and peace within the community.” Thus, when parishioners absented themselves from the parish Mass it was considered a breach of communal bonds and expectations.
29. As mentioned, only a few people received Communion with any frequency. Indeed, to do so often was considered presumptuous by many. For most, receiving Holy Communion was an annual rite performed on Easter Sunday following the making of one’s Confession during Holy Week. For English Catholics going to Confession and receiving Communion during the Easter season, as well as making an offering to the priest, was called “taking one’s rights.” In principle, the Lenten fast from eating meat could only be broken when these three actions had been completed. In addition to receiving Communion at Easter,

great emphasis was placed on the receiving the Holy Eucharist prior to death as Viaticum—“food for the journey.”

30. Still, while they rarely received Communion, the importance attached to adoring the Host at the elevation led many lay people to attend Mass on at least some weekdays. It also prompted many of the gentry to keep altars and priests in their households. In addition to “seeing the Host”, another strong impetus for the offering of frequent Masses was the desire to have one’s deceased family members and friends remembered at the sacrifice of the altar should their souls have been detained in Purgatory. Catholics routinely arranged that Masses be offered for their deceased loved ones.

### **Fasts and Feasts**

31. Both before and after the Reformation, the liturgical calendar of the Church, with its days of feasts and fasts, was also an integral part of Catholic life. Roughly one of every three days was a day of fasting or abstinence. This included all Fridays and the forty days of Lent. Fasting meant having only one meal a day which could not be eaten before noon. Abstinence meant not only from flesh meats but also “white meats”—cheese and eggs. These days of self-denial were balanced by some forty feast days and extended seasons for celebrating Christmas and Easter.
32. Following the Reformation English Catholics had to adjust to their changing circumstances but fasting and abstinence were practices that they held on to most firmly. Because it was as a personal ascetical practice, fasting was immune to interference by the state. Fasting and abstinence practices also helped Catholics maintain their distinct identity by setting them apart from Protestant neighbors. And when they were not able to celebrate Mass and the other Sacraments, fasting and abstinence took on the character of rituals for those deprived of the official rites of the Church.
33. Of course it was mostly the gentry who had options regarding the consumption of meat. Fasting and abstinence practices sometimes caused tensions between Catholic landowners and their Protestant laborers. The zealotry with which English Catholics practiced fasting and abstinence concerned their pastors who feared it distracted from more interior spiritual exercises. The Jesuits in England tended to be less supportive of rigorous fasting than were the secular clergy. The traditional fasting and abstinence customs endured until the 1780s.
34. Typically feast days in the homes of the Catholic gentry were observed with Vespers on the evening of the vigil of the feast, then Confession in the morning followed by a Solemn Mass. In more devout households catechetical instructions would also take place. Major feasts, such as Easter and Christmas, also included festivities such as plays, music and dancing. Some households were even known to have games of cards and dice on feast days although not without raising the eyebrows of some of their co-religionists.
35. Since servile labor was forbidden on feast days, during the seventeenth century there was growing pressure on the clergy to limit their number. By around 1650 the most prominent feast days on the English Catholic calendar were Christmas, Easter, Pentecost or “Whitsun.” SS. Peter and Paul (June 29), the Assumption and All Saints. The first Sunday in Lent was also a special day of observance with Confession, Mass & Communion, although there were no festivities. Together these eight days formed a cycle of special observances held roughly every six weeks.

36. The Catholic tenants and servants on these estates were usually invited to attend the religious services, and in some homes, the social activities as well. A priest who resided with the Bapthorpe family of Yorkshire in the 1620's has left a description of these domestic Church services.

*Our house, I might rather consider a religious house than otherwise... On Sundays we locked all the doors and all came to Mass, had our sermons, catechisms and spiritual lessons every Sunday and Holyday. On the weekdays, we had for the most part two Masses...one for the servants at six o'clock in the morning, at which the gentlemen, everyone of them without fail, and the ladies if they were not sick, would, even in the midst of winter of their own accord be present; and the other we had at eight o'clock for those who were absent from the first.*

37. The convenience of a domestic chapel could apparently lead to lackadaisical attitude toward attire, according to one seventeenth century priest who complained of those who came to Mass "in such a disrespectful undress that it would be an affront to the meanest Friend....which can be called nothing less than stepping out of bed to the Altar." This same priest, Father John Gother, a Presbyterian convert, also recorded that the degree of lay participation in the Mass had changed little since pre-Reformation days despite the Church's admonitions that the congregation should focus their attention on the words and actions of the priest. For most, attendance at Mass provided an occasion for exercises of interior devotion with many "saying their Beads all the time of the Mass"...but with little regard to what the priest does".

### **Birth, Marriage and Death**

38. The traditional Catholic rites of passage of baptism, marriage and burial, like fasting and feasting practices, took on added significance now that the faithful were a struggling minority in England. Despite the 1606 statute imposing a 100 pound fine for "clandestine baptism" and the growing importance of registering baptisms, home baptisms among Catholics who had recourse to a priest were common. In order to avoid legal question that might arise if their children were not entered in parish registers, Catholics at times bribed the local vicar to say he baptized the child. On other occasions they simply had their child go through the rite a second time in the state Church. Still more frequently, the Catholic landlord would inform the local minister that his children had been baptized and pay the requisite fee for a baptism. The parson would then enter the child's name in his register. Catholics who were not members of the gentry or servants to the gentry, had less access to priests. Most of these had their children baptized in the local Church of England parish as such baptisms were still considered valid. In either case, both Roman Catholic and Anglican clergy recognized the validity of each others baptisms as well as the prerogative of parents to decide where the rites would take place.
39. As much as baptismal procedures were dictated by familial considerations rather than by ecclesiastical norms, this was even more true of marriage rites. It was long-standing Catholic tradition that spouses are effectively the "ministers" of the Sacrament of Matrimony. The requirement that for the legality and the validity of the Sacrament their vows must be witnessed by a priest was not established until the sixteenth century at the Council of Trent. Further, the Tridentine reforms were only slowly implemented in England. Catholics were also seemingly unconcerned about civil requirements that their marriages take place within the Anglican Church. Thus, large numbers of Catholics married within the privacy of their homes and very few of these weddings were "officially" recorded.
40. In 1653, during the era of the Commonwealth government, a system of civil marriage was imposed on all. Catholic couples were advised by their clergy to conform to the laws, but to see a priest for nuptial blessing before consummating the marriage. It was not until the mid-eighteenth century, when both the

marriage laws of the state and the requirements of the English Catholic Church became stricter, that Catholics were compelled to give up their domestic marriage rites.

41. Paradoxically, while with baptism and marriage Catholics sought to be left out of the Anglican parochial system, when it came to burial, they very much wanted to be brought in. Because of the traditional emphasis that burials take place in consecrated ground, Catholics wanted their dead interred in the ancient parish cemeteries. However, as Catholics absented themselves from the local church and refused to have the Anglican prayers read over them, many parsons tried to keep them out. In the face of intransigent parsons, Catholics resorted to burying their dead at night and the practice remained common until about 1700. Other Anglican clergy simply insisted that the proper fees be paid by Catholics and in the eighteenth century open parish burial in daytime became the norm. In parishes where Catholics were strong in numbers, portions of the parish graveyard were set aside for their use.

#### **IV. The Maryland Experience.**

*“On the day of the Annunciation of the Most Holy Virgin Mary, in the year 1634, we celebrated on this island the first Mass which had been offered up in this part of the world. After we had completed the Sacrifice, we took upon our shoulders a great cross which we had shaped out of a tree and advancing in order to the appointed place, with the assistance of the Governor and his associates and the other Catholics, we erected a trophy to Christ the Savior, humbly reciting on our knees the Litanies of the Holy Cross with great emotion.”*

42. **1634 March 25 The Feast of the Annunciation** With the above words Father Andrew White, S.J. memorialized the founding of Maryland and the first celebration of the Eucharistic sacrifice in the English-speaking colonies. There were roughly one hundred and fifty men, women and children present when the cross was raised on St. Clement’s Island. A few days after the Mass and cross raising ceremony on St. Clement’s Island the expedition sailed back down the Potomac a few miles to establish a settlement where a natural harbor provided an easily defensible site. The Jesuits used Indian hut for first chapel until 1637 when Governor Leonard Calvert granted them permission to build a wood chapel .
43. **1638 Jesuits & Lord Baltimore in Conflict.** Under his charter, Lord Baltimore had sole authority to erect chapels. Additionally, news that the Jesuits were openly building churches in his colony would have undermined his position in England. Eventually the Jesuits and Lord Baltimore reached an agreement which essentially gave them the same rights as other gentlemen, no more and no less. In their letter to their superiors for 1638 they reported making 12 converts.
44. In 1641 the Maryland Jesuits reported that of the roughly four hundred persons then in the colony, one hundred were Catholics and forty more had been converted.
45. Between 1634-1645 eight of the fourteen Jesuits sent to Maryland died, almost all of disease.
46. In 1645 elements hostile to Lord Baltimore’s rule over Maryland, aligned themselves with the Parliamentary faction in England’s Civil War, and rebelled against the Calverts. The Catholics in the colony were also violently attacked and the chapel at St. Mary’s City destroyed. Governor Leonard Calvert, Father Roger Rigby and Father John Cooper were among those Catholics who escaped to Virginia. The two Jesuits died there of disease the following year. Father Bernard Hartwell, the superior at St. Inigoes went into hiding and also died in 1646. Father Thomas Copley and Father Andrew White were put in irons and taken back to England where they were tried and banished
47. In 1647 the Calverts reasserted their rule over Maryland . Father Copley returned the following year with another Jesuit priest, Lawrence Starkey. However, by the time of the Jesuits’ return most of the Indians they had hoped to evangelize had been driven out of Maryland or had died from disease. Only a few Indian converts remained.
48. The “Act Concerning Religion” of 1649 was composed by both Catholics and Protestants. The Act is a landmark document on religious toleration as the first legislative act on religious freedom.

49. In 1651 Parliament commissioned a group of the Calverts' enemies to insure the colony's obedience to Parliament. Once in control of the colonial government, the Protestant commissioners repealed the Act of Religion of 1649 and replaced it with a new ordinance which gave religious liberty to all Christians "provided that this liberty not be extended to popery..." The anti-Catholic penal codes of England were now enforced in Maryland and a number of Catholics were prosecuted.
50. In 1655 the two Jesuit priests in Maryland, Father Francis Fitzherbert at St. Inigoes and Father Lawrence Starkey who attended to the outlying missions, came under direct attack. The Jesuit residences and property at St. Inigoes, south of St. Mary's City, and St. Thomas Manor near Port Tobacco, having been destroyed, Fitzherbert and Starkey were forced to flee to Virginia.
51. In 1660 Charles II and the Stuarts restored to throne in England and the Calverts regained full control of the colony. The population of Maryland stood at approximately 8,000 in 1660 swelled to 15,000 by 1675. During the three decades from 1660-1690 the Catholic Church openly flourished in Maryland. The number of Jesuits also grew gradually although at this period there were never more than five priests in the colony at one time. Circa 1660-1667 the brick chapel erected in St. Mary's City under the patronage of St. Ignatius,
52. **1661** William Breton of Newtown deeded an acre and a half for a church and cemetery to serve the "zealous Roman Catholik inhabitants of New Towne and St. Clements' Bay." A small wooden church was built here in 1662 within the boundaries of the current cemetery. In 1668 The Jesuits purchased Bretton's entire estate at Newtown.
53. In **1677** The Jesuit Fathers, succeeded in opening a "school of humane letters" at Newtown.
54. 1688 There were approximately 25,000 residents of Maryland and 32,000 by 1700. although there were few towns and neither St. Mary's City or Providence (Annapolis) had more than a two hundred residents.
55. 1689 James II, the last Catholic king of England, was driven from the throne, the Calverts' opponents rose up in April, 1689. Once again using religion as a pretext, and feeding on absurd fears of popish plots and Catholic collusion with the Indians, the opposition formed "An Association in arms for the defense of the Protestant Religion," asserted their support for the new Protestant monarchs, William and Mary, and took control of the colony. The new monarchs assumed control of the colony while leaving Lord Baltimore his lands and certain revenues.
56. In 1690 sheriffs assigned to report on Catholic activity noted that there were nine churches and chapels then in existence in Maryland. In addition to the chapel at St. Mary's City, other chapels constructed in these years included those at the Jesuits' three manors of St. Inigoes, Newtown, and St. Thomas, as well as three chapels around Newport and one at Matapany. These early churches were forerunners of the church of St. Ignatius at St. Inigoes and the parishes of St. Francis Xavier and St. Nicholas in St. Mary's County. (St. Nicholas became the base chapel when Patuxent Naval Air Station.opened in 1942). The other chapels mentioned were in Charles County and were forerunners of St. Ignatius at Chapel Point and St. Mary's in Newport.
57. 1694 The colonial capital was changed from the Catholic center of St. Mary's to Providence (Annapolis).
58. 1699 The "Test" oath was imposed on all office-holders it effectively barred Catholics from holding positions in the Provincial government, although some were retained by Lord Baltimore to manage his holdings.

59. 1702 The Church of England was officially recognized as the state church of Maryland and all taxpayers, regardless of their own beliefs, were obliged to support it financially. The following year Catholics were denied the right to worship publicly.
60. 1704 Governor Seymour commanded that the brick chapel at St. Mary's City, which was understandably a source of pride to the Catholic community, be forever closed and it was. Shortly after, with Seymour's encouragement, the assembly passed the "Act to Prevent the Growth of Popery" which closely resembled similar laws recently passed by the English Parliament prohibiting Catholics from teaching or proselytizing, and forbidding priests to celebrate Mass even privately. The Act, if enforced, could have destroyed Catholicism in Maryland by ending the celebration of the Eucharist. As a result, all Catholic chapels, including the church at Newtown, were ordered to be closed. The assembly later relented its severity and Catholic worship in private homes was permitted. Thus, for the next seventy years the Catholics of Maryland were only able to celebrate Mass in small "house chapels." The same legislation also prohibited the operation of Catholic schools, so the school at Newtown was forced to close. Until the American Revolution parents seeking a Catholic secondary education for the children had to send them to Europe and, given the difficulties of ocean travel in the eighteenth century, it is surprising how many Catholic families made this choice.
61. **CATHOLIC POPULATION IN 1708** The governor ordered that a census be taken of all the "Papists" in the colony. According to this census, conducted by the local sheriffs, there were 1238 Catholics in St. Mary's County. They constituted approximately 31% of the County's total population and 41% of all the Catholics in Maryland. The next largest concentration of Catholics was found in Charles County where 709 Catholics constituted approximately 22% of the total population and 24% of the total Catholic population of Maryland. Thus 2/3 of the Catholic population of Maryland was concentrated in Charles and St. Mary's Counties. The total number of Catholics in Maryland was 2974 which amounted to just 7.2% of the total population. At this time nearly half of the Catholic gentry in Maryland had their own house chapels.
62. The period of royal control of Maryland ended in 1714 with the conversion of the fourth Lord Baltimore, Benedict Leonard Calvert, to Protestantism. While a few Maryland Catholics followed the new Proprietor and the changed political winds into the Protestant church, the vast majority continued to practice the faith of their fathers despite the discrimination. They also continued to give their children Catholic names such as "Ignatius," "Francis Xavier" and "Maria".
63. In 1718 all Catholic voters who refused to take various oaths that denied Catholic teaching, including the doctrine of the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist were disenfranchised. Also at this time the tax of twenty shillings per servant imposed in 1704 to restrict the immigration of Irish "Papists" was doubled.
64. As anti-Catholic sentiment ebbed the laws against Catholics worshipping were rarely enforced. Consequently, throughout the middle 1700s the network of house chapels in the homes of the Catholic gentry grew. Catholics would even gather quietly in small, disguised churches they had built. In the first decade of the eighteenth century there were ten such chapels where Catholics could worship. By the 1740's the number had risen to thirty-four, twenty-three of these were in St. Mary's, Charles and Prince George's counties. A number of Catholic communities which first gathered at these chapels later evolved into full fledged parishes. For example, the Slye family chapel in Bushwood, c.1734, became the parish of Sacred Heart.
65. By the 1740s the number of priests in the colony had risen to an average of twelve were active in Maryland during each year of the decade. Even so, the Catholic population had also risen from approximately 3000 in 1710 to 8000 in 1740, which meant that there were roughly 650 people per priest.

66. Although it was illegal, in the 1740s the Jesuits were operating small elementary schools at Newtown and at Bohemia Manor on the Eastern Shore. From these schools the students were then sent to Europe.
67. Between 1747 and 1756 thirty-one young women left Maryland to become nuns in Europe. One of these, Ann Matthews, left Charles County in 1754 and returned in 1790 as Mother Bernadina Teresa to found the Carmelite monastery in Port Tobacco.
68. 1756 Two years after the outbreak of the French-Indian War the assembly proposed and Lord Baltimore agreed that Catholics, who were rumored to be aiding England's enemies, should be taxed twice as much as everyone else to support the defense of the colony. Although the amount of the tax was not large, Catholics were indignant over the principle involved and that despite all they had done to contribute to the founding and development of Maryland, they continued to be considered potential traitors. In fact, some leading Catholics like Charles Carroll, seriously considered leaving Maryland. Carroll actually went to France in 1757 in order to buy land on which to settle in Louisiana, but the deal fell through. The French-Indian War ended in 1763.
69. 1758 The governor of Maryland Horatio Sharpe reported that while Catholics were only 1/13th (8%) of the population, ten of the wealthiest estates in the colony belonged to Catholics.
70. In 1763 Bishop Richard Challoner, the Apostolic Vicar in London for English Catholics reported to Rome that there were about 16,000 Catholics in Maryland and twelve Jesuits. There were also six to seven thousand Catholics in Pennsylvania served by four Jesuit priests. They had a "public Church", Old St. Mary's in Philadelphia. According to his report about half of Maryland's Catholics received the sacraments of Confession and Holy Communion annually. This level of participation was about twice that in France at that time.
71. At this time two thirds of Maryland's Catholics lived in St. Mary's, Charles and Prince George's counties. There were also communities on the Eastern Shore, and in Frederick & Harford counties.
72. The Jesuit archives at Georgetown have a collection of 462 homilies that were delivered by 44 priests in Maryland and Pennsylvania during the 1700s. The homilies were composed by different priests but then circulated among them for shared use over many years. The sermons were written in a plain style and their purpose was to move their listeners "to practice their religion and inculcate the virtues in their lives, offering practical examples of the way to achieve this." The sermons were read to their audiences and would have averaged thirty minutes in length.
73. Themes in the sermons according to frequency are; the struggle to maintain the Christian life against the spirit of the world, "that spirit of falsehood and seduction.;" non-attendance at Mass, failure to perform their Easter duty and neglect of personal prayer; swearing using the name of God and profanity; drunkenness; anger, envy, revenge and detraction; lewd talk, lust and impurity; family relations.
74. The homilists also consistently urged their listeners to practice one half-hour of daily prayer and devotions to the Blessed Virgin Mary. Additionally, they urged the practice of a daily examination of conscience, spiritual reading, frequent Communion and acts of charity.
75. Maryland Catholics reacted with understandable alarm when in 1765 news reached them that officials in Rome were considering sending a vicar-apostolic or even a bishop to lead them. Two-hundred and sixty leading Catholics, including Charles Carroll of Annapolis signed a petition stating that the move would

give their enemies who were “bent on our ruin, a stronger handle than anything they have hitherto been able to lay hold on, and consequently terminate in the utter extirpation of our religion.”

76. In 1767 a Sodality for the Adoration of the Blessed sacrament was formed at St. Inigoes with thirty lay members.
77. The following year, 1768 two hundred Catholics in Charles County enrolled in the Sodality for the Perpetual Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. Members pledged to adore the Blessed Sacrament through prayer while on their knees for a half an hour on specific days of the month. This time of prayer would take place where ever they were at the time , which was usually at home
78. 1773 Due to the political situation in Europe, the Society of Jesus was officially suppressed by Pope Clement XIV. The nineteen now ex-Jesuit priests in Maryland and Pennsylvania soon reorganized themselves as the Corporation of Roman Catholic Clergy.
79. In September 1773 Fr. John Mattingly (1735-1807) wrote a report on the Jesuit missions in Maryland. The main residence house was St. Thomas Manor at Chapel Point in Charles County. The next “in order of dignity” was Newtown. From theses two centers the Jesuits would go out to surrounding missions of which there were twenty. Each mission was visited at least once a month.
80. According to the report the priests would arrive early at the mission station and hear confessions until eleven o’clock. Then Mass was said and Communion distributed. At the end of Mass there was a sermon and usually a doctrinal question explained.
81. The Jesuits operated lending libraries of Catholic books out of their residences at Chapel Point, Newtown and St. Inigoes. Two of the most popular were Bishop Challoner’s *The Catholic Christian Instructed* and *The Garden of the Soul*. The latter was a book of devotions and remained popular into the twentieth-century.
82. One of the earliest references to Catholic music in colonial America is this statement by John Adams, who visited a Catholic Church in Philadelphia in 1774: “...went in the afternoon, to the Romish Chapel in Philadelphia...the scenery and the music are so calculated to take in mankind that I wonder the Reformation ever succeeded...the chanting is soft and sweet.” The first Catholic hymn book in America was published in Philadelphia in 1787.
83. **1775** The American Revolution At the time of the American Revolution St. Mary’s County already had seven well-established Catholic communities which regularly gathered for the celebration of the Mass. These were St. Inigoes (1638), St. Francis Xavier (1662), St. Nicholas 1662), St. John’s .1698), St. Aloysius (1708), Our Lady’s (1766) Sacred Heart (1770) Another church was added around 1795 when the great builder, Father Joseph Walton, S.J., erected the first church of St. Nicholas at Mattapany. This church served the Catholics in the area that heretofore had heard Mass in various family chapels.
84. According to Maura Jane Farrelly (*Papist Patriots*, published in 2012, ) Catholics in St. Mary’s County were more supportive of the Revolution than were Protestants as evidenced by their over representation in the Maryland regiments. She states “an analysis of more that 2,000 men from St. Mary’s County who aided the independence movement reveals that more than half of them were probably Catholic—at a time when the Catholic population of St. Mary’s County was between 25 and 32 percent.”
85. **1776** An entry in Fr. Walton’s diary lists the names of fifty-five women of St. Aloysius parish who were

members of the Sodality of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

86. On July 4, 1779 a celebration for the anniversary of the Declaration of Independence was held at Old St. Mary's in Philadelphia . Participants included George Washington, the French as well as members of Congress. The Gregorian chant setting of the *Te Deum* was sung.