

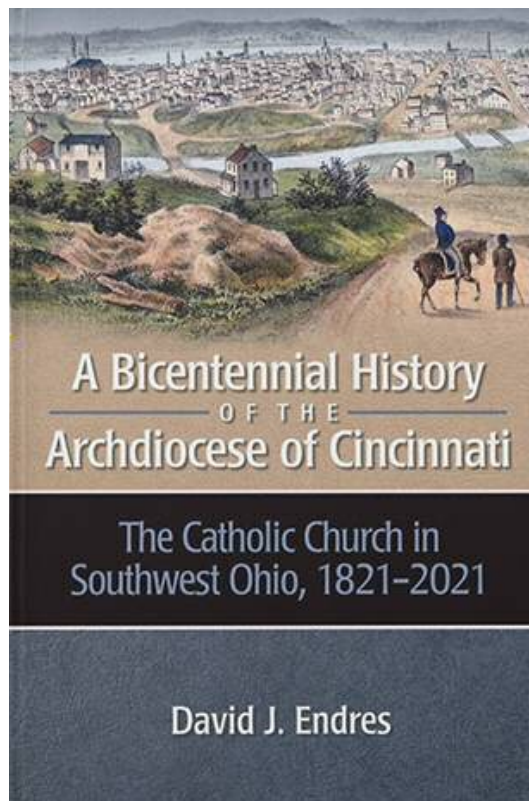
Colleen Phillips

***A Bicentennial History of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati:
The Catholic Church in Southwest Ohio, 1821-2021***

David J. Endres

Little Miami Publishing, Milford 2021

It is hard to imagine the Hamilton County community without its multitude of Catholic churches or the priests, brothers, and nuns who minister to the city's faithful, but that was the plight of early Roman Catholic pioneers to the Queen City. Those who settled in the western frontier shared the same predicament. They relied on missionary priests who made sporadic visits to their communities, or they worshiped together without a priest. A group of Cincinnati Catholics built Christ Church in 1819, but the Diocese of Cincinnati was not established until 1821 when Edward D. Fenwick was installed as its first bishop. The Diocese, which was elevated to archdiocesan status in 1850, included Ohio, Michigan, and parts of Wisconsin.



Archdiocese in Dayton, Maria Stein (Mercer County), and Minster (Shelby and Auglaize Counties), Ohio, as well as Michigan and Wisconsin. As readers will discover, the northern communities have fascinating histories.

Dayton became home to waves of Irish Catholics who came to Ohio to work on the Erie Canal. Irish-born Robert Conway, who arrived in Ohio from Maryland in 1831, wrote Bishop Benedict Flaget in Bardstown, Kentucky asking for a priest to be sent to Dayton. Conway's support of the church included housing clergy in his own home. Father Frederic Baraga, a Slovenian-born priest, was sent to Dayton where he not only provided the sacraments

for the Catholic settlers but also preached at a Lutheran church that had no minister.

Local author, educator, and historian Rev. David J. Endres, Ph.D., chronicles two hundred years of Archdiocesan history in his latest book, *A Bicentennial History of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati: the Catholic Church in Southwest Ohio, 1821-2021*. Father Endres, who serves as academic dean and associate professor of Church history and historical theology at Mount St. Mary's Seminary, is editor of *U.S. Catholic Historian* and a regular contributor to *The Catholic Telegraph*. His informative article on Cincinnati's Catholic heritage was featured in the June 2021 issue of *The Tracer* (vol. 42, no. 2).

The welfare of Native Americans living in the northern territories of the Archdiocese was championed by Bishop Edward B. Fenwick. Fenwick made three trips to the Native American settlements in the northern territories and sent priests to missions in Michigan and Wisconsin. Among those tapped to serve at the Native American missions was Father Frederic Baraga, the priest initially sent to Dayton. To better serve his Native American flocks, he learned to speak Ojibwe and Ottawa dialects and translated prayers and hymns into these languages. Baraga was named the first bishop of Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan (now the Diocese of Marquette), a post he held for fifteen years.

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Father Endres includes a series of vignettes about the ethnic groups from France, Hungary, Italy, the Congo, Burundi, Rwanda, Cameroon, Guatemala, and Mexico who have joined the Archdiocesan family over the years. He also includes new material on the history of the Archdiocese, like the story of Civil War chaplain Father William T. O'Higgins, who gave heroic service with the Tenth Ohio Volunteer Infantry (the Bloody Tenth), a unit comprised of Irish immigrants from Cincinnati.

Father Eugene P. Corcoran, who, like O'Higgins, was appointed by Archbishop John B. Purcell, was assigned to the Sixty-First Ohio regiment. Father Corcoran was captured by Confederate forces while enroute to Washington D.C. and became ill during his imprisonment. He resigned from his position due to ill health and died in Cincinnati soon after the war.

Sisters from the Charity, Mercy and the Poor of St. Francis orders answered the call for nurses to care

for wounded and ill Civil War soldiers. The Sisters of Charity who served were buried in the Mt. St. Joseph Cemetery with military grave markers noting their Civil War military service.

While Father Endres does not address all the contemporary problems faced by the Archdiocese, he does include the University of Dayton heresy trial in 1966 and the protest by seminarians at Mount Saint Mary's Seminary in Norwood who questioned the leadership of the faculty and rector Monsignor Joseph J. Schneider in 1967.

Father Endres provides an informative and interesting narrative of the two-hundred-year history of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati. Each chapter is well documented and includes a bibliography. There is also an impressive assortment of illustrations and photographs that document the Catholic faith in Southwest Ohio and beyond. †

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