

# The history of Catholic education in the United States

PLENARY COUNCILS OF BALTIMORE AND  
MASS CATHOLIC IMMIGRATION FROM EUROPE

# PLENARY COUNCILS OF BALTIMORE

- ▶ What does Plenary mean?

*Unlike a synod, which can take place in a diocese or Archdiocese, a Plenary council includes bishops and representatives from every diocese in the country.*

*The Plenary Council was called for by a consensus among American bishops with permission from the Vatican*

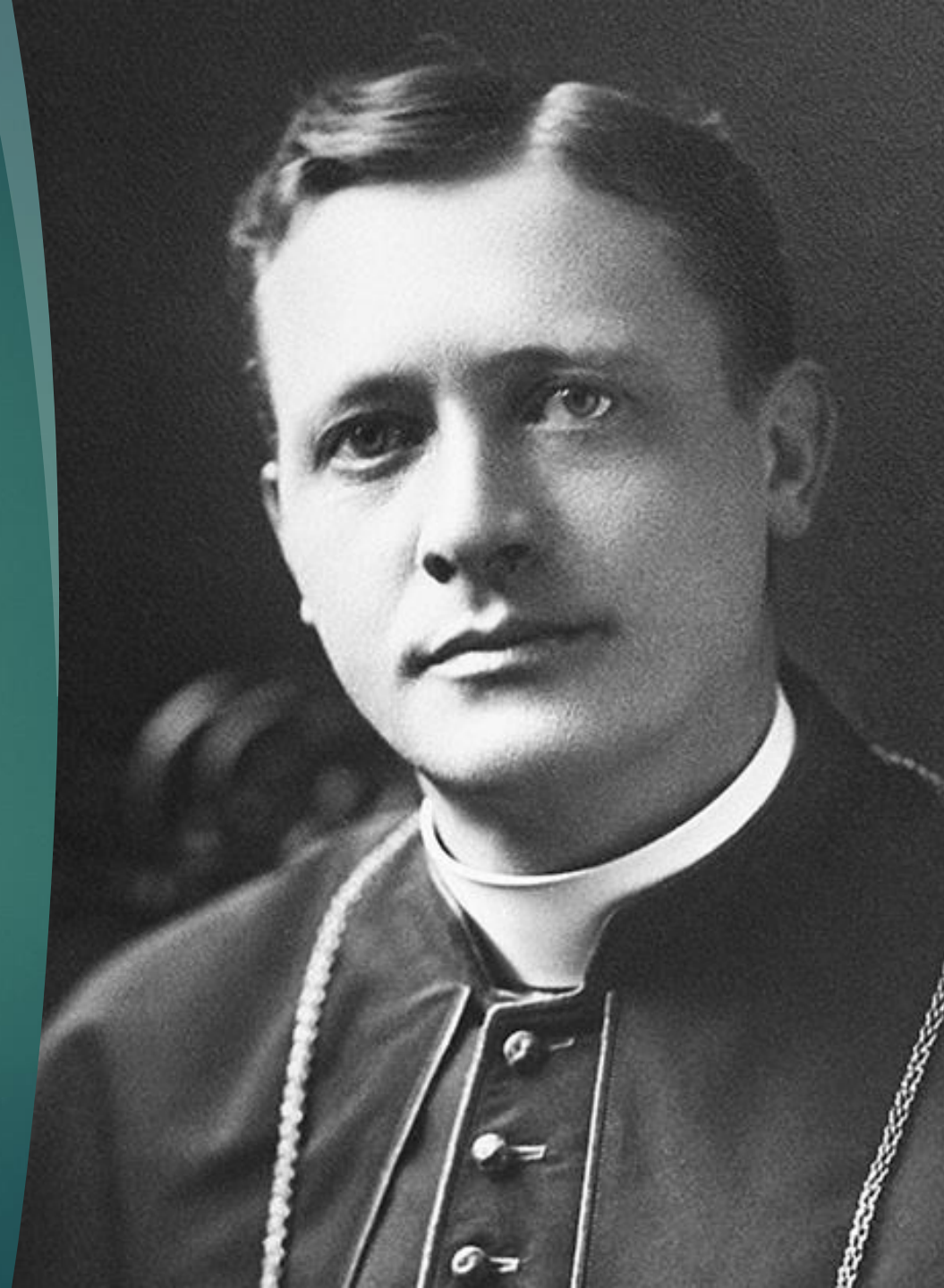
- ▶ There were actually 3 plenary councils: 1852, 1856, 1884
- ▶ It was at the third council that the largest independent school system in American history was created: American Catholic schools.

# PLENARY COUNCILS OF BALTIMORE

- ▶ Was the cultural reality for Catholics in the United States when the Councils were called? Catholics were:
  - ▶ majority immigrants
  - ▶ The majority spoke the language of the land of their birth
  - ▶ With few exceptions, were poor;
- ▶ RESULT of their culture reality:
  - ▶ XENOPHOBIA
  - ▶ ANTI-CATHOLIC SENTIMENT
  - ▶ ATTEMPT TO INTEGRATE CATHOLIC CHILDREN INTO PUBLIC SCHOOLS which promoted Protestant values

# PLENARY COUNCILS OF BALTIMORE

- ▶ Why BALTIMORE:
- ▶ First Catholic Diocese in the United States
- ▶ Founded by a Catholic, Cecil Calvert, second Lord Baltimore of the Irish House of Lords and founding proprietor of the Province of Maryland
- ▶ “Baltimore” comes from *Baile an Tí Mhóir*, meaning "town of the big house"
- ▶ First Bishop of Baltimore: John Carroll
- ▶ First Catholic College: Georgetown Academy



# PLENARY COUNCILS OF BALTIMORE

- ▶ When New York, Boston and Philadelphia were made dioceses, Baltimore was made an archdiocese. (1808)
- ▶ Before the Councils were called, there was a recognition that Catholic children in public schools were being flooded with “inaccurate knowledge on Catholicism,” such as usage of the term popery, Protestant-run common schools were causing Catholic children to fall from their faith.
- ▶ Anti-Catholic rhetoric, offered by many politicians, entered into public or “common” schools. There was a fear that Catholics, with their allegiance to a foreign pope, would undermine American democracy.

# PLENARY COUNCILS OF BALTIMORE

- ▶ Sentiment: to “Americanize” the increasing number of foreign immigrants, their children should be “Protestantized.”
- ▶ (There had been some violence between working class Catholics and Protestants)
- ▶ “to see that those frequenting public school do not use the Protestant version of the Bible or sing sectarian hymns...[and that they] employ their influence against the introduction of such practices into the public schools.” (This incited some Protestant Americans)
- ▶ declared “bishops are exhorted to have a Catholic school in every parish and the teachers should be paid from the parochial funds.”
- ▶ Bishops were further recommended to “begin these schools whenever possible in their dioceses, since Catholic boys and girls are in grave danger in educational institutions which are not directed by [Catholic] religious motives.”



# PLENARY COUNCILS OF BALTIMORE

- ▶ St. John Neumann, consecrated as Bishop of Philadelphia in the same year as the first Council, was the first American bishop to organize an official diocese-sponsored school system. Under his leadership, Philadelphia again became the leader of Catholic education in the United States.
- ▶ After the First Council of Baltimore, there were protests by Protestants in Philadelphia, NY and Boston out of fear that Catholics were becoming increasingly influential and that their schools were one means to promote such “dangerous” influence.
- ▶ Massachusetts created a law in 1855 requiring compulsory reading of the Protestant Bible alone in public schools.
- ▶ As Catholic schools opened, Catholics attempted to get public funding of their schools, which was usually rejected.

# COUNCILS OF BALTIMORE

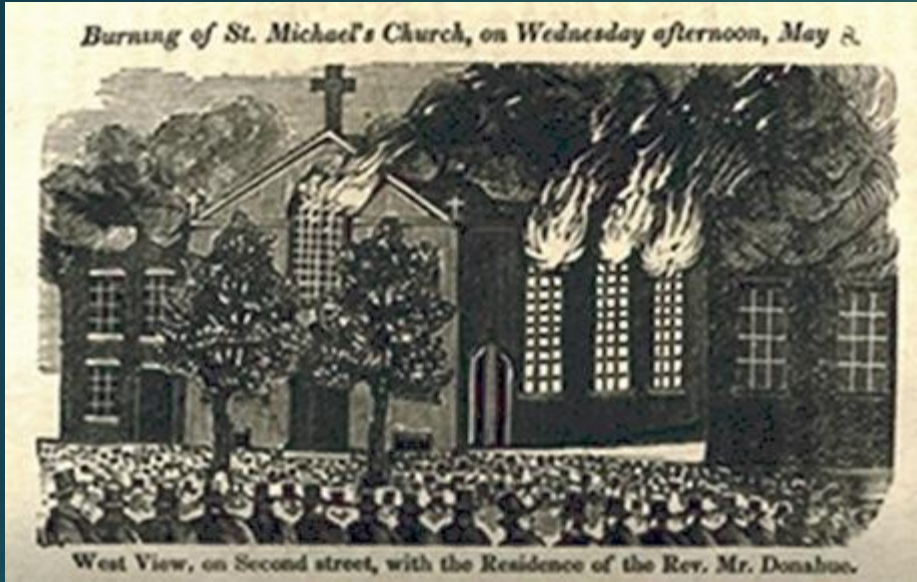
- ▶ A new political party is established in reaction to growing Catholic influence (increasing Catholic immigration and the creation of Catholic schools)
- ▶ “New American Party” – “Know Nothing Party”
- ▶ Prevent Catholic voting
- ▶ Suppress Catholic immigration
- ▶ 1855: had 75 delegates in U.S. Congress
- ▶ Some successful attempts to strip Catholic churches of their land titles
- ▶ Successful attempts to deny any public funding of Catholic schools



# New American Party/ Know Nothing Party







## Philadelphia Nativist Riot: July 5, 1844

Attack on a Church rumored to be armed







*Reproduced according to the original in the year 1855 by John Smith in the "Globe" office of the British Court of the Southern District of N.Y.*

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The hand that  
would rob us of our  
freedom.

CURTAIN  
OF  
RELIGION

WASHINGTON

## ROME IN POLITICS

## SHALL HE BE ALLOWED TO RULE AMERICA?

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THIS IS NUMBER 200

FEBRUARY 20, 1915



A PUBLIC MENACE

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Gain for the week 10,112

**Total Number Subscriptions this date**

**1,407,848**

## ROME SUPPRESSING FREE SPEECH BY BLOODSHED

**Campaign to Make America Catholic Brings About Sad Tragedy at Marshall, Texas--Ex-Priest Wm. Black Murdered in Cold Blood by Knights of Columbus--One Knight Killed and Another Fatally Wounded--Revival of Terrorist Tactics Indicates That Rome Prefers War to Peace**

[illegible][illegible]

that attracted the attention of the writer early Thursday morning, and the dispatch that caused him to take the first train for Marshall in order that the whole truth in the case might be ascertained.



WILLIAM BLACK

As stated before, Marshall is a town of about 15,000 inhabitants, the county seat of Harrison County, and while the scene of many tragedies it is not a typical frontier town.

The gross disgust, quailed there like the white story so far as the black one is concerned. You can tell from this dimension that two men are in the room, and that the man who is, and what their color is, and what their father is, and that a waiting world must be left in the darkness.

Every day daily news is brought in the country carried this dispatch. The managing editor

Rogers—"Well, you are not going to speak tonight, and you are going to leave town."  
Black, attempting to rise from his seat, said: "I am going to speak tonight, and I am not going to leave town."  
At this juncture Rogers took hold of Black. Copeland shot him through the heart and it is believed that Ryan shot him in the abdomen. At the same time that Black was shot, C. F. Hall, Black's traveling companion

communities where the  
her of him has been murdered.  
"Naturally enough, Princeton  
in the city, and it should be borne  
said that there is only  
the Roman Catholic in the  
population does not represent  
that it shows how a very small  
amount of prison can engulf  
the rest of the community."  
One would naturally think

be lapsed upon the man by sta-  
tioning him in the center of  
of the faith, and it appears now  
we can produce his re-  
sponse to the inquiry that  
is unblemished.

Mr. Blank was born and reared  
in the city of New York, and  
approached by Catholic parents  
and moved in that capacity, after  
the death of his mother, to  
years and seven months. Un-  
hundreds of other honest men, he  
has been a member of the  
board and resumed his afflu-

young lady who was traveling  
with Mr. Blank and in the room  
of the hotel where he was staying  
was adopted daughter. The  
writer interviewed Miss Blank at  
her home in New York, and  
learned that she had been  
adopted in Mr. Blank as well as  
in the city of New York, and  
was given to the adoption  
was Adeline Adams. She was re-  
siding in New York at  
at Pine Hill, Ark.

It was developed in the be-  
lieved that she was the

know the signs and know the danger—but he gave them to his friends.

He knew that he was spreading in a state where, until a few years ago and, until the coming, recent and rapid, of the automobile, there was a spirit of criticism for his travels. Texas can answer for its own safety, and it can answer nobody else.

The evidence shows that the aggressors in the affair were John Rogers, John Copeland, George Ryan, George Tier and Harry Wynn, all Roman Catholics and Knights of Columbus in good standing, and all armed with automatic pistols.

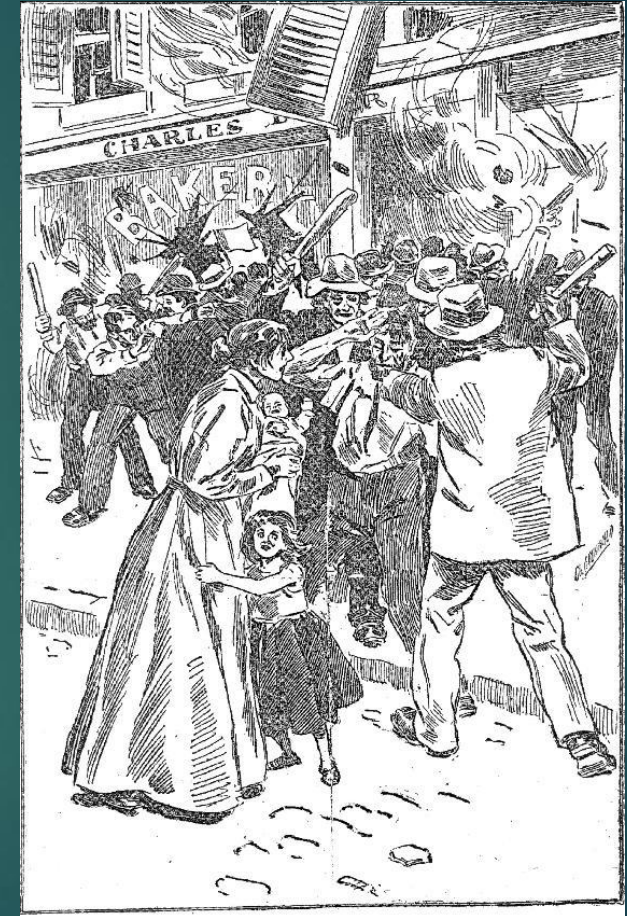
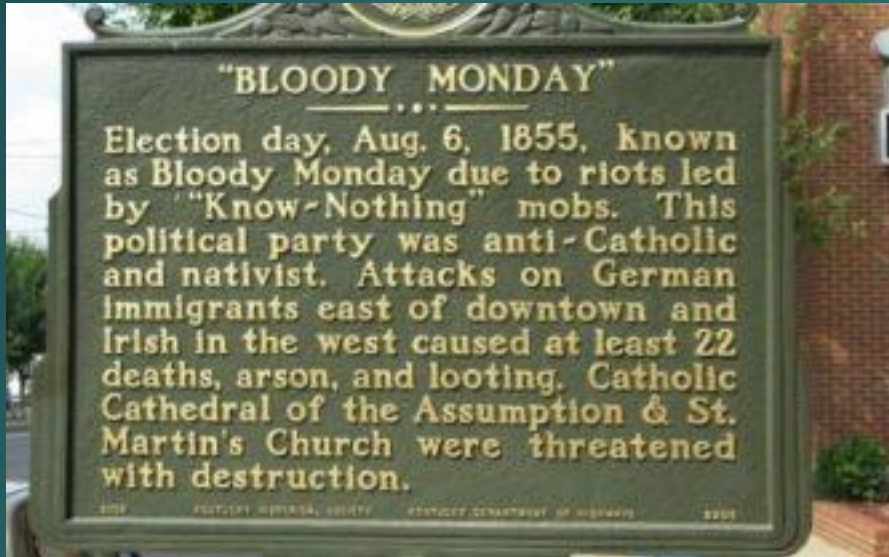
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# COUNCILS OF BALTIMORE

- ▶ Intense anti-Catholic riots and violence:
- ▶ i.e. Louisville KY: “Bloody Monday” riots left 100+ dead
- ▶ Maine: priest was torn from rectory tarred, feathered and paraded around town
- ▶ Archbishop Hughes sent a letter in 1858 to the Holy See, noting that even non-Catholic immigrants openly proclaimed “that there was no hope of freedom for the downtrodden people of Europe until the Catholic Church and its clergy, from the Pope downwards, should be overthrown, and if necessary, annihilated.”



# Bloody Monday riots





# COUNCILS OF BALTIMORE

- ▶ Degree from 2<sup>nd</sup> Council included:
- ▶ a call for Catholic teachers working in public schools to be employed in parish schools whenever possible,
- ▶ parochial schools “should be erected in every parish.”
- ▶ for those parents who could not afford the cost of Catholic schools, “catechism classes should be instituted in the churches,” “especially in preparation for First Holy Communion and Confirmation.

# COUNCILS OF BALTIMORE



# CATHOLIC IMMIGRATION TO THE UNITED STATES

- ▶ Radical increase in Catholic population:

1776: 24,000

1850: 1.7 million

1866: 2.5 million

1870: 3.55 million

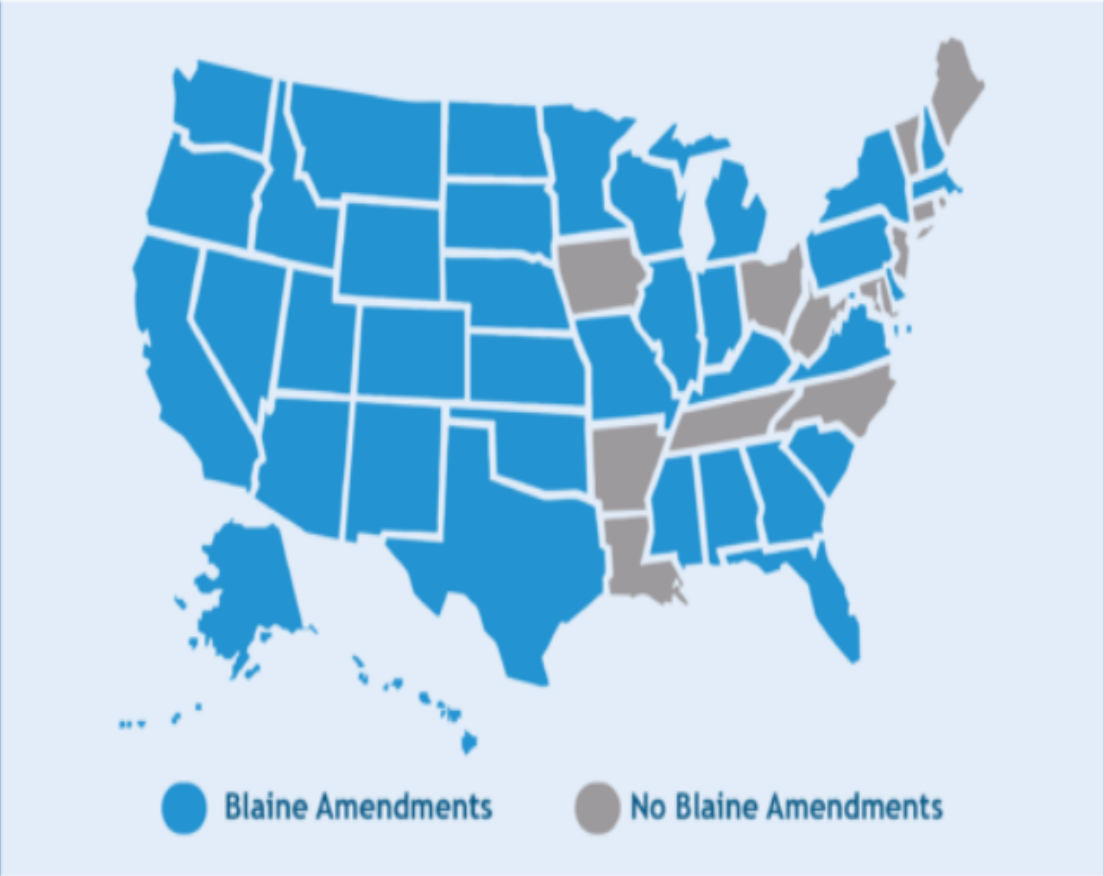
1890: 7.3 million

1920: 17 million (6,500 parochial schools)

# CATHOLIC SCHOOLS INCREASE

- ▶ 1875: President Grant's "annual message to Congress recommended a constitutional amendment prohibiting...the "granting of any school funds or school taxes...for the benefit or in aid, directly or indirectly, of any religious sect or denomination"
- ▶ Congressman James Blaine proposes "Blaine Amendment" which passes congress, failed in the Senate by 4 votes, but adopted eventually by 34 states.
- ▶ 1880s: public schools begin removing (Protestant) religion from curriculum
- ▶ Bishop of Cincinnati: "all pastors are bound, under pain of mortal sin, to provide a Catholic school in every parish or congregation subject to them."

**FACT:**  
Blaine Amendments  
are found in  
**37**  
state constitutions.





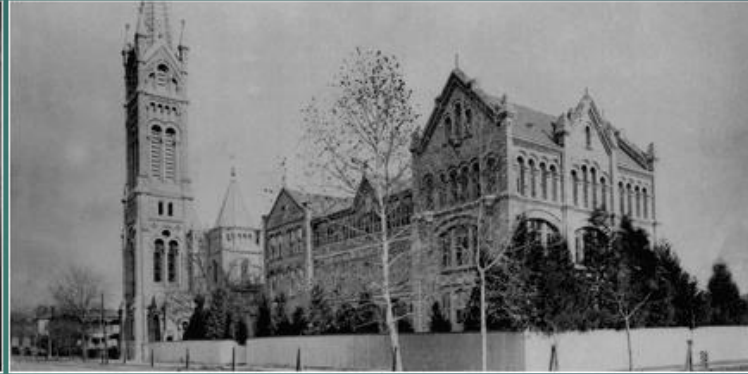
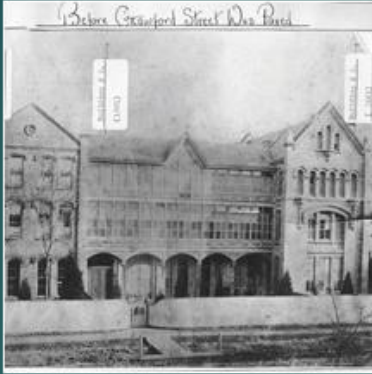
# GROWTH OF CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

- ▶ 3<sup>rd</sup> Plenary Council of Baltimore in 1875 stated: “we not only exhort Catholic parents...but we command them with all the authority in our power, to procure a truly Christian education for their dear offspring...[and] send them to Catholic...schools,” unless they otherwise obtained permission from their local bishop.
- ▶ Promoted the establishment of Catholic High Schools
- ▶ 1900: 100 Catholic High Schools in the US (1873: *Incarnate Word Academy*; 1900: *St. Thomas High School in Houston!*)
- ▶ 1920: 1500 Catholic High Schools in the US
- ▶ Given that not every parish could support a high school, What became the #1 name for a Catholic high school in the United States?



# HOUSTON

## The Early Years (1873-1905)



# Next week (Thursday, April 30):

- ▶ Bringing Catholic schools to record enrollments: the hard work of religious sisters, brothers and priests.

