

ABSTRACT

Title of Thesis: IN THE HABIT OF RESISTANCE: RADICAL
PEACE ACTIVISM AND THE MARYLAND
SISTERS OF NOTRE DAME DE NAMUR, 1954-
PRESENT

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Between 1968 and present, members of the Maryland Province of Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur (SNDN) participated in radical peace activity. These sisters cultivated a distinct religious identity and used the all-woman spaces of their order to define, support, and sustain their peace activism. The SNDN illuminate the vital role women religious played in shaping the form and longevity of the Catholic peace movement. Sisters were central to Catholic peace activity, drawing on their religious identity and linking their actions to work sanctioned by the Catholic Church. Between 1954 and 1970, the SNDN responded to changes in the Church and constructed a religious identity based in a Catholic feminist ideology. During the Vietnam War, sisters called upon this religious identity and their order's support networks to motivate their activism. After the Vietnam War ended, the SNDN continued to cultivate their religious identity and maintained their peace activism within the Church.

IN THE HABIT OF RESISTANCE: RADICAL PEACE ACTIVISM AND THE
MARYLAND SISTERS OF NOTRE DAME DE NAMUR, 1954-PRESENT

by

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List of Abbreviations

AFDC	Aid to Families with Dependent Children
CAIP	Catholic Association for International Peace
CCNV	Community for Creative Non-Violence
CND	Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament
CPF	Catholic Peace Fellowship
GE	General Electric
IAMAW	International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers
LCWR	Leadership Conference of Women Religious
NAACP	National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
NDMV	Notre Dame Mission Volunteers
SANE	International Committee for a Sane Nuclear Policy
SCLC	Southern Christian Leadership Conference
SFC	Sister Formation Conference
SNDN	Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur
SPC	Swarthmore Peace Collection
TWUA	Trinity Washington University Archives
UNDA	University of Notre Dame Archives
WAVES	Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service
WILPF	Women's International League for Peace and Freedom
YWCA	Young Women's Christian Association

Introduction

Sister Mary Cain was skilled at casing buildings. Late at night, she stalked office buildings in Philadelphia, Boston, and New York, tracing security guard movement and watching office lights turn on and off.¹ In 1972, journalist William O'Rourke called Mary "one of the Catholic Left's best 'casers.' [As] who could better observe the midnight vigils outside federal office buildings than prayer disciplined religious?"² Mary, a religious sister in the order of Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur (SNDN), was a member of the Catholic Left, the loosely organized religious coalition that took nonviolent direct action against the Vietnam War. After nine individuals destroyed draft files in Catonsville, Maryland in 1968, the Catholic Left embarked on a campaign of civil disobedience, sneaking into Selective Service offices, and destroying draft files to protest the Vietnam War. Catholics across the United States, including priests, religious sisters, and laypeople, participated in these radical actions for peace and faced arrest and legal consequences. Speaking of her actions nearly fifty years later, her voice sparkling with pride, Mary asserted: "They can never convict us of a crime because a crime is a sin against society and we've never done that."³

Mary was just one of many members of the Maryland Province of Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur — an order of Catholic religious sisters based in Ilchester, Maryland — working for peace during the Vietnam War. Between 1968 and 1975, sisters in the Maryland Province of SNDN participated in draft board raids and other dramatic acts of

¹ Mary Cain, interview with author, October 7, 2020.

² William O'Rourke, *The Harrisburg 7 and the New Catholic Left* (New York, NY: Crowell, 1972), 174.

³ Mary Cain, interview with author, October 7, 2020; Howard Shapiro, "Mary Scoblick: 'They Can Never Convict Us of a Sin Against Society,'" *National Catholic Reporter*, January 14, 1972.

civil disobedience to protest U.S. involvement in Vietnam. Their peace activism, however, was not confined to the Vietnam War. Between 1954 and 1971, the Maryland Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur transformed from a group of teaching sisters to an order supporting radical action for peace and justice, even if that action included casing federal office buildings. Their peace activism did not stop when the last U.S. troops withdrew from Vietnam in 1975; these sisters remained active peace organizers throughout the 1980s, 1990s, and into the present day. The Maryland Province of Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur cultivated a distinct religious identity and used the all-woman spaces of their religious order to define, support, and sustain their peace activism. These sisters constituted a significant force for peace within the Roman Catholic Church, even as many male peace activists in the Catholic Left distanced themselves from official Church structures.

The story of the radical peace activism of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur contributes to two large bodies of historical scholarship: that of women's peace activism and that of the Catholic Left. While histories of male-dominated peace movements in the United States are plentiful, the study of twentieth-century women's peace activism only gained the attention of historians in the 1970s as the larger field of women's history expanded. Historians in the 1970s and early 1980s focused on uncovering the existence and contributions of women to peace activism, mostly through studies of individual activists or organizations.⁴

⁴ Examples of early works in the field of twentieth century women's peace history include Allen Freeman Davis, *American Heroine: The Life and Legend of Jane Addams* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1973); Barbara Steinson, *American Women's Activism in World War I* (New York, NY: Garland Publishers, 1982); Blanche Wiesen Cook, "The Woman's Peace Party: Collaboration and Non-Cooperation," *Peace & Change* 1, no. 1 (Fall 1972).

Since the 1970s, the field has seen dramatic growth, as historians steadily expand the parameters of women's peace history. Scholars studying women's peace movements moved from analyses aimed at proving women's participation in peace advocacy, toward more nuanced examinations of the ideologies and causes behind women's peace activism. Historians like Amy Swerdlow and Linda Schott posited maternalist values and ideas as the driving force behind women's peace activism. They analyzed the ways women drew on traditional understandings of women as inherently nurturing, mothering, and protective to argue that women were uniquely equipped to advocate for peace.⁵ Historians like Alice Echols and Barbara Tischler took a different approach, examining how some women peace activists felt compelled to engage in activism because of a liberal feminist ideology. Feminist peace activists argued they were equal to men and explained that they participated in the peace movement for the same reasons as men.⁶ During this period, historians also examined different forms of peace organizing conducted by women, exploring both separatist women's groups for peace and mixed-gender peace organizing.⁷ From the early 1980s to the early 2000s, historians established

⁵ Amy Swerdlow, *Women Strike for Peace: Traditional Motherhood and Radical Politics in the 1960s* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1993) and Linda Schott, *Reconstructing Women's Thoughts: The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom Before World War II* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1997). See also Catherine Foster, *Women for All Seasons: The Story of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1989); Linda Schott, "The Women's Peace Party and the Moral Basis for Women's Pacifism," *Frontiers* 8, no. 2 (1985).

⁶ Alice Echols, "'Women Power' and Women's Liberation: Exploring the Relationship Between the Antiwar Movement and the Women's Liberation Movement," in *Give Peace a Chance: Exploring the Vietnam Antiwar Movement*, Melvin Small and William Hoover, eds. (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1992) and Barbara Tischler, "The Refiner's Fire: Anti-War Activism and Emerging Feminism in the Late 1960s," in *The Vietnam War on Campus: Different Voices, More Distant Drums*, Marc Jason Gilbert, ed. (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2001). See also Ruth Rosen, "The Day They Buried 'Traditional Womanhood': Women and the Politics of Peace Protest," in *The Legacy: The Vietnam War in the American Imagination*, D. Michael Shafer, ed. (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1990).

⁷ These studies examine the distinct character of peace organizations comprised entirely of women rather than focusing on mixed-gender peace organizing. For examples of studies examining women's separatist movements for peace see Carrie Foster, *The Women and the Warriors: The U.S. Section of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, 1915-1946* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1995); Harriet Hyman Alonso, *Peace as a Women's Issue: A History of the U.S. Movement for*

women's place in the larger history of peace movements, over time teasing out more careful understandings of the different ideologies and contexts for women's peace organizing.

Since the late 1990s, two other shifts have occurred in the field. Historians moved away from a narrow focus on the peace activities of white, middle-class women to examine the ways class, race, sexuality, and gender intersected in the history of women's peace organizing.⁸ These scholars challenged the idea of a universal white, middle-class womanhood as the center of women's peace activism, stretching understandings of what constituted women's peace history by excavating previously hidden or marginalized voices in the historical record. Currently, scholars are forging new directions in the field by bringing a transnational approach to women's peace history.⁹ Over time, historians

World Peace and Women's Rights (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1993); Harriet Hyman Alonso, *The Women's Peace Union and the Outlawry of War, 1921-1942* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1997). For studies of mixed-gender peace organizing see Frances Early, *A World Without War: How U.S. Feminists and Pacifists Resisted World War I* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1997) and Marian Mollin, "Women's Struggles Within the American Radical Pacifist Movement," *History Compass* 7, no. 3 (May 2009).

⁸ For an examination of working-class women active for peace see Rachel Goosen, *Women Against the Good War: Conscientious Objection and Gender on the American Home Front, 1941-1947* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1997). Goosen also examines the role of religion in women's peace movements, focusing on women in historic peace churches like the Brethren, the Quakers, and the Mennonites. Notable explorations of race and women's peace organizing include Joyce Blackwell, *No Peace Without Freedom: Race and the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, 1915-1975* (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 2004); Jacqueline Castledine, *Cold War Progressives: Women's Interracial Organizing for Peace and Freedom* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2012) and Gerald Gill, "From Maternal Pacifism to Revolutionary Solidarity: African American Women's Opposition to the Vietnam War," in *Sights on the Sixties*, Barbara Tischler, ed. (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1992). More scholarship is still needed on the role of Asian American, Latina, and American Indian women in peace movements. Additional research is also needed to explore the intersections of sexuality with women's peace work.

⁹ Examples of works taking a transnational approach to women's peace organizing include Jessica Frazier, *Women's Antiwar Diplomacy During the Vietnam War Era* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2017) and Judy Tzu-Chun Wu, *Radicals on the Road: Internationalism, Orientalism, and Feminism During the Vietnam Era* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2013). For an excellent overview of changes in the field of women's peace history and other new avenues for research see Harriet Hyman Alonso, "One Woman's Journey Into the World of Women's Peace History," *Women's Studies Quarterly* 23, no. 3/4 (Fall-Winter 1995).

have steadily stretched and reshaped the contours delineating women's peace history to widen our view of who advocated for peace and the motivation for their activism.

An examination of the peace activism of the Maryland Province of Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur further expands our understanding of who participated in women's peace movements in the twentieth century and why. The Maryland Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur interpreted peace not just as an end to war, but as an end to all forms of violence, suffering, and oppression. These women did not explain their peace activity with the ideologies of maternalism or liberal feminism, rather, a Catholic feminism and their particular identity as Catholic women religious motivated them to engage in peace work. As Catholic feminists, these women integrated their Catholic faith with a commitment to women's liberation and interpreted their religious calling as Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur as a commitment to combating social injustice.¹⁰ As a result, the Maryland Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur engaged in peace activism as a means of fulfilling their religious mission and bringing an end to myriad forms of deprivation and violence.

In addition to enriching the history of women's peace activism, the story of the Maryland Province of Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur contributes to the history of the new Catholic Left, which in the 1960s and 1970s devoted its attentions specifically to peace activism. The Catholic Church has been active in North America since 1564, with a large number of Catholics settling in Maryland in 1634.¹¹ While originally a minority

¹⁰ Mary Henold, *Catholic and Feminist: The Surprising History of the American Catholic Feminist Movement* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2008), 1-2, 85-86; Donna Haverty-Stacke, *The Fierce Life of Grace Holmes Carlson: Catholic, Socialist, Feminist* (New York, NY: New York University Press, 2021), 206.

¹¹ Chester Gillis, *Roman Catholicism in America* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1999), 49-53. For more on the Catholic majority in Maryland and the founding of the Baltimore archdiocese in

religion in the United States, with the influx of European immigrants in the nineteenth century the number of practicing Catholics quickly grew.¹² These predominately Irish, Polish, Italian, and German Catholic immigrant communities sought to prove their loyalty and Americanness despite their immigrant origins.¹³ The Church's minority and immigrant status led many U.S. Catholics to avoid an antiwar stance in earlier international conflicts so as to prove their patriotism.¹⁴ During World War I and World War II, only a handful of Catholics registered as conscientious objectors, as the majority of American Catholics viewed civic duty as synonymous with being a good Catholic.¹⁵ Catholic doctrine also supported the Just War theory, which argues war is not immoral if it is waged for a just cause, leading to a lack of widespread Catholic antiwar activity during the First and Second World Wars.¹⁶ With the creation of the Catholic Association for International Peace (CAIP) in 1927, however, and Dorothy Day's founding of the Catholic Worker Movement in 1933, American Catholics slowly began to register their

1789 see Thomas Spalding, *The Premier See: A History of the Archdiocese of Baltimore, 1789-1989* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989).

¹² Gillis, *Roman Catholicism in America*, 58-60. By 1860, Catholics comprised the largest Christian denomination in the United States with over three million followers.

¹³ Gillis, *Roman Catholicism in America*, 58-64; Patrick Carey, *Catholics in America: A History* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2004); Jay Dolan, *The American Catholic Experience: A History from Colonial Times to Present* (New York, NY: Doubleday, 1985). The history of American Catholicism in the twentieth century is one of assimilation and the Americanization of Catholicism, a process that was nearly complete by the 1960s and 1970s. See John McGreevy, "Introduction: The American Catholic Century," in *Catholics in the American Century: Recasting Narratives of U.S. History*, R. Scott Appleby and Kathleen Sprows Cummings, eds. (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2012).

¹⁴ Mel Piehl, *Breaking Bread: The Catholic Worker and the Origins of Catholic Radicalism in the United States* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 1982), 189; Penelope Adams Moon, "Loyal Sons and Daughters of God? American Catholics Debate Catholic Antiwar Protest," *Peace & Change* 33, no. 1 (December 2007): 8.

¹⁵ Patricia McNeal, *Harder Than War: Catholic Peacemaking in Twentieth-Century America* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1992), 55; Moon, "Loyal Sons and Daughters of God?" 8. McNeal estimates that during World War I, at most four Catholics registered as conscientious objectors. The highest estimate for Catholic conscientious objectors in World War II is 135 men, just 0.0001 percent of the Church's American membership.

¹⁶ McNeal, *Harder Than War*, x; William Au, *The Cross, the Flag, and the Bomb: American Catholics Debate War and Peace* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1985), 42.

dissent to war.¹⁷ Whereas CAIP devoted itself to peace education and eventually supported World War II, Dorothy Day, a Catholic convert and absolute pacifist, maintained an unequivocal pacifist stance adopted by the Catholic Worker Movement during World War II. Despite rallying Catholics committed to social justice to oppose the draft and protest nuclear weapons during the Cold War, the Catholic Worker Movement remained focused on a wide variety of social causes instead of focusing exclusively on peace.¹⁸ From within this context, a new version of the Catholic Left embarked on its movement for peace, when in 1968 nine Catholic priests, sisters, and laypeople destroyed records at the Selective Service office in Catonsville, Maryland.¹⁹ The media hailed two of the nine participants, priests and biological brothers Daniel and Philip Berrigan, as the leaders of this new Catholic movement for peace.

Historians echoed the media, devoting their attention to the Berrigans when studying the Catholic peace movement beginning in 1968. Labeling the brothers as leaders of the Catholic peace movement, scholars produced numerous works examining their life and work in the Catholic Left.²⁰ More recently, historian Marian Mollin argued that the celebrity afforded to the Berrigans in both public and scholarly imagination serves to erase the grassroots nature of this movement for peace, particularly women's role in Catholic peace activism.²¹ Gender markedly shaped the radical activism of the

¹⁷ McNeal, *Harder Than War*, 10-11; Piehl, *Breaking Bread*, 191.

¹⁸ Piehl, *Breaking Bread*, 192-98.

¹⁹ Piehl, *Breaking Bread*, 189, 236. John Francis Peters, *The Catonsville Nine: A Story of Faith and Resistance in the Vietnam Era* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012); McNeal, *Harder Than War*, 173-210; Charles Meconis, *With Clumsy Grace: The American Catholic Left, 1961-1975* (New York, NY: Seabury Press, 1978), 24-28.

²⁰ Prominent works examining the Berrigans include Murray Polner and Jim O'Grady, *Disarmed and Dangerous: The Radical Lives and Times of Daniel and Philip Berrigan* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 1997); McNeal, *Harder Than War*; Peters, *The Catonsville Nine*; and Meconis, *With Clumsy Grace*.

²¹ Marian Mollin, "Communities of Resistance: Women and the Catholic Left of the Late 1960s," *Oral History Review* 31, no. 2 (September 2004): 29.

Catholic Left during the Vietnam War. In contrast to draft resistance campaigns that privileged men in action roles, the Catholic peace movement provided opportunities for both men and women to protest the Vietnam War.²² Nevertheless, patriarchy plagued the movement, and by the mid-1970s women participants decried the sexism of the Berrigans and other men involved in the movement.²³ Historians Marian Mollin, Charles Meconis, and Shawn Francis Peters explore women's roles and subjugation in the Catholic Left, but these works mainly explore the sexism experienced by women as a group or by laywomen. No scholarship focuses exclusively on the roles and experiences of Catholic religious sisters in Catholic movements for peace.

Catholic religious sisters have a long history in the United States as women of faith and service. Catholic sisters, who first arrived in North America in 1727, served Catholic communities as teachers, nurses, orphanage administrators, and social workers, making these women notable public reformers.²⁴ Scholars of Catholic history and women's history, however, largely overlook religious sisters — and the centuries of work they conducted in the United States — as a result of sisters' dual marginalization by both their gender and religion.²⁵ Recently, historians have embarked on in-depth examinations of the lives of women religious, updating the historical record to reflect sisters'

²² Mollin, "Communities of Resistance," 40.

²³ Mollin, "Communities of Resistance," 41; Polner and O'Grady, *Disarmed and Dangerous*, 298; Meconis, *With Clumsy Grace*, 104-5; Peters, *The Catonsville Nine*, 306.

²⁴ Margaret McGuinness, *Called to Serve: A History of Nuns in America* (New York, NY: New York University Press, 2013); Amy Koehlinger, "'Are You the White Sisters or the Black Sisters?' Women Confounding Categories of Race and Gender," in *The Religious History of American Women: Reimagining the Past*, Catherine Brekus, ed. (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 258.

²⁵ Carol Coburn and Martha Smith, *Spirited Lives: How Nuns Shaped Catholic Culture and American Life, 1836-1920* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 3; Koehlinger, "'Are You the White Sisters or the Black Sisters?'" 258.

participation in a variety of movements and activities.²⁶ Simply reinserting the contributions of women religious into histories of American Catholicism, however, is not enough, and historians must do more to clarify why women's history is central to understanding American Catholic history.²⁷ Historian Mary Beth Fraser Connolly's work on the Chicago Sisters of Mercy exemplifies this approach; she writes, "Understanding *how* religious life called and sustained women...opens up a new view of how sisters conceptualized their spiritual lives, community, and ministries."²⁸ If we are to understand why the history of women religious matters to Catholic peace history, we need to explore the religious worlds and identities Catholic sisters created as well as the diverse ways women enacted their Catholic faith.²⁹ To do so requires centering the lived experiences of women religious within the peace movement.³⁰

²⁶ For works that update the historical record to include the accomplishments of women religious see McGuinness, *Called to Serve*, 7-9; Coburn and Smith, *Spirited Lives*; Mary Ewen, "Women in the Convent," in *American Catholic Women: A Historical Exploration*, Karen Kennelly, ed. (New York, NY: Collier Macmillan, 1989); Suellen Hoy, *Good Hearts: Catholic Sisters in Chicago's Past* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2006); Diane Batts Morrow, *Persons of Color and Religious at the Same Time: The Oblate Sisters of Providence, 1828-1860* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2002).

²⁷ Gerda Lerner, *The Majority Finds Its Past: Placing Women in History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979), 152; Kathleen Sprows Cummings, "The 'New Woman' at the 'University': Gender and American Catholic Identity in the Progressive Era," in *The Religious History of American Women: Reimagining the Past*, Catherine Brekus, ed. (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 206-7; Kathleen Sprows Cummings, *New Women of the Old Faith: Gender and American Catholicism in the Progressive Era* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2009), 2-3; Louise Tilly, "Gender, Women's History, and Social History," *Social Science History* 13, no. 4 (Winter 1989); Catherine Brekus, "Introduction: Searching for Women in Narratives of American Religious History," in *The Religious History of American Women: Reimagining the Past*, Catherine Brekus, ed. (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 23. Tilly urges historians to ask "what difference it makes" to include women in historical narratives. Brekus echoes the need to elaborate on historical significance, particularly in the context of American women's religious history. Brekus' questions also build on the work of Anne Braude, who argues that "women's history is American religious history" and pushes for a re-reading of American religious history through this lens. See Anne Braude, "Women's History Is American Religious History," in *Retelling US Religious History*, Thomas Tweed, ed. (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1997), 86-106.

²⁸ Mary Beth Fraser Connolly, *Women of Faith: The Chicago Sisters of Mercy and the Evolution of a Religious Community* (New York, NY: Fordham University Press, 2014), 6.

²⁹ Koehlinger, "'Are You the White Sisters or the Black Sisters?'" 258-9.

³⁰ Lerner, *The Majority Finds Its Past*, 146-53.

This thesis seeks to clarify why the history of the peace activism of the Maryland Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur is central to our understanding of the history of Catholic movements for peace. Writing about the Catholic peace movement from the perspective of the Maryland Province of Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur illuminates the vital role women religious played in shaping the form and longevity of Catholic peace activism. Catholic sisters comprised a central core of Catholic peace activism, basing their activism in religious identity and linking radical peace work to the good works sanctioned under the official auspices of the Roman Catholic Church. The Maryland Province of Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur also utilized the all-woman spaces of their religious order to create a strong religious identity that supported and sustained peace activism. Between 1954 and 1970, responding to a period of dramatic change in the Catholic Church, the Maryland Province of SNDN actively constructed a strong religious identity based in a Catholic feminist ideology, one that required activism for peace and justice. During the Vietnam War, individual activist sisters called upon this religious identity and the support networks within their religious order to motivate and sustain their peace activism. After U.S. troops withdrew from Vietnam, the Maryland Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur continued to cultivate their religious identity for peace, maintaining their activism within the Church even as many men left explicitly Catholic peace activism.

The activism of the Maryland Province of Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur serves as a microcosm of the involvement of women religious in the Catholic peace movement. Catholic religious sisters from a variety of orders were active for peace between 1954 and the present, as were multiple provinces within the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur.³¹ The

³¹ This thesis focuses on the activism of the Maryland Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, but further research is needed to uncover peace activism conducted by other religious orders and the role of religious

activist sisters in the Maryland Province SNDN, however, are notable for the community support sisters provided one another, their commitment to peace as a strong element of their order's religious identity, and the longevity of their peace activism.

Using a combination of oral histories and newspaper research, I traced the lives and activism of several prominent sisters in the Maryland Province of Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur. Teasing these stories from the historical record was a long, arduous process. Beginning with an article in *The Catholic Worker* mentioning four SNDN arrested for praying at the White House in 1973, I picked my way through an archive that obscures the role of women, particularly women religious, in peace activism. Through these records, I uncovered the robust, decades-long peace activity of Sisters Marjorie Shuman, Mary Cain, Beverly Bell, Katherine Corr, Mary Hayes, Rosalie Murphy, Sarah Fahy, and Susan Davis.³² Tracking down living sisters, I slowly moved from newspaper records to oral history interviews.

identity in motivating this activism. Notable religious sisters who also participated in draft board raids during the Vietnam War include Sister Susan Cordes of the Dominican Sisters, Sister Jogues Egan and Sister Elizabeth McAlister both from the Order of the Sacred Heart of Mary, Joann Malone of the Sisters of Loretto, and Sister Judith Peluso of the Sisters of Charity. See Joan Cook, "The Troubled, Uneasy World of the Women in the Berrigan Case," *New York Times*, May 26, 1971; E.B. Duarte, "Peace Activists Vow More Disruptions," *Catholic News Service*, February 23, 1970; "Loretto Nun to Resume Teaching," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, April 8, 1969; Betty Medsger, "Catholic Radicals: Shock, Challenge," *Washington Post*, March 7, 1970; Emanuel Perlmutter, "7 Nuns Arrested In Antiwar Protest Inside St. Patrick's," *New York Times*, May 1, 1972; "Nuns Fast, Pray for Peace," *National Catholic Reporter*, March 17, 1972. The New England Province of Sisters of Notre Dame also actively participated in peace activism and more research is needed to uncover the role of a religious identity in peace activism within this specific province of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur. See "330 Nuns Oppose War," *National Catholic Reporter*, June 4, 1971.

³² Joining the Maryland Province of Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur prior to 1965, many of these sisters used religious names instead of their given names. After the Second Vatican Council, many sisters reverted back to use of their given names. As a result, sisters appear in sources under religious names, given names, and nicknames. For clarity I have chosen to use the sisters' given names, the names used most frequently by the sisters themselves. Marjorie Shuman was also known as Sister Ann Paul, Mary Cain went by Sister Joseph Magdalene and later by Mary Cain Scoblick, Beverly Bell was Sister Ann Charles, Mary Hayes was Sister Mary Gerald, Katherine Corr was Sister Thomas Mary, but she also went by the nickname "Sissy," and Sarah Fahy was Sister Charles Mary. Sisters Rosalie Murphy and Susan Davis did not have alternate religious names. See Mary Reilly, *Women of Courage: Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur Maryland Province, 1934-1984* (Ilchester, MD: Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, 1992), 273-81.

The women-centered support networks of the Maryland Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur — the very ones vital to defining, supporting, and sustaining their peace activism across nearly seven decades — proved essential to telling the story of their pacifism. The lives of these sisters intimately intertwined with one another through decades of sisterhood and service with the SNDN. Stories overlapped and learning about one sister meant the mention of several more. Through both conversation and written historical records, the women-centered networks sustained by the SNDN slowly came into focus. This network proved useful in conducting oral histories, as sisters referred me to other sisters. Sister Katherine Corr referred me to Sister Mary Hayes, archivist for the SNDN-affiliated Trinity Washington University, who introduced me to Mary Cain, a former SNDN living in Baltimore. Over the course of four phone interviews, Mary Cain introduced me to a whole cast of activists in the rich history of the SNDN.

Ultimately, I conducted six oral history interviews: four with Mary Cain, one with Sister Katherine Corr, and one with Sister Mary Hayes.³³ These sisters, interviewed many times by journalists, were eager to share their stories and spoke with reverence and awe for their sisters. Sister Katherine recalled, “There’s so many of us [sisters], when you hear our life stories it’s incredible!”³⁴ Mary Cain expressed an appreciation to find an interviewer “truly interested in the sisters...not just the peace movement. I like your combination.”³⁵ These sisters’ excitement about sharing their life’s work points to the way journalists and historians have inadvertently, and at times intentionally, obscured the

³³ The theory and methodology of Mary Jo Maynes, Jennifer Pierce, and Barbara Laslett greatly informed my oral history practice. See Mary Jo Maynes, Jennifer Pierce, and Barbara Laslett, *Telling Stories: The Use of Personal Narratives in the Social Sciences and History* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2008). For more on my oral history methodology see the Appendix.

³⁴ Sister Katherine Corr, interview with author, June 25, 2020.

³⁵ Mary Cain, interview with author, September 30, 2020.

importance of women's religious identity to the Catholic peace movement. These women were eager to answer questions that were not about the Berrigan brothers or the Catholic Left, questions that instead centered their community of women religious and explored the way faith guided their lives. These women spoke with candor, warmth, modesty, and passion about their peace activism, continually linking their work to their unique position as Catholic women religious.

Many of the sisters active during this era are now deceased, and lapsing memories, technological issues, and health concerns prevented me from speaking to several living sisters. As a result, I used newspaper records, SNDN promotional materials, archival records, and quotations from earlier oral histories to supplement Sister Katherine, Sister Mary, and Mary Cain's first-hand accounts. In 1992, Sister Mary Reilly conducted oral histories with over two hundred sisters in the process of writing *Women of Courage*, her chronicle of the Maryland Province of SNDN's history in celebration of the 150th anniversary of the order's presence in America.³⁶ Sister Mary Reilly deposited her oral histories, and their transcripts, at the SNDN Provincial Archives. Unfortunately, the order currently maintains these records under a highly restrictive access policy, further obscuring the life and work of women religious in the historic record.³⁷ Reilly quoted liberally from these interviews in *Women of Courage*, and I have chosen to use these passages, even though they are filtered through a secondary source, in order to represent the sisters in their own words. As a result, my work creatively uses a combination of sources to extract the voices and activism of women religious whose strong commitment

³⁶ Reilly, *Women of Courage*, vii-ix.

³⁷ Reilly, *Women of Courage*, ix. See the Appendix for the language of the SNDN archives' access policy.

to peace has been erased or ignored in favor of those who appear more readily in the historic record. Taken together, these sources reveal the central role of religious identity in defining, supporting, and sustaining peace activism among the Maryland Province of SNDN, and its larger impact on the form and longevity of Catholic peace organizing.

I draw on the stories of these eight activist sisters and examine them chronologically, highlighting the activism of specific sisters as well as the actions of the order as a whole. Chapter One examines the ways the Maryland Province of Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur developed and defined a strong identity devoted to activism for peace and justice. Analyzing the order's actions in response to the dramatic changes taking place in the Catholic Church during the 1960s, I argue that between 1954 and 1971 the Maryland SNDN drew on the experiences of individual sisters to construct a robust mission explicitly tying their religious identity with work for peace and justice.

Chapter Two explores the way this newly formed identity motivated the involvement of many members of the Maryland SNDN in radical peace activism between 1968 and 1973, the height of the Vietnam War. I argue that during the Vietnam War, these sisters deployed a distinct philosophy for peace, based in their religious identity as SNDN. Centering this identity, activist sisters relied on the all-women networks of their religious order to support their activism despite legal and media scrutiny. By basing their peace work in their religious identity and depending on the support of their sisters, activist members of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur served as key actors in the mixed-gender Catholic peace movement.

Finally, in Chapter Three, I analyze the continued peace activism of the Maryland Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur after the Vietnam War. Remaining committed to both

the Catholic Church and peace activism, activists from the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur contradict existing narratives describing women's departure from the Catholic peace movement after the Vietnam War's conclusion. I argue that because peace work intertwined with sisters' religious identity and the order's mission, the Maryland SNDN remained involved with both the Church and the peace movement even as many male activists distanced themselves from either peace work or the Roman Catholic Church. Activist sisters committed themselves to working for change within the Catholic Church, remaining faithful to their religious mission for peace and justice, and working for reform within their traditional institution.

I use the terms "sister" and "peace" very carefully throughout my work. Although the terms "nun" and "sister" are synonymous in public imagination, according to canon law in the Catholic Church nuns are vowed women who live severely cloistered, contemplative lives. In contrast, sisters are vowed women who pursue a vocation of both prayer and apostolic ministry.³⁸ The Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur pursue apostolic ministries and therefore are Catholic religious sisters, not nuns. As a result, I use the terms Catholic sister, religious sister, and women religious to refer to these women.³⁹ I am also careful to define peace activism in the terms the sisters themselves used. Mary Cain was adamant in correcting my language surrounding her activism. Five minutes into our first conversation, when I referred to her work as antiwar activism, she asserted "I was for peace not antiwar."⁴⁰ She explained: "If I was antiwar, I would be making war

³⁸ Henold, *Catholic and Feminist*, 7-8.

³⁹ The use of the adjective "religious" as a noun when referring to sisters is traditional in the Catholic Church. See Lora Ann Quiñonez and Mary Daniel Turner, *The Transformation of American Catholic Sisters* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 1992), xiii.

⁴⁰ Mary Cain, interview with author, September 25, 2020. Mel Piehl makes a careful distinction between the Catholic peace movement and Catholics participating in peace movements. Whereas many Catholics participated in peace activity, the Catholic peace movement was distinct in that activists believed they had a

the standard, but peace is [the standard]. War is always dangerous, why give it validity?”⁴¹ Sister Katherine also viewed her activism through this lens, never once referring to her organizing as antiwar activity and always using an explicit peace terminology.⁴² This speaks to the sisters’ definition of peace as moving beyond opposing war, to instead encompass an opposition to violence and deprivation more generally. I attempt to remain faithful to the sisters’ conceptualization of their own work, avoiding the term “antiwar” wherever possible.

I also refer to the peace activism of these sisters as “radical,” a term that requires further definition. Through their peace work, members of the Maryland SNDN adopted an outlook that was radical both in a larger societal context and within the Catholic world they inhabited. The sisters were radical in a societal context because their peace advocacy pushed for progressive and structural social change. Through their peace work, the sisters targeted systems of oppression and worked to remedy the societal roots of suffering. Their actions were distinct from those of liberal peace activists “whose efforts for social reform did not extend to direct action or civil disobedience.”⁴³ Members of the Maryland SNDN sisters relied on tactics of civil disobedience and knowingly broke the law to demonstrate their dissent, which led the American public to label their activism as radical.

responsibility as Catholics, not just as citizens, to act for peace. See Piehl, *Breaking Bread*, 234. Patricia McNeal also argues that the Catholic peace movement was a peace movement not an antiwar movement. She compares the Catholic peace movement during the 1960s and 1970s with the key components of political antiwar movements on the New Left during this era. From this comparison she concludes the Catholic Left had more in common with pacifist groups than with the New Left or the counterculture. See McNeal, *Harder Than War*, 171.

⁴¹ Mary Cain, interview with author, September 25, 2020.

⁴² Sister Katherine Corr, interview with author, June 25, 2020.

⁴³ Charles DeBenedetti and Charles Chatfield, *An American Ordeal: The Antiwar Movement of the Vietnam Era* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1990), 20; Marian Mollin, *Radical Pacifism in Modern America* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006), 1.

The sisters' peace activism was also radical within the context of their membership in the Roman Catholic Church. In the 1960s, when the sisters first undertook peace protest, the Catholic Church staunchly supported the Just War doctrine and possessed "a conservative and patriotic hierarchy that exhorted its members to obey the nation's lawfully constituted authority, especially during a time of war."⁴⁴ Church leaders fervently supported U.S. Cold War foreign policy aimed at stopping the spread of communism. When the French withdrew from Vietnam in 1954, Ngo Diem's anti-communist, Catholic nationalist regime in South Vietnam drew the robust support of the Catholic hierarchy.⁴⁵ As a result, the institutional Catholic Church firmly supported the Vietnam War and expected its membership to show their patriotism by eagerly aiding the war effort. Thus, the peace stance taken by members of the Maryland Province of Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur during the Vietnam War was a radical action. These sisters stood in direct defiance to the Catholic hierarchy's official position regarding war and took dramatic, public action to demonstrate their commitment to peace.

Activist sisters within the Maryland Province of Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur provide a fascinating new perspective to the histories of women's peacemaking and Catholic peacemaking. The peace activism of these sisters sits at the intersections of religion and gender, bridging disparate historiographies of Catholic peace organizing and the history of women religious in the United States, and further expanding our conceptions of the composition and ideologies of U.S. women's peace movements in the twentieth century. By developing a clearer understanding of the lives and work of these

⁴⁴ McNeal, *Harder Than War*, 135.

⁴⁵ McNeal, *Harder Than War*, 135-36. For more on Catholic support for U.S. foreign policy and the containment of communism as well as a description of Catholic Cold War ideology see David O'Brien, *Public Catholicism* (New York, NY: Collier Macmillan Publishers, 1989), 238-39.

sisters, and the central role religious identity played in their peace activism, we can move beyond the standard image of a male-dominated Catholic movement for peace and a Protestant or secular view of women's peace activism. In bringing the activism of women religious out of obscurity we are able to see the wide variety of ideas and women comprising women's peace movements, the true longevity of the Catholic peace movement, and the continuing legacy of women's activism within the Roman Catholic Church in America.

Chapter One: Creating a Mission for Peace and Justice, 1954-1971

“We are aggressive for the powerless, speakers for the voiceless. We are God’s trouble shooters in a world that thinks we should be quiet and pray.”⁴⁶

On a swampy August day in 1970, a group of women in brightly patterned dresses sat in the dining hall at Trinity College in Washington, D.C. One woman remarked, “Justice is the primary thing today. The time is coming where you have to take a stand.” The others nodded in agreement, continuing their discussion about U.S. imperialism and racism.⁴⁷ Although referring to each other as “sister,” these women were not college students engaged in a fervent debate over feminism or the New Left. They were Catholic women religious, members of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur who gathered at Trinity College in 1970 for a conference entitled “Notre Dame’s response to the 70s – our corporate mission.”⁴⁸ Responding to the changes in the Roman Catholic Church that Pope John XXIII instituted during the Second Vatican Council in 1965, these women came together to discuss a renewed mission for their religious order. These religious sisters adopted a “radical terminology which when stripped of partisan politics [fit] in easily with their dedication to service.”⁴⁹ A commitment to social justice was crucial to the ways the religious order conceptualized itself following changes to the Church initiated by Vatican II.

From 1954 to 1971, the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur reoriented their mission and moved away from a traditional identity as obedient daughters of the Church. In place of their conventional teaching mission, they formulated a Catholic feminist identity as

⁴⁶ Religious Women...A Special Breed brochure, late 1970s, Box 71, Folder 3, Religious Orders Printed Materials Records, University of Notre Dame Archives (hereafter UNDA).

⁴⁷ Caroline Heck, “Sisters in the ‘70s,” *Washington Post*, August 21, 1970.

⁴⁸ Heck, “Sisters in the ‘70s,” August 21, 1970.

⁴⁹ Heck, “Sisters in the ‘70s,” August 21, 1970.

women religious devoted to fighting social injustice. Individual sisters played a central role in reformulating this identity and mission, drawing on experiences in higher education, direct service to the poor, and civil rights activism to formulate new understandings of their religious life as a calling to combat systemic injustice. By 1971, sisters cemented this new understanding of their order's mission and were already deploying their renewed identity in support of peace activism.

Before the Second Vatican Council, which Pope John XXIII convened in 1962 and Pope Paul VI concluded in 1965, religious sisters in the United States remained relatively cloistered from the outside world and fulfilled their calling mainly through teaching in Catholic schools.⁵⁰ In the pre-Vatican II Church, a sister's sacred religious identity remained separate from her ministry. By swearing vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience, sisters pledged themselves to serve God and strive for holiness. Although sisters commonly engaged in works like teaching, nursing, staffing orphanages, and ministering to the poor, the Church considered this activity secondary to and separate from a sister's religious identity.⁵¹ Church officials expected sisters to focus on providing spiritual guidance before concerning themselves with the material needs of those they served, much less striving to remedy the systems causing these conditions.⁵²

Gendered expectations for the behavior of women religious accompanied ideas about the sacred religious identity of Catholic sisters. Regarded as “good sisters,” “daughters of the Church,” or “brides of Christ,” religious sisters occupied a specific

⁵⁰ Jay Dolan, R. Scott Appleby, Patricia Byrne, and Debra Campbell, *Transforming Parish Ministry: The Changing Roles of Catholic Clergy, Laity, and Women Religious* (New York, NY: Crossroad Publishing Company, 1989), 111, 186.

⁵¹ Quiñonez and Turner, *The Transformation of American Catholic Sisters*, 34-35; McGuinness, *Called to Serve*, 2-3.

⁵² Quiñonez and Turner, *The Transformation of American Catholic Sisters*, 35-36.

gendered space in the Catholic Church.⁵³ Religious sisters subverted traditional norms of female domesticity by opting for a career outside the family, but they also occupied a prized and holy position in the eyes of the Church and its faithful.⁵⁴ The Church called upon these women to differentiate themselves through saintly sacrifice and service to God as they gave up traditional feminine dress and personal relationships.⁵⁵ The gendered hierarchy within the Church still marked religious life for women, however, as male Church officials expected women religious to submit to their authority. Cardinals, archbishops, and bishops decided wages, occupation, public engagement, and clothing on behalf of women religious. Unlike religious brothers who could rise to positions of power, women were unable to hold positions of authority in the Church and never saw themselves represented in the hierarchy.⁵⁶ Thus, before the Vatican II Council, Catholic sisters occupied a position of womanly service to the Church. They adhered to strict rules governing daily life and chose a life of service to God as an alternative to domestic Catholic womanhood.

Even before Vatican II, important changes were afoot in the lives of American women religious, laying the foundation for more radical transformations after Vatican II. Sisters organized the Sister Formation Conference in 1954, pushing for access to higher

⁵³ Quiñonez and Turner, *The Transformation of American Catholic Sisters*, 88-90.

⁵⁴ Paula Kane, "Introduction," in *Gender Identities in American Catholicism*, Paula Kane, James Kenneally, Karen Kennelly, eds. (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2001), xxiii.

⁵⁵ Mollin, *Radical Pacifism in Modern America*, 174; Quiñonez and Turner, *The Transformation of American Catholic Sisters*, 89-90; Rebecca Sullivan, *Visual Habits: Nuns, Feminism, and American Postwar Popular Culture* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005), 12-13; Karen Kennelly, *American Catholic Women: A Historical Exploration* (New York, NY: Collier Macmillan, 1989), 17.

⁵⁶ Henold, *Catholic and Feminist*, 87-88. The Roman Catholic Church is a hierarchical organization with different levels of authority vested to different ranks of clergymen. The pope sits at the top of the Catholic hierarchy, followed by cardinals who elect the pope. The next rank of clergy are archbishops who oversee archdiocese worldwide followed by bishops. Bishops oversee priests, deacons, religious sisters and brothers, and the laity in individual diocese. See Gillis, *Roman Catholicism in America*, 197-98.

education for teaching sisters. Along with changes to requirements for higher education, sisters advocated for a change in the processes of spiritual formation among women in religious orders. Beginning in the mid-1950s, then, sisters gained exposure to greater learning and freedom despite religious life's rigid constraints. These spiritual and educational reforms coalesced, creating new worlds for women religious that were further broadened after the Church embraced a more open mentality during the Second Vatican Council.

Historians have written extensively on Vatican II's reforms and the changes it brought to the lives of American Catholics, particularly the lives of Catholic religious sisters, in the 1960s.⁵⁷ Studies of renewal and change for Catholic sisters during and after Vatican II typically acknowledge increased activism for social justice among women religious but do not explain the actual processes through which these sisters formulated new identities to engage in this work.⁵⁸ More recent work addresses these questions, exploring connections between the involvement of Catholic religious sisters in the civil rights movement in the early 1960s and changes to the individual and collective identities of women in religious orders. Historian Amy Koehlinger argues civil rights activism

⁵⁷ For more on the impact of Vatican II reforms on American Catholics see Jeremy Bonner, Mary Beth Fraser Connolly, and Christopher Denny, eds., *Empowering the People of God: Catholic Action Before and After Vatican II* (New York, NY: Fordham University Press, 2014); Carey, *Catholics in America*, 114-30; Dolan, *The American Catholic Experience*, 425-53; Mary Henold, *The Laywoman Project: Remaking Catholic Womanhood in the Vatican II Era* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2020); Gillis, *Roman Catholicism in America*, 95-125. Works exploring the impact of Vatican II reforms on religious sisters include Dolan, Appleby, Byrne, and Campbell, *Transforming Parish Ministry*, 111-200; Quiñonez and Turner, *The Transformation of American Catholic Sisters*. For a study examining the way a particular order of religious women navigated the changes of Vatican II see Connolly, *Women of Faith*.

⁵⁸ Studies discussing the post-Vatican II activism of religious sisters include Kennelly, *American Catholic Women*; Paula Kane, James Kenneally, and Karen Kennelly, eds., *Gender Identities in American Catholicism* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2001); Helen Rose Ebaugh, *Women in the Vanishing Cloister: Organizational Decline in Catholic Religious Orders in the United States* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1997); James Kenneally, *The History of American Catholic Women* (New York, NY: Crossroads, 1990).

changed the outlook of religious sisters, allowing them to create new identities as women religious, which they brought back to their congregations and used to advocate for a reconsideration of the customs of religious life in the late 1960s.⁵⁹ The Maryland Province of Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur serves as an intriguing case study that both confirms and furthers this assertion.

Members of the Maryland Province of Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur engaged in activism as a result of loosening restrictions on religious life resulting from the Second Vatican Council and the earlier educational reforms of the Sister Formation Conference. Activist sisters in the SNDN awakened to racism and explicitly connected what they experienced in their work to larger systems of injustice. Forming radical ideologies on the interconnected nature of racism, capitalism, and militarism, individual sisters brought these understandings back to their SNDN community and enshrined an anti-capitalist, anti-racist, and pacifist philosophy in their institutional mission. Additionally, the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur show the way sisters developed a Catholic feminist ideology that leveraged gender to motivate their activity, actively reformulating what it meant to be a good Catholic sister and reinterpreting traditional understandings of Catholic religious sisters as saintly, self-sacrificing women.

* * *

The founding and history of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur reveal the basis for the renewals of religious life in the late 1960s. Later encouraged to return to the ideals of their foundress and examine their history for inspiration in their present-day work,

⁵⁹ Amy Koehlinger, *The New Nuns: Racial Justice and Religious Reform in the 1960s* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007), 4.

sisters drew on longer traditions within the SNDN when re-evaluating their identities as religious sisters. Julie Billiart and Marie-Louise-Françoise Blin de Bourdon founded the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur in 1804 in Amiens, France, and the order relocated to Namur, Belgium in 1809.⁶⁰ Establishing Catholic schools for young women, the SNDN “devote[d] all their labors to the poor in the most abandoned places.”⁶¹ Originally, the order taught only students that could not otherwise afford school fees, arguing “it was the poor, above all, who lacked food for their intellect and their heart, which was no less necessary than for their bodies.”⁶² From their founding, the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur emphasized the importance of serving the poor both materially and spiritually.

After rapidly expanding across Europe during the early nineteenth century, in 1840 the first Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur arrived in the United States. Establishing their first U.S. foundation in Cincinnati, Ohio, the sisters recruited new postulants, mainly Irish immigrants.⁶³ Expanding from Ohio into Oregon, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, and Washington, D.C. in the late nineteenth century, the sisters established Catholic academies and taught in parish schools serving the burgeoning Irish, Italian, German, and Polish Catholic immigrant communities in American cities.⁶⁴ In 1897, the SNDN established Trinity College in Washington, D.C., and in 1922 the order’s many

⁶⁰ *The Life of Blessed Julie Billiart, Foundress of the Institute of Sisters of Notre Dame*, James Clare, ed. (London: Sands and Company, 1909), 78-94, 125-46.

⁶¹ *The Educational Ideals of Blessed Julie Billiart, Foundress of the Congregation of Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur* (London: Longmans, 1922), 55.

⁶² *The Educational Ideals of Blessed Julie Billiart*, 21.

⁶³ Reilly, *Women of Courage*, vii; Kathleen Sprows Cummings, “‘We Owe it to Our Sex as Well as Our Religion’: The Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, the Ladies Auxiliary, and the Founding of Trinity College, 1898-1904,” *American Catholic Studies* 115, no 4 (2004): 25.

⁶⁴ Reilly, *Women of Courage*, vii; Gillis, *Roman Catholicism in America*, 59-64; James Hennessey, *American Catholics: A History of the Roman Catholic Community in the United States* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983), 116-27; Dolan, *The American Catholic Experience*, 127-57.

individual foundations on the East Coast consolidated to form the Eastern Province.⁶⁵ In 1934, Church officials divided the Eastern Province into two separate provinces: the New England Province and the Maryland Province.⁶⁶ Throughout the 1940s and 1950s, the order continued to grow, part of a larger growth trend among women's religious orders in the United States. In the postwar period, the number of Catholic sisters in the United States expanded rapidly as the Church positioned religious sisterhood as the highest honor for Catholic women and encouraged families to view a daughter entering the Church as a form of holy sacrifice.⁶⁷ In the mid-1950s, a new generation of women joined the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur. This new generation of sisters participated in the renewal of religious life and pushed the SNDN toward a religious identity as women active for peace and justice.

Sister Mary Cain was one of the sisters active in reforming the mission and identity of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur. Mary recounted a lifelong calling and commitment to religious life, beginning in childhood. When she was four years old, a relative asked her, "What do you want to be when you grow up?" While other young girls dreamt of being movie stars, ballerinas, or wives and mothers, Mary responded, "I'm going to be a sister."⁶⁸ As a sophomore in high school, she was "moony-

⁶⁵ Cummings, "'We Owe it to Our Sex as Well as Our Religion;'" Reilly, *Women of Courage*, vii. Trinity College is now known as Trinity Washington University. The Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur established foundations in Oregon and California in the 1847, forming the Western Province of the order.

⁶⁶ Reilly, *Women of Courage*, viii. The Maryland Province includes communities in Maryland, New York, Pennsylvania, Washington, D.C., North and South Carolina, Georgia, and Virginia. The province was originally headquartered in Ilchester, Maryland. In 2011, the Maryland Province merged with the Ohio Province of Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur due to a declining number of sisters. The Ohio Province of SNDN is currently headquartered in Cincinnati, Ohio.

⁶⁷ Ewens, "Women in the Convent," 17; Henold, *The Laywoman Project*, 17-28. The number of Catholic sisters in the United States grew dramatically during the postwar period. In 1950 there were 147,360 women religious in the U.S. and in 1965 this number reached its peak at 179,954. See Ebaugh, *Women in the Vanishing Cloister*, 46-47.

⁶⁸ Mary Cain, interview with author, September 25, 2020.

eyed...swooning, practically, over the life of Saint Therese of Lisieux who entered a Carmelite cloistered convent at a very early age.”⁶⁹ By 1956, at age seventeen, Mary sat in a classroom, her head covered with the white wimple worn by novices in the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur.⁷⁰ Trading her given name for the religious name Sister Joseph Magdalene, Mary entered into a period of intense study and prayer to prepare for life as a member of the Maryland Province of Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur.

Sister Katherine Corr was also a member of the generation of religious sisters active in reforming religious life. Recalling her decision to join the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, Sister Katherine reminisced that “it had all that kind of joy and challenge to it but...it was a simple sense of having a call...I was following God’s call.”⁷¹ Called in service to God and the Catholic Church, Sister Katherine joined the Maryland Province of SNDN in 1959. Like Mary Cain, and all other new sisters, she entered as a novice and began “a formation period...[to] learn a little more about prayer and scripture...learning how to meditate...and go a little deeper with the gospels.”⁷² For previous generations of religious sisters, training and education focused exclusively on religion and spirituality. With the creation of the Sister Formation Conference in the United States in 1954, however, many Catholic sisters began to pursue higher education to adequately prepare them for teaching positions.

The educational and spiritual reforms introduced by the Sister Formation Conference (SFC) in 1954 changed the shape of religious life for women in the United States and altered the outlook of an entire generation of Catholic religious sisters.

⁶⁹ Mary Cain, interview with author, September 30, 2020.

⁷⁰ Mary Cain, interview with author, September 25, 2020.

⁷¹ Sister Katherine Corr, interview with author, June 25, 2020.

⁷² Sister Katherine Corr, interview with author, June 25, 2020.

Established by a group of sisters from different religious orders active in the National Catholic Educational Association, the Sister Formation Conference worked to provide women religious with professional training.⁷³ During the SFC, sisters asserted that women religious, who had long held teaching positions in Catholic schools, required higher education and training to adequately prepare for the classroom.⁷⁴ As a result of the SFC, many religious orders — including the SNDN — incorporated higher education as a requirement for training newly professed sisters. Sisters could now pursue degrees in sociology, history, economics, and politics, and, by doing so, they gained new perspectives on issues they had seen first-hand in their work with students. These women connected personal observations on the suffering of the poor, the evils of racism, and social inequities with new knowledge of historic and sociological trends, the pervasiveness of social problems, and theories about ways to alleviate these ills.⁷⁵ Because of the SFC and the ensuing surge of higher education for women religious, many sisters developed an intellectual and theoretical understanding of the world that explained the need for their good works.

In addition to providing new educational opportunities enabling sisters to connect the conditions they observed in the lives of those they served with explanatory theories and histories, the Sister Formation Conference also sought to enrich the spiritual life of

⁷³ Henold, *Catholic and Feminist*, 20. Prior to the Sister Formation Conference women religious and clergy operated under the mentality that through the act of professing religious vows God automatically endowed sisters with the skills needed to complete work which she was previously professionally unprepared to do. See Judith Eby, “‘A Little Squabble Among Nuns?’ The Sister Formation Crisis and the Patterns of Authority and Obedience Among American Women Religious, 1954-1971” (PhD dissertation, St. Louis University, 2000), 55-57.

⁷⁴ Mary Beth Fraser Connolly, “Reaching Out to the People of God: The Implications of Renewal for the Sisters of Mercy in Parish Schools,” in *Empowering the People of God: Catholic Action Before and After Vatican II*, Jeremy Bonner, Mary Beth Fraser Connolly, and Christopher Denny, eds. (New York, NY: Fordham University Press, 2014), 177.

⁷⁵ Ewens, “Women in the Convent,” 35.

women religious. Developing a new theology and spirituality, the SFC promoted new understandings of the mission of women's religious orders. Originally, sisters' vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience served to remove them from society to allow greater focus on the spiritual or the divine.⁷⁶ As a result of the SFC, many sisters reconceptualized their vows using a more worldly outlook. They reformulated the vow of personal poverty, for instance, as a tool sisters could use to better serve the needy. Celibacy provided greater energy, mental space, and time to serve the underprivileged. They reinterpreted obedience to shift away from blind obedience to the all-male Church hierarchy and toward an obedience to the mission of the Church and the gospels.⁷⁷ By combining religious formation with professional training, the SFC envisioned a new mission for sisters, one reaching beyond the confines of convent life. Beginning in 1954, many women religious began to engage in a process of reform and a widening of both theological and educational perspectives.

As a result of the educational reforms the SFC instituted in 1954, members of the SNDN attended Trinity College in Washington D.C. to receive bachelor's degrees in education before beginning their teaching careers in Catholic schools. Mary Cain remembered she was a part of the second group of sisters to get a degree from Trinity College before entering the classroom.⁷⁸ For Mary, the time spent at Trinity was essential to broadening her understanding of the world, at times bringing her to topics outside those deemed appropriate for Catholic religious sisters. She recalled, "I just went nuts when I got to Trinity. We could roam around in the stacks at the library and read pretty

⁷⁶ Jo Ann McNamara, *Sisters in Arms: Catholic Nuns through Two Millennia* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996), 4.

⁷⁷ Ebaugh, *Women in the Vanishing Cloister*, 19-20; Eby, "'A Little Squabble Among Nuns?'" 195-96.

⁷⁸ Mary Cain, interview with author, September 25, 2020.

much whatever we wanted. I found a book by Simone Weil.”⁷⁹ A Christian anarchist and philosopher, Weil’s work explores the role of faith in remedying social injustice.⁸⁰

Mary’s superior chastised her when she read the book out loud to a group of sisters during dinner. The librarian overheard the reading and told Mary’s superior, “You can’t have that for reading! That’s on the Index of Forbidden Books.”⁸¹ Despite constraints on Catholic sisters, Mary gained exposure to radical thinkers through access to the college’s library while pursuing higher education.

Sister Katherine Corr also graduated with a degree in education from Trinity College before beginning her teaching career in Catholic schools. Her continued education, however, proved to be more influential in broadening her understanding of the world. In 1970, Sister Katherine attended graduate school at the New School of Social Research in New York City where she studied sociology.⁸² Reading works by Erving Goffman and Thomas Szasz as part of her coursework, Sister Katherine felt invigorated by these scholars’ understandings of shared humanity, something she experienced first-hand while working for Catholic Charities in the Bedford-Stuyvesant area of New York.⁸³ Describing her involvement with welfare rights activism through this

⁷⁹ Mary Cain, interview with author, September 25, 2020.

⁸⁰ Eric Springstead, “Introduction,” in *Simone Weil: Writings Selected* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1998), 11-29. Simone Weil, born an agnostic Jew, later deeply identified with the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church, but she never officially converted to Catholicism.

⁸¹ Mary Cain, interview with author, September 25, 2020. The Index of Forbidden Books or *Index Librorum Prohibitorum* was a list of books first compiled in 1577 by Pope Paul IV. Books on the list were deemed heretical or morally unfit by the Roman Catholic Church. Devout Catholics were forbidden from reading these books, with the risk of excommunication from the Church. Pope Paul VI abolished The Index for Forbidden Books in 1966 because the list contradicted the spirit of free inquiry encouraged by Vatican II. Many Catholic college and university libraries retained copies of forbidden books, but access required special permission. It is unclear how Mary Cain gained access to Weil’s work given its forbidden status. See Daniel Sheridan, “The Catholic Case: The Index of Prohibited Books,” *Journal of Hindu-Christian Studies* 19 (January 2006).

⁸² Sister Katherine Corr, interview with author, June 25, 2020.

⁸³ Sister Katherine Corr, interview with author, June 25, 2020. Sister Katherine specifically cited the works *Asylums* by Erving Goffman and *The Myth of Mental Illness* by Thomas Szasz as central to her

organization while in graduate school, she asserted these experiences “round[ed] out the formal education...at Trinity or the New School. This is the stuff of life and how it all relates. It was a very powerful formation.”⁸⁴ Sister Katherine’s education reinforced the work she conducted as part of her calling as a religious sister. Her formation as a religious sister involved a combination of scholarly, experiential, and spiritual pursuits and eventually motivated her to develop a distinct philosophy of peace and justice related to her experiences as a Catholic sister.

Sisters in the order also gained valuable experiences through the social aspects of higher education, experiences resulting from the new formation process for women religious inspired by the Sister Formation Conference. Sister Rosalie Murphy served as the director of the SNDN’s juniorate beginning in 1962 where she provided guidance to junior sisters who had completed their novitiate, professed temporary vows, and begun their work in the religious community. At the time, she was also a graduate student studying religious education at Catholic University in Washington, D.C.⁸⁵ She remembered her time at Catholic University as “very liberalizing. I began to be influenced by that experience. I was...meeting men and women religious from different congregations and hearing what they were thinking and doing.”⁸⁶ Not only was the intellectual experience of higher education influential for sisters, but the opportunity to interact with professors, students, and other vowed religious also profoundly impacted

experiences with higher education. See Erving Goffman, *Asylums: Essays on the Social Situations of Mental Patients and Other Inmates* (Chicago, IL: Aldine Publishing Company, 1962) and Thomas Szasz, *The Myth of Mental Illness: Foundations of a Theory of Personal Conduct* (New York, NY: Harper, 1961).

⁸⁴ Sister Katherine Corr, interview with author, June 25, 2020.

⁸⁵ Frederick Rasmussen, “Sister Rosalie Murphy, a Member of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, Dies,” *Baltimore Sun*, September 16, 2015.

⁸⁶ Sister Rosalie Murphy, quoted in Reilly, *Women of Courage*, 194. For more on the use of interview excerpts from *Women of Courage* see the Appendix.

the outlook of members of the SNDN. Sister Rosalie brought these perspectives and experiences with her as she worked as the director of juniors, shaping the religious and educational formation of newly professed sisters.

Beginning in 1964, sisters in the SNDN also began to work in the community as a part of their formation. Novices and postulants still in their formation period began assisting in low-income schools in Washington, D.C. as a way to introduce prospective or newly professed sisters to the “Christian gesture of service to the community.”⁸⁷ Sister Katherine fondly remembered this work as part of her formation. She taught at St. Martin’s school in Washington, D.C.’s Eckington neighborhood and recalled experiencing the thrill of being “right in the thick of things.”⁸⁸ Combining the intellectual and social experiences of higher education with hands-on work, members of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur experienced a broadening of awareness that they shared with their community. This broadening resulted from the changes the Sister Formation Conference initiated in religious life in 1954 and served as a step in the creation of the SNDN’s new identity based in advocacy for peace and justice.

While changes to religious life for women initiated by the Sister Formation Conference were profound, the changes to the Roman Catholic Church during the Second Vatican Council between 1962 to 1965 completely changed the lives of religious sisters. At the opening of the Vatican II Council, Pope John XXIII emphasized the Council’s nature as one of *aggiornamento*, an opening of the Church to create relationships with the

⁸⁷ “Postulants to Help in Public Schools,” *Catholic Transcript*, January 21, 1965. See also “Nuns End ‘Beautiful Job’ in D.C. Schools,” *Washington Post*, February 24, 1965; Reilly, *Women of Courage*, 32.

⁸⁸ Sister Katherine Corr, interview with author, June 25, 2020.

outside world.⁸⁹ The Second Vatican Council shifted the structure of Catholic Mass, changed the Church's hierarchy, and introduced new forms of engagement for Catholic laypeople.⁹⁰ The priest now delivered Mass in the congregation's vernacular language rather than in the traditional Latin, faced the congregation instead of the altar, and invited laypeople to participate in the Mass.⁹¹ Vatican II reformers insisted the Church engage in the modern world rather than shutting it out, and the institution began to invite lay people's participation and decision-making, vesting the faithful with an authority previously reserved only for members of the hierarchy.⁹² The Second Vatican Council encouraged a spirit of renewed engagement with laity and a new openness to interaction with the world outside of Catholicism.

Building on the reforms of the mid-1950s and responding to Pope John XXIII's call for religious renewal during the Second Vatican Council, the lives of religious sisters changed dramatically in 1965. Beginning in 1965, the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur had the option to wear casual clothing in place of the religious habit, move from convents to small group apartment living, and embark on new ministries in direct service to the

⁸⁹ Gillis, *Roman Catholicism in America*, 88. See also Carey, *Catholics in America*; Dolan, *The American Catholic Experience*.

⁹⁰ Carey, *Catholics in America*, 115-17; Jeremy Bonner, Jeffrey Burns, and Christopher Denny, introduction to *Empowering the People of God: Catholic Action Before and After Vatican II*, Jeremy Bonner, Christopher Denny, and Mary Beth Fraser Connolly, eds. (New York, NY: Fordham University Press, 2014), 5; Robert Orsi, *Between Heaven and Earth: The Religious Worlds People Make and the Scholars Who Study Them* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005), 52-54.

⁹¹ Gillis, *Roman Catholicism in America*, 90-92. The Second Vatican Council also inspired a number of other dramatic changes in the Roman Catholic Church. Before Vatican II, priests distributed Communion by placing the host directly on the recipient's tongue while after the Council the priest placed the wafer in the recipient's hand. After Vatican II, Mass was given in English and the laity were allowed to participate in Mass by singing, responding to communal prayers, and reading scriptures. These changes replaced the practice of the laity silently praying the rosary while the priest turned away from the congregation to face the altar as he recited Mass in Latin.

⁹² Gillis, *Roman Catholicism in America*, 90; Bonner, Burns, and Denny, introduction to *Empowering the People of God*, 6; Lizabeth Cohen, "Re-viewing the Twentieth Century through an American Catholic Lens," in *Catholics in the American Century: Recasting Narratives of U.S. History*, R. Scott Appleby and Kathleen Sprows Cummings, eds. (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2012), 58-59.

poor.⁹³ Vatican II reforms not only opened up religious life, but they also emphasized the dignity, rights, and morality of the individual sister.⁹⁴ While religious life once separated community ministry from a sister's sacred religious identity, the changes wrought by Vatican II brought sisters to an understanding of worldly work and religious identity as inseparable.⁹⁵ Inspired by these changes, Catholic sisters became active participants in a variety of movements for social change. Following Pope Paul VI's 1965 encyclical *Perfectae Caritatis*, sisters embraced their new autonomy and adapted their life, prayer, and work to meet the needs and outlook of individual women religious. *Perfectae Caritatis* urged sisters to consider "the necessities of the apostolate, the demands of culture, and [the] social and economic circumstances" of the communities they served.⁹⁶ The process of renewal for religious sisters, initiated by the Second Vatican Council's decrees led to a re-evaluation of religious life for Catholic sisters and a redefinition of community and mission. Many religious orders had already begun the process of renewal with their embrace of the Sister Formation Conference and the worldly involvement it entailed. Spurred further by Vatican II reforms, many religious sisters returned to their order's founding spirit and took up social ministries outside of teaching in Catholic schools.⁹⁷

Historians also recognize the Second Vatican Council as the awakening of a distinctly Catholic feminist movement. Catholic feminists interpreted their faith as

⁹³ Connolly, "Reaching Out to the People of God," 172; Gillis, *Roman Catholicism in America*, 96-97; Connolly, *Women of Faith*, 132.

⁹⁴ Connolly, *Women of Faith*, 132; Quiñonez and Turner, *The Transformation of American Catholic Sisters*, 113-14.

⁹⁵ Quiñonez and Turner, *The Transformation of American Catholic Sisters*, 35-39.

⁹⁶ Paul VI, *Perfectae Caritatis* (Vatican City: Vatican Press, October 28, 1965).

⁹⁷ Gillis, *Roman Catholicism in America*, 96; Kane, "Introduction," xxiii; Dolan, Appleby, Byrne, and Campbell, *Transforming Parish Ministry*, 159.

requiring advocacy for women's liberation. The feminism of these women originated within their Catholic faith, rather than the Catholic Church serving as the next space for the spread of secular feminist ideas.⁹⁸ Vatican II renewals served as the impetus for a Catholic feminist consciousness, as this period of reform in the Catholic Church gave women the opportunity to identify the source of their oppression and to envision the possibilities for change in this traditional institution.⁹⁹ Although Catholic feminists did not organize until the 1970s, a nascent Catholic feminist ideology formed in the 1960s. Early Catholic feminists, religious sisters among them, targeted an ideal of Catholic womanhood known as the "eternal woman."¹⁰⁰ The idea of the Catholic eternal woman gained traction in America in the 1950s, and called on women to cheerfully shoulder the burden of denial of the self the Church required of all practicing Catholics. Women were to remain confined to the private sphere and serve as models of sacrifice, domesticity, piety, and submission in order to fulfill the ideals of true Catholic womanhood.¹⁰¹ This ideal applied to all women, even women religious and single women, who were "encouraged to be 'spiritual mothers.'"¹⁰²

⁹⁸ Henold, *Catholic and Feminist*, 6.

⁹⁹ Henold, *Catholic and Feminist*, 23.

¹⁰⁰ Henold, *Catholic and Feminist*, 23.

¹⁰¹ Henold, *Catholic and Feminist*, 25-33. After World War II, when traditionally tight-knit ethnic Catholic communities began to Americanize and suburbanize, Catholics could no longer easily control women's behavior and Church officials became increasingly concerned with Catholic women's sexual morality. As a result of these fears, as well as the dominant culture's postwar obsession with women's domesticity, priests and laymen worked to re-define Catholic womanhood. Building from the 1934 writings of Gertrud Le Fort, in the 1950s American Catholics promoted the idea of women's duty to sacrifice body, mind, work, and personality for the sake of God and family. For more on the evolution of ideas of Catholic sacrifice, devotionism, motherhood, and eternal womanhood over time see Henold, *The Laywoman Project*, 17-28; Robert Orsi, *Thank You, St. Jude: Women's Devotion to the Patron Saint of Hopeless Causes* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1996), 92-93; Karen Kennelly, "Ideals of American Catholic Womanhood," in *American Catholic Women: A Historical Exploration*, Karen Kennelly, ed. (New York, NY: Macmillan, 1989), 1-16.

¹⁰² Henold, *Catholic and Feminist*, 29-30; Henold, *The Laywoman Project*, 25-26; Ewens, "Women in the Convent," 17.

The Vatican II Council's reforms and the opening of religious life for Catholic sisters changed the way many women understood their religious identity and their womanhood. Drawing on the Second Vatican Council's language of freedom of vocation for women religious, these women decried the "pious, suffering, *imaginary* being, 'Catholic woman'" and linked their faith with a new push for Catholic women's rights and liberation.¹⁰³ Religious sisters were no longer willing to define themselves solely in relation to men or to serve as "brides of Christ," "daughters of the Church," or "spiritual mothers."¹⁰⁴ Instead, they demanded definition on their own terms, and sought to enact their religious values as women dedicated to their own liberation and the pursuit of social justice.¹⁰⁵ The Maryland Province of Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur embodied the ideas of 1960s Catholic feminism, linking their faith with ideas about women's liberation, social justice, and peace while working to establish a new identity outside traditional understandings of the eternal Catholic woman.

The Maryland Province of Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur experienced the changes of Vatican II in their own distinct way. Sister Mary Hayes spoke of Vatican II as encouraging "religious communities to...get back to their roots, what we call the founding charism...we had to go...where our founders were, with the poor."¹⁰⁶ Sister Katherine also recalled her reorientation toward the foundress' vision during this period, working to fulfill the SNDN goal of "working with the poor in the most abandoned places."¹⁰⁷ For the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, the dictates of the Second Vatican

¹⁰³ Henold, *Catholic and Feminist*, 23; Kane, Keneally, and Kenelly, eds., *Gender Identity in American Catholicism*, 173.

¹⁰⁴ Quiñonez and Turner, *The Transformation of American Catholic Sisters*, 88-90.

¹⁰⁵ Quiñonez and Turner, *The Transformation of American Catholic Sisters*, 89-94; Henold, *Catholic and Feminist*, 85-86.

¹⁰⁶ Sister Mary Hayes, interview with author, September 1, 2020.

¹⁰⁷ Sister Katherine Corr, interview with author, June 25, 2020.

Council meant returning to their roots to work for those marginalized or abandoned by the broader society.

A return to the order's roots provided sisters with vocations beyond traditional teaching positions in parochial schools. Sisters had the option to engage in "two different kinds of work: direct service with the poor and...working more pastorally in the parishes."¹⁰⁸ For the first time, Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur could select the type of work they felt called to, instead of deferring to the male hierarchy to make decisions on their behalf. An article in *The Catholic Transcript* reported on a presentation by Sister Mary Daniel Turner, the superior for the Maryland Province of SNDN at the time, at a conference for sisters sponsored by the Washington Council for Women's Vocations in 1965. During the presentation, she spoke about "the disappearance of the assembly line image of the sister, and the appearance of the religious woman who takes responsibility for her own development."¹⁰⁹ Sisters were no longer at the beck and call of the all-male Catholic hierarchy; instead, they followed an individual calling and determined their own mission. Sister Mary Daniel also urged sisters to select their new responsibilities in accordance with "suggest[ed] principles which will have to be developed and applied by the individual communities."¹¹⁰ The submission to male superiors previously expected of sisters dramatically diminished, and a new emphasis on individual responsibility encouraged a new assertiveness among religious sisters.¹¹¹ Thus, Vatican II prompted the

¹⁰⁸ Sister Mary Hayes, interview with author, September 1, 2020.

¹⁰⁹ "New 'Openness' for Nuns Lauded," *Catholic Transcript*, December 17, 1965. Sister Mary Daniel Turner served as the Provincial Superior for the Maryland Province of SNDN from 1962 to 1969. She later served as the executive director of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR) from 1972 to 1978. See "Notre Dame Sister Mary Daniel Turner Dead at 84," *National Catholic Reporter*, January 28, 2010; Reilly, *Women of Courage*, 272.

¹¹⁰ "New 'Openness' for Nuns Lauded," December 17, 1965.

¹¹¹ Henold, *Catholic and Feminist*, 88.

Maryland Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur to take individual responsibility while also engaging with their larger community, an outlook that profoundly shaped the formation of their new institutional identity as determined women devoted to fighting injustice.

This period of intense change for sisters triggered a re-evaluation of the meaning of “community” for religious orders. Before Vatican II, the term “religious community” referred to religious orders like the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur living together in convents and observing rigid rules governing dress, cloister, and scheduled prayer. In the mid-1960s, sisters reoriented their definitions of community as a result of the previous decade of changes in religious life. Called the “new nuns,” young sisters who joined the Church in the 1950s and 1960s left the relatively circumscribed spaces of convents and Catholic parishes to instead work and live among non-Catholics.¹¹² These sisters found “merely living together under one roof, taking meals together, even conversing charitably together does not make ‘community.’”¹¹³ Instead, these women developed a new sense of community, by which they meant not just sisters “but all the people with whom they come in contact – students, lay faculty, workmen, visitors.”¹¹⁴ The Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur experienced this shift, changing their idea of community from one defined by “rigid routine” to a “recognition of ‘the fundamental right to be a free person, even in religious life’” and a new familiarity with individuals outside the religious order.¹¹⁵ Members of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur expanded their idea of who constituted their community, creating conditions ripe for the eventual peace action of individual sisters in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

¹¹² Koehlinger, *The New Nuns*, 2.

¹¹³ Michael Novak, “The New Nuns,” *Saturday Evening Post*, January 5, 1965.

¹¹⁴ Novak, “The New Nuns,” January 5, 1965.

¹¹⁵ Heck, “Sisters in the ‘70s,” August 21, 1970.

As sisters shifted the identity, mission, and community of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur throughout the 1960s, they frequently looked to the example of their foundress, Julie Billiart. The Church canonized Julie Billiart as a saint in 1969, and the process of canonization was an important tool the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur used to cement a Catholic feminist identity as women committed to fighting for social justice. Throughout the 1960s, sisters and their supporters worldwide petitioned the Pope to advance the cause of Julie Billiart, beatified in 1906, for inclusion in the canon of saints. Over 150 years after her death, the Congregation of Rites in Vatican City accepted the validity of the two miracles attributed to Julie Billiart, completing the last major step toward her sainthood.¹¹⁶ On June 22, 1969, officials hung a tapestry depicting Blessed Julie Billiart outside St. Peter's Basilica in the Vatican City as Pope Paul VI delivered the homily officially inducting Saint Julie to the register of saints.¹¹⁷

The process of Saint Julie's canonization reveals a great deal about the interests and motivations of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur. As the congregation participated in religious renewal, Julie Billiart's concern for the poor and marginalized influenced the formation of a new religious identity among SNDN. Saint Julie's canonization reinforced sisters' formation of an identity as women devoted to improving the lives of the poor.

¹¹⁶ "Beatification, Canonization Causes Advance," *Catholic News Service*, January 31, 1969. Canonization is a complicated process. A candidate is first beatified by the pope, affirming the individual lived a life of heroic virtue and that upon their death they moved into the company of God and the other saints. The beatified individual must have two miracles verified by the Church before they are officially canonized as a saint. Once canonized, the heavenly status of saints does not change but they move from private devotion to public veneration by the faithful. See Kathleen Sprows Cummings, *A Saint of Our Own: How the Quest for a Holy Hero Helped Catholics Become American* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2019), 5-6. The two miracles attributed to St. Julie that led to her canonization in 1969 were Otacilio Ribeiro, who was cured of an intestinal occlusion, and Homer Rhodius, who recovered from a coma.

¹¹⁷ Louis Panarale, "Bedridden Many Years: Woman Who Founded an Order Canonized," *Voice*, June 27, 1969; "Pope on Canonization of Saints," *Catholic News Service*, July 17, 1969.

The process of canonization institutionalized a previously personal devotion to Saint Julie and provided a model of holiness for the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur to emulate.¹¹⁸ By working for Saint Julie's canonization, the Sisters of Notre Dame institutionalized their commitment to the ideals of their foundress. Julie Billiard's sainthood emphasized the religious elements of a feminist and activist identity for sisters. As an intercessor between heaven and earth, one of God's chosen holy few, Saint Julie's example was deeply religious and imbued the activism of Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, undertaken in her name, with religious significance.

Julie Billiard's sainthood held gendered significance for the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur. Historian Kathleen Sprows Cummings writes, "Church leaders have long used models of female sanctity to contain and control women...and...Catholic women have, conversely, cited the example of female saints as justifications of expanding gender roles."¹¹⁹ While male leaders in the Catholic Church wanted religious sisters to remain meek, submissive, and in line with ideals of the eternal Catholic woman and sought to claim Saint Julie as an example of these traits, the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur cited their foundress as proof their increasing feminism and activism was part of a religious calling. At a dedication of a statue of Blessed Julie Billiard in 1965, Cardinal Richard Cushing, the archbishop of Boston, demonstrated this dynamic when he encouraged sisters to follow their foundress' example. Opposing the participation of SNDN in protests and civil rights demonstrations, the cardinal told the gathering, "I don't think you'll find in the story of Julie Billiard's life...[that] she went out on the highways and

¹¹⁸ Cummings, *A Saint of Our Own*, 4-6.

¹¹⁹ Cummings, *A Saint of Our Own*, 8.

byways.”¹²⁰ He followed his comment with a request that the assembled sisters “pray and work for the canonization of Blessed Julie. ‘And by that I don’t mean by carrying placards.’”¹²¹ Cardinal Cushing attempted to wield Julie Billiard’s impending sainthood as a mechanism for controlling the behavior of the sisters, using the life of their foundress to justify his belief that sisters belonged in Catholic classrooms rather than in the streets advocating for civil rights.

In contrast, the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur used Julie Billiard to justify their activism and an expanded role for religious sisters. Sisters in the Maryland Province of SNDN faced admonishments about their participation in civil rights activism similar to those delivered to the Boston sisters by Cardinal Cushing. Mary Cain remembered that when the Poor People’s Campaign, organized by the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), marched in Washington, D.C. in 1968, Church leaders explicitly barred the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur from participating. She recalled, “The bishop thought that he had the right to send around and tell us, that those...wild Sisters of Notre Dame of Namur were not to participate.”¹²² Despite these warnings, the sisters found ways to take part in the march. Mary laughingly remembered, “We found ways to do what needed doing without bringing about the downfall of the province.”¹²³ Emboldened by the new individual choice granted to sisters, members of the SNDN subverted traditional expectations of the submission of sisters to male authority within the Church.

The Maryland Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur explicitly connected their social justice activism to the ideals of their foundress to justify their budding activism. Julie

¹²⁰ “Nun-marchers Out of Place — Card. Cushing,” *National Catholic Reporter*, May 19, 1965.

¹²¹ “Nun-marchers Out of Place — Card. Cushing,” May 19, 1965.

¹²² Mary Cain, interview with author, October 14, 2020.

¹²³ Mary Cain, interview with author, September 30, 2020, 2.

Billiard, who became the patron saint of poverty and illness in 1969, expressed a deep and lasting commitment to assisting the poor that members of the Maryland Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur cited as a justification for their activism. Saint Julie showed special concern for the plight of the poor, working to change their circumstances through education. In 1808, as the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur were creating new educational institutions across Europe, Saint Julie wrote, “Take the poor, only the poor, the very poorest little girls who can’t pay you anything. Gather them in...because we exist first and foremost for them.”¹²⁴ Julie Billiard devoted her life to working for the poor in post-Revolutionary France, and also pledged her congregation in lifelong service to the poor, a commitment the order returned to following the Second Vatican Council.

Drawing on their foundress’ commitment to helping the poor, the Maryland Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur used Saint Julie’s example to bolster their activism. Mary Cain spoke of her strong identification with their foundress due to a shared working-class background. She felt drawn to Julie Billiard’s ideals because “she wasn’t exactly a farm peasant, but she wasn’t a rich woman...what appealed to me was that she was an ordinary kid off the street herself. I grew up with a lot of information that what we call more privileged — socially, economically — women wouldn’t have had.”¹²⁵ Identifying deeply with Blessed Julie, Mary stressed that through her activism she attempted to embody “the ideals of Julie, the foundress, and carr[y] that into...everyday life.”¹²⁶ Mary Cain worked to enact the principles of the foundress by participating in political activism. She stretched the boundaries of traditional Catholic sisterhood and

¹²⁴ Letter from Julie Billiard to Sister St. Jean, September 1808, quoted in Mary Linscott, *To Heaven on Foot* (Glasgow: Burns, 1969).

¹²⁵ Mary Cain, interview with author, September 25, 2020.

¹²⁶ Mary Cain, interview with author, September 25, 2020.

justified civil rights activism forbidden by male Church leaders by citing the example of a devout, and eventually sainted, Catholic sister.

Sister Katherine also relied on the ideals of the foundress to explain her increased political activism in the late 1960s. Describing her decision to volunteer to teach poor people to read outside her normal teaching duties at a suburban Catholic school in Georgia, Sister Katherine said, “See that’s working with the poor. The Sisters of Notre Dame one of our slogans is ‘Working with the poor in the most abandoned places.’ So that just would fit right in.”¹²⁷ Sister Katherine explicitly called on the motto of the SNDN, developed by Julie Billiart, to explain the activity that served as a catalyst for her involvement with political activism and the expansion of her work beyond her traditional duties as a Catholic sister. Even as male clergy used the foundress’ sainthood to bar the Sisters of Notre Dame from participating in political protest, the sisters themselves drew on an understanding of Blessed Julie as a brave woman devoted to social justice to understand and sustain activities that stretched traditional ideas of the proper place for Catholic religious sisters.

As a result of religious life’s transformation in the 1950s and 1960s, women religious returned to their founding charism and engaged in apostolic work incorporating a broader sense of community. For the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, this meant direct work with the poor. Through their work with the poor, sisters gained new understandings of race, poverty, and religion that awakened individual sisters to systems of injustice operating in society. Sister Mary Hayes asserted that for activist sisters “awareness of injustice, systemic injustice, began through the civil rights movement and then along

¹²⁷ Sister Katherine Corr, interview with author, June 25, 2020.

came [the] Vietnam [War] and what you had was a critical intersection: Vietnam and racial injustice...that was how people got involved.”¹²⁸ Within the larger context of changing life for women religious, activist sisters pinpointed specific events that raised their consciousness to the way war, racial injustice, and poverty intertwined into a system of oppression.

Mary Cain described the work she did to supplement her teaching career in the early 1960s as her entry point into work for racial justice. Living in a convent at North Capitol and K Streets in Northeast Washington, D.C., and teaching at the Academy of Notre Dame, Mary described the contrast between the predominately white Academy and the surrounding Black neighborhoods. The students in the school “didn’t come from the neighborhood, their parents drove them in” from the suburbs.¹²⁹ This resulted in “students who didn’t know anything about the neighborhood. All you had to do was cross the street and you were surrounded by poverty.”¹³⁰ Mary noticed the disparity between community members and her students, but it was through her connections with other sisters that she became involved in community activism.

In 1965, during her time at the Academy of Notre Dame, Mary Cain connected with a sister named Mary Leo Vincelette who fostered Mary’s engagement with

¹²⁸ Sister Mary Hayes, interview with author, September 1, 2020.

¹²⁹ Mary Cain, interview with author, September 30, 2020. An all-girls school, the Academy of Notre Dame in Washington, D.C. was founded in 1873 and originally served the city’s largely white, immigrant Catholic population. In 1950, the academy integrated, allowing the admission of two Black students. By the early 1960s, white flight to the suburbs changed the neighborhood makeup, and D.C.’s Southeast and NoMa neighborhoods grew increasingly economically and racially segregated. This resulted in relatively affluent, middle-class students being driven in from the suburbs to attend the Catholic all-girls school in a largely Black, working-class neighborhood. For more on the history of the Academy of Notre Dame see Reilly, *Women of Courage*, 5. For more on urban policy and racial and economic segregation in Washington, D.C. see Chris Myers Asch and George Derek Musgrove, *Chocolate City: A History of Race and Democracy in the Nation’s Capital* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2017); Howard Gillette Jr., *Between Justice and Beauty: Race, Planning, and the Failure of Urban Policy in Washington, D.C.* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006).

¹³⁰ Mary Cain, interview with author, September 30, 2020.

community activism.¹³¹ She spoke of Sister Mary Leo's involvement with a homeless woman named Mary Etheredge and her five children. One day Mary Etheredge approached Sister Mary Leo for help at the bus stop in front of the convent.¹³² Sister Mary Leo "spent a week going with the mother to various social service agencies" but one day Mary Etheredge collapsed on the street. "Sister Mary Leo went to the hospital, and it was discovered that [Mary Etheredge] died of malnutrition. She was literally starved because anything she could get she gave to her children."¹³³ This experience illustrated the dire stakes of poverty and drove several members of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur to action. In the aftermath of Mary Etheredge's death, Sister Mary Leo was angry that "welfare services [were] so fragmented that no one stepped across bureaucratic boundaries when people were in trouble."¹³⁴ Mary Cain recalled that witnessing Mary Etheredge's death by starvation drove Sisters Mary Leo and Marjorie Shuman to become involved with advocacy for better welfare services and to create their own community service programs.¹³⁵ Financed by the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Sister Mary Leo created a "talk-time" tutoring program for toddlers and

¹³¹ Mary Cain, interview with author, September 30, 2020. Sister Mary Leo Vincelette was a part-time teacher at the Notre Dame Academy in Washington, D.C., and the director of the Walker-Jones Area Community Action Program. See "Postulants to Help in Public Schools," January 21, 1965; "Pupils Enjoy Sisters' Summer School," *Washington Post*, July 13, 1964. Sister Mary Leo was also involved in civil rights activism, participating in a march from Selma to Montgomery in 1965. See "Catholic Prelates Deplore Tragedy of Selma," *Voice*, March 19, 1965.

¹³² Russell Shaw, "Washington Examines Its Conscience Because Mary Etheredge is Dead," *National Catholic Reporter*, June 2, 1965; Helen Dewar, "No Help Available When Needed for Homeless Mother, 5 Children," *Washington Post*, April 11, 1965; Helen Dewar, "300 at Funeral for Mary Etheredge," *Washington Post*, April 21, 1965.

¹³³ Mary Cain, interview with author, September 30, 2020; Shapiro, "Mary Scoblick," January 14, 1972. An article in *The National Catholic Reporter* reports Mary Etheredge's official cause of death as a blood clot in her lung. See Shaw, "Washington Examines Its Conscience Because Mary Etheredge is Dead," June 2, 1965.

¹³⁴ Dewar, "No Help Available When Needed for Homeless Mother, 5 Children," April 11, 1965.

¹³⁵ Mary Cain, interview with author, September 30, 2020.

Project Summer Education and Enrichment Center for school-aged children.¹³⁶ Mary Cain “trod along with them. I thought...these ladies know stuff I don’t know...I better go learn something.”¹³⁷ In the early 1960s, Sister Mary Leo became involved in activism as a result of her firsthand view of poverty and brought her sisters Mary Cain and Marjorie Shuman along with her.

After this experience, the sisters expanded their activism and began providing community services to local Black teenagers in Washington, D.C. Marjorie Shuman befriended a young man who requested the sisters’ help in providing evening entertainment in the community. As a result, Sisters Marjorie Shuman, Mary Cain, and Beverly Bell started Friday night dances for the neighborhood’s young people in the Catholic school auditorium.¹³⁸ This led the sisters to cultivate deeper relationships with the community. Mary Cain remembered, “Through the dances and meeting young people we found out how very many of them were talented musically,” leading the sisters to support community members in producing a concert series.¹³⁹ Echoing Saint Julie Billiart’s desire to nourish the minds and spirits as well as the bodies of the underserved, these sisters produced fun and recreation for an impoverished community in addition to working to satisfy their basic needs. Working with Black communities in the poorest neighborhoods in Washington, D.C., Mary Cain and her sisters came to deeper understandings of the interconnectedness of poverty and racism in the United States and

¹³⁶ “Talk-Time Tutors Inner-City Tots,” *Catholic Advocate*, March 3, 1966; Reilly, *Women of Courage*, 216.

¹³⁷ Mary Cain, interview with author, September 30, 2020.

¹³⁸ Mary Cain, interview with author, September 30, 2020.

¹³⁹ Mary Cain, interview with author, September 30, 2020; Reilly, *Women of Courage*, 216.

worked to assist their neighbors by providing opportunities for recreation and human dignity.

The connections between war and the poverty and racial injustice sisters saw firsthand began to solidify for Mary Cain, Sister Beverly Bell, Sister Susan Davis, and Sister Marjorie Shuman during their time as teachers at the Martin de Porres Center in Baltimore. Activism on behalf of the poor was previously a supplemental work of mercy for the sisters, but by the late 1960s, multiple members of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur adopted work at the Martin de Porres Community Center as their main form of religious service. The Martin de Porres Center evolved out of a summer camp for children from Baltimore's segregated neighborhoods developed by Sisters Beverly Bell and Susan Davis in 1963.¹⁴⁰ In 1965, Sister Beverly expanded the program into an "alternative educational program" for children in the Latrobe Homes Public Housing Project.¹⁴¹ It was important to the sisters that they respond to community needs and so "the first thing [they] did was go through the neighborhood and talk to all kinds of people...Everyone said that the thing that was needed most was education. The people couldn't read and they couldn't do math."¹⁴² Responding to these needs, the sisters set up programs in reading, history, math, and science as well as a preschool service and program for mothers.¹⁴³ In addition to the five sisters on the faculty, the Center also employed individuals from the neighborhood as teachers and worked to create a space

¹⁴⁰ Reilly, *Women of Courage*, 216.

¹⁴¹ Reilly, *Women of Courage*, 216; Sherbourne Everett, "Martin de Porres: Center to Launch New Program," *Baltimore Sun*, April 28, 1967. The Martin de Porres Center was located at 908 Valley Street in Baltimore.

¹⁴² Sister Beverly Bell quoted in Reilly, *Women of Courage*, 217.

¹⁴³ Reilly, *Women of Courage*, 217-18.

defined and led by the community they served.¹⁴⁴ The Center was officially incorporated as a school by the state of Maryland in 1968, receiving financial support from both the Baltimore Diocese and Catholic Charities. The Center advanced a mission “to promote the educational and social advancement of all people, but especially those who are economically and socially handicapped.”¹⁴⁵ As teachers at the Martin de Porres Center, activist sisters in the SNDN awakened to the ways poverty and racism intersected with U.S. militarism during the Vietnam War.

Sister Beverly traced her peace activism directly to her involvement with the Martin de Porres Center. “[W]e began to make all the connections,” she later reported, “between the poverty in the city, the Vietnam War, what was happening at Kent State — the whole picture opened up with all the connections.”¹⁴⁶ Marjorie Shuman also formed an understanding of the interconnected axes of injustice while at Martin de Porres. Through her work with the Center, she met other Catholic activists working for the poor in Baltimore, like the Berrigan brothers and members of the Catholic Worker community. In conversation with these activists, Marjorie began to see “that what we were doing was only Band-Aid work, that if we really wanted to do something, we would have to ask ourselves the question ‘Why are there ghettos and who is the real oppressor?’”¹⁴⁷ As a result of their work with the community and their firsthand view of poverty and racism in

¹⁴⁴ Reilly, *Women of Courage*, 217. The faculty for the Martin de Porres Center included Sisters Beverly Bell, Marjorie Shuman, Susan Davis, Virginia Bruder, and Mary Cain. In an effort at community self-determination, the sisters hired a Black man named Roscoe Herring to serve as the Center’s director in 1969. It is likely the sisters learned this approach to community organizing, one centering community and individual self-determination, from their academic work, as many of the sisters involved with starting the Martin de Porres Center studied sociology and history.

¹⁴⁵ Mission Statement of the Martin de Porres Center, 1969, quoted in Reilly, *Women of Courage*, 216-17.

¹⁴⁶ Sister Beverly Bell quoted in Reilly, *Women of Courage*, 218.

¹⁴⁷ Cook, “The Troubled, Uneasy World of the Women in the Berrigan Case,” May 26, 1971.

Baltimore, these sisters began to view the U.S. government as a perpetrator of violence and oppression both at home and abroad.

Mary Cain spelled out exactly how her experiences at the Martin de Porres Center awoke her to the ways poverty and racism were interwoven with war. She remembered the Center “was where poverty and the war came together for me.”¹⁴⁸ Mary came to the Martin de Porres Center in April 1968, shortly after the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr. During unrest in the city following King’s murder, the Baltimore Diocese did not let sisters stay in their Baltimore convents overnight. During the day, Mary and the sisters “came over in droves...to help, whatever people needed in the neighborhood, giving out food and taking care of people.”¹⁴⁹ Seeing firsthand the devastation caused by poverty and racism, Mary also saw the way the Vietnam War disproportionately affected Black families. While working at the Martin de Porres Center, Mary met a local Black woman who had two sons serving in the military but did not know where they were stationed. Mary immediately thought, “That ain’t right. She’s their mother! Who is anybody to send them off somewhere, what if they don’t know where they are? This is wrong. It got me...kind of flabbergasted at first that such a thing could be.”¹⁵⁰ This situation, in contrast with the draft exemptions she saw granted to the wealthy and elite, inspired Mary to take action for peace.¹⁵¹ She expressed an understanding of capitalism as the root of war and violence in society, saying the causes of war are “always money and power.”¹⁵² Her experiences aiding community members in Baltimore awakened her

¹⁴⁸ Mary Cain, interview with author, September 30, 2020.

¹⁴⁹ Mary Cain, interview with author, September 30, 2020.

¹⁵⁰ Mary Cain, interview with author, September 25, 2020.

¹⁵¹ Mary Cain, interview with author, October 7, 2020.

¹⁵² Mary Cain, interview with author, October 14, 2020.

to the disproportionate impact of the Vietnam War on poor Black communities and lamented the government's pursuit of an imperialist war abroad rather than devoting resources to aid their citizens.

Sister Katherine also connected her work with the poor to activism for peace and racial justice. In 1967, the order sent Sister Katherine to Atlanta, Georgia to teach at St. Pius X High School. While at St. Pius, she participated in efforts to desegregate the all-white, suburban Catholic high school.¹⁵³ St. Pius was near “a small neighborhood that [was] all very poor Black people...[with] no electricity,” and Sister Katherine went there every day after school to teach.¹⁵⁴ Volunteering her time outside the classroom to provide adult literacy education, Sister Katherine cited her work with the poor as her initiation to greater political involvement. As a result of her work with impoverished communities, she and another sister got involved with Emmaus House, an Episcopal Center committed to providing resources to promote the economic and social well-being of the community.¹⁵⁵ In 1968, her anti-poverty work morphed into political and labor organizing. Sister Katherine participated in Southern Christian Leadership Conference voter registration drives and a “garbage strike because some of our folks [who we tutored] were garbage workers.”¹⁵⁶ By fulfilling a religious mission to work with the poor, Sister Katherine became further involved in labor organizing and civil rights activism.

¹⁵³ Sister Katherine Corr, interview with author, June 25, 2020.

¹⁵⁴ Sister Katherine Corr, interview with author, June 25, 2020.

¹⁵⁵ Sister Katherine Corr, interview with author, June 25, 2020.

¹⁵⁶ Sister Katherine Corr, interview with author, June 25, 2020. For more on the SCLC sponsored sanitation workers strike in 1968 see Gordon Keith Mantler, *Power to the Poor: Black-Brown Coalition and the Fight for Economic Justice, 1960-1974* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2013), 212-16.

Sister Katherine's peace activism snowballed from her labor and civil rights activism. She asserted, "I think the really critical piece there was SCLC...That's really where the formation happened about Vietnam and peace...there I [was involved in] civil rights, voter registration, and then the garbage strike. I was participating in all that but see if you get into something one question leads to the next question leads to the next."¹⁵⁷ Once she awakened to one form of suffering and injustice in the world, she began to see interconnected injustices. Looking back, she expressed her original wariness of the peace movement, "I did not want to convert to getting involved with Vietnam because my brother [was] there [serving as a Marine], but lo and behold there just comes that nudge from God, it's all connected."¹⁵⁸ Despite her desire to avoid peace activism, Sister Katherine spoke of the way prayer, meditation, and reading showed her the systemic nature of injustice and caused her to act on her conviction. For Sister Katherine, a personal awakening to systems of injustice resulted from her religious calling to work to ease the suffering of the poor. Activity in the peace movement embodied the sisters' recognition of interconnected axes of injustice.

These sisters brought their personal awakening to the interrelated nature of poverty, racism, and war to the larger community of the Maryland Province of Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur and, in doing so, shaped the creation of a new institutional mission for peace and justice. After the changes to religious life encouraged by the Sister Formation Conference and the Second Vatican Council, the sisters, as a community of like-minded women, reformulated their mission as a religious order to incorporate ideals

¹⁵⁷ Sister Katherine Corr, interview with author, June 25, 2020. For more on the SCLC's involvement in and perspectives on anti-Vietnam War activism see Simon Hall, *Peace and Freedom: The Civil Rights and Antiwar Movements in the 1960s* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005).

¹⁵⁸ Sister Katherine Corr, interview with author, June 25, 2020.

of peace and justice. This institutional reformation is illustrated in three acts: the creation of a Reflection Center at Trinity College, the 1970 conference for SNDN at Trinity College, and the revision of the SNDN mission statement.

The Reflection Center, founded in 1971 by Sister Sarah Fahy at Trinity College, consisted of a group of sisters who met monthly to discuss issues of peace and social justice. Sister Mary Hayes, a member of the group, cited individual awareness as a significant factor in the creation of the group: “We were becoming more and more aware of the Catholic social justice tradition.”¹⁵⁹ Sister Mary described the group’s mission as “looking at and reflecting on and trying to understand the reality of social injustice and always using the framework of the Catholic Social Tradition.”¹⁶⁰ The Catholic Social Tradition calls its followers to live the gospel values in their everyday lives, a tradition wholeheartedly embraced by Dorothy Day’s Catholic Worker Movement in the 1930s.¹⁶¹ Both an understanding of the gospels and the mechanisms at play in society were crucial to the work undertaken by these sisters. Through prayer, discussion, and community, this group of women “expanded [their] awareness of injustice of all kinds, and how to address that injustice through the gospel.”¹⁶²

The group focused their energies on understanding how their religious order could act to combat injustice in society. Sister Mary described the Reflection Center as involving a reciprocal relationship between the individual and the larger community.

¹⁵⁹ Sister Mary Hayes, interview with author, September 1, 2020.

¹⁶⁰ Sister Mary Hayes, interview with author, September 1, 2020.

¹⁶¹ For more on the Catholic Social Tradition and the major contributions of Dorothy Day, Thomas Merton, and others in the Catholic Worker Movement see James Fisher, *The Catholic Counterculture in America, 1933-1962* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1989); Piehl, *Breaking Bread*; Kennelly, *American Catholic Women*, 180-81. For more on the social justice tradition and the ministry of the new nuns see Henold, *Catholic and Feminist*, 85-86; Ebaugh, *Women in the Vanishing Cloister*, 145; Kenneally, *The History of American Catholic Women*, 199.

¹⁶² Sister Mary Hayes, interview with author, September 1, 2020.

Speaking of Sister Katherine's later peace activism, Sister Mary remembered, "Things that she did were influenced by the Reflection Center and she influenced the Reflection Center. Her activism was very important for us."¹⁶³ While discussion and social analysis led to direct action for some sisters, Sister Mary recounted that it "influenced my teaching, my awareness. I started teaching African American history at Trinity in 1968...certainly, we were all influenced in one way or another by the Reflection Center."¹⁶⁴ Bringing individual understandings of injustice formulated through direct service in the community, sisters used the Reflection Center as a community space to create a philosophy of social justice informed by their activism, and these new understandings, in turn, shaped their continued activism.

The Reflection Center highlights the interplay between individual activism and larger, community understandings of peace and justice. The Reflection Center served as an intermediary community, one where sisters worked together to formulate an awareness of systems of injustice. These small group conversations parallel larger patterns of awareness of injustice among the Maryland Province of Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur. These conversations and the formation of an identity based in social justice were occurring at the same time as larger conversations regarding the mission of the order. These dynamics reveal changes to the religious life and mission of the SNDN resulted from activity at the grassroots level and were not imposed from above by Church

¹⁶³ Sister Mary Hayes, interview with author, September 1, 2020. Sister Mary incorrectly placed Sister Katherine's participation in the prayer raids at the White House in 1971, before the founding of the Reflection Center. According to newspaper accounts of the pray-ins and Sister Katherine's own recounting of the events, her peace action took place in July 1973, two years after the founding of the Reflection Center. This error speaks to the centrality of Sister Katherine's activism to the group, to the point where Sister Mary cited it as an event leading to the founding of the Reflection Center.

¹⁶⁴ Sister Mary Hayes, interview with author, September 1, 2020. Sister Mary also spoke of the community organizing of Sister Maryann Gillespie in Tennessee and Sister Dorothy McCormick's teaching in Kenya as resulting from the discussions held at the Reflection Center between 1971 and the mid-1980s.

officials. The sisters themselves were agents of change for their religious order, experiencing personal awakenings to injustice, discussing these issues in a formal community composed of their sisters, and then bringing these conversations into the larger sphere of religious life.

The Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur called a conference at Trinity College in 1970 to discuss the order's corporate mission for the new decade; it reflects the relationship between individual consciousness and community understandings of systemic injustice. The conference, which took place over three weeks in August 1970, welcomed Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur from around the world for a discussion of the relationship between the religious order and the secular world.¹⁶⁵ Accounts of the conference proceedings show the process of aligning religious community life with the raised consciousness of individual sisters within the religious order. This conference was one of many discussions and meetings held by the order in the late 1960s and early 1970s, and it demonstrates the larger patterns and procedures that went into the process of religious renewal and reorientation toward a ministry of peace and justice for the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur.

During the meeting, tensions over the meaning of religious sisterhood came to the fore. More traditional sisters questioned sisters who took "radical missions in the inner city," as traditional sisters found "it hard to understand how Sisters [could] do this and still consider themselves Sisters."¹⁶⁶ These more traditional sisters argued that providing direct service to the poor did not fit with the educational and teaching mission of the

¹⁶⁵ Linda Major, "Sisters of Notre Dame Look Inward to Grow Outward," *Catholic News Service*, August 26, 1970.

¹⁶⁶ Major, "Sisters of Notre Dame Look Inward to Grow Outward," August 26, 1970.

Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur as it existed before the Vatican II council. Through discussion and group prayer, the conference served as a step in the process of renewing the religious order's mission and identity, as "the group expressed a real 'need to relate Christian values to real problems' and to use Sisters' talents on a priority basis according to people's needs."¹⁶⁷ By 1970, the SNDN incorporated individual conviction into a larger identity and idea of community life. Attendees stated there "was an awakening at this meeting," an opening up to the outside world and a recognition of the ways radical thought and terminology fit with their religious mission and pledge to renew their founding charism.¹⁶⁸ The 1970 conference reflects the eagerness of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur to participate in the process of renewal, including a renewal of the order's mission as a result of sisters' individual experiences.

At the same time that the international order of Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur came together to create a new corporate mission devoted to social justice, the Maryland Province of SNDN underwent its own reorientation. In 1970, after a year of evaluation as part of an Assessment of Life and Works mandated by the Special General Chapter of SNDN, the Maryland Province developed a new mission statement. The process of evaluation involved visits to all active ministries and reports by sisters on their work.¹⁶⁹ This process illustrates the influence of individual sisters' experiences on the larger corporate mission of the Maryland Province. The 1949 Constitutions of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur stated that sisters were "destined to primarily prepare children for their First Communion and for Confirmation, and to train them in Christian virtues." The

¹⁶⁷ Major, "Sisters of Notre Dame Look Inward to Grow Outward," August 26, 1970.

¹⁶⁸ Major, "Sisters of Notre Dame Look Inward to Grow Outward," August 26, 1970; Heck, "Sisters in the '70s," August 21, 1970.

¹⁶⁹ Reilly, *Women of Courage*, 269.

sisters were supposed to conduct this mission “subject to the Ordinary of the Diocese and in accord with the pastors.”¹⁷⁰ Although the Constitutions note service to the poor, they also stress that this service was secondary to the teaching mission of the sisters.

Submission to male authority was also a strong element of these edicts, and sisters were forbidden from altering their activities without explicit permission from the Catholic hierarchy.

By 1970, there were so many sisters in the Maryland Province involved in direct service to the poor, political activism, or other work outside of the traditional Catholic classroom that the order needed to re-evaluate their mission statement. The new mission statement asserted: “We, the Sisters of the Maryland Province commit ourselves to work together and with others towards transformation of our society’s fundamentally materialistic value-base, which fosters such problems as poverty, racism and violence, into a value system rooted in the Gospel.”¹⁷¹ Emphasizing that Catholicism required the faithful to ease human suffering, these sisters positioned themselves as crusaders for social justice committed to tackling systems of oppression rooted in capitalism. By 1970, the SNDN codified peace and justice as central to their mission, faith, and identity as women religious.

Taken together, these events served as the culmination of seventeen years of change and renewal among the SNDN. By 1971, the sisters solidified a specific Catholic feminist identity as courageous women devoted to working for justice in an effort to alleviate human suffering. This identity resulted from changes in sisters’ access to higher

¹⁷⁰ *Constitutions of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur* (Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, 1949), 1-2.

¹⁷¹ Mission Statement of the Maryland Province of Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, 1970, quoted in Reilly, *Women of Courage*, 269.

education, a new opening of religious life, and the individual awakenings of sisters working directly with the poor and for racial justice in the 1960s. These factors converged in the late 1960s, with the renewal of religious life, and by 1971 these women cemented a distinct identity as a community of women religious committed to fighting systemic injustice and pursuing peace. In centering their mission in peace and justice, these women understood issues of poverty, racism, and militarism as interconnected and resulting from larger economic and social systems. This renewed religious identity and mission motivated individual activist sisters in the Maryland Province of Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur to take radical action for peace during the Vietnam War.

Chapter Two: Radical Peace Activism and the Vietnam War, 1968-1973

“Religious women challenge the church to be true to itself. Religious women dare other women to step forward and be themselves. Religious women challenge men to step back and look at themselves.”¹⁷²

At nine o’clock in the morning on July 6, 1973, four Catholic religious sisters joined the line for a public tour of the White House. The sisters, dressed in casual clothes, easily blended in with the tourists clamoring to see the antiques decorating President Richard Nixon’s White House. Twenty-five minutes after the house opened, Sisters Katherine Corr, Beverly Bell, Cita Lamb, and Judith LaFemina stepped out of the tour line, moved aside the velvet rope, and knelt on the rug in the White House main hall. One sister calmly announced, “We are here to pray...that the bombing in Cambodia will stop.” She invited the tour group to join them before launching into the Lord’s Prayer.¹⁷³ Arrested for unlawful entry, the four sisters, all members of the Maryland Province of Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, had just triggered thirty-seven days of “pray-ins” at the White House to protest the bombing of Cambodia. Their protest attracted the attention of the Community for Creative Non-Violence (CCNV) and the Catholic Peace Fellowship (CPF), and activists from these groups flocked to D.C. to join the protests. Over the course of the summer, police arrested nearly one hundred individuals, both Catholic and non-Catholic, for praying at the White House.¹⁷⁴

Historians have framed the activism of Catholic religious sisters with these women as part of a larger, male-dominated story of Catholic organizing for peace. No scholarship, however, analyzes how Catholic women religious participated in peace

¹⁷² Religious Women...A Special Breed brochure, late 1970s, UNDA.

¹⁷³ Albert Sehlstedt, Jr., “4 Nuns Arrested in White House,” *Baltimore Sun*, July 7, 1973.

¹⁷⁴ Mike Murphy, “Prayer Raids,” *Catholic Peace Fellowship Bulletin*, October 1973, Box 1, Folder 10, Catholic Peace Fellowship Records, UNDA.

activism as religious sisters belonging to a larger community of women. The Maryland Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur did not embark on peace activism as a religious order; rather, individual sisters within the order engaged in peace organizing. Despite the individual nature of their peace protest, activists in the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur drew upon the teachings of their religious community during the Vietnam War to deploy a distinct philosophy of peace grounded in their identity as Catholic sisters.

Understanding peace as intimately intertwined with their identities as Catholic women religious, these sisters used the all-woman spaces and networks of their religious order to sustain and support their work for peace, defending their activism against those who viewed their actions as outside the traditional roles of Catholic sisters and ultimately shaping the form and content of mixed-gender Catholic organizing for peace. In addition to “praying-in” at the White House, Maryland Province sisters were members of the Catholic Left who raided draft boards to destroy Selective Service files. The Maryland Province of SNDN provides a fascinating entry point for understanding the peace activism of religious sisters within the broader context of Catholic peace organizing.

In both popular and scholarly imagination, the Catholic peace movement remains dominated by male clergy. Historians have studied the impact of the Catholic peace movement in detail, but remain focused on the charismatic presence of Daniel and Philip Berrigan, priests who gained prominence for their participation in the destruction of draft files in Catonsville, Maryland in 1968.¹⁷⁵ Historians who do seek to move beyond the

¹⁷⁵ A number of historians have studied the historical impact of the Catholic peace movement by examining the prominent activism of the Berrigan brothers. See Meconis, *With Clumsy Grace*; Au, *The Cross, the Flag, and the Bomb*; Piehl, *Breaking Bread*; McNeal, *Harder Than War*; Mollin, *Radical Pacifism in Modern America*, 162-81; Mark Stephen Massa, *The American Catholic Revolution: How the Sixties Changed the Church Forever* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 103-28; Peters, *The Catonsville Nine*.

celebrity of the Berrigans in the Catholic Left mainly focus on the participation of laypeople in Catholic movements for peace.¹⁷⁶ Only one major study focuses exclusively on the role and treatment of women in the Catholic Left. Historian Marian Mollin argues that in the 1960s women occupied a conflicted and often subordinate position in the Catholic Left, one leading to their participation in the women's liberation movement in the 1970s.¹⁷⁷ Mollin's work remains focused on laywomen, however, and does not interrogate the position or unique identity of Catholic women religious in this movement. Scholars study the activism of religious sisters through individual biography or with these women as characters in a larger, male-dominated story of Catholic organizing for peace.¹⁷⁸ No scholarship reveals or explores how Catholic religious sisters participated in peace activism as *religious sisters*, examining how their identity as Catholic women religious who were a part of a larger community of like-minded women shaped their activism. Filling a noticeable gap in the scholarship, this chapter examines the way religious identity motivated the peace activism of Catholic religious sisters during the Vietnam War and how their participation in this movement profoundly shaped the contours of the larger Catholic peace movement.

A study of activist sisters in their context as members of the supportive, all-woman community of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, illuminates the gender

¹⁷⁶ For examinations of the role of lay Catholics and a focus toward "on the ground" activism rather than leadership in the Catholic peace movement see Penelope Adams Moon, "'Peace on Earth, Peace in Vietnam': The Catholic Peace Fellowship and Antiwar Witness, 1964-1976," *Journal of Social History* 36, no. 4 (Summer 2003); Penelope Adams Moon, "'We Have Got to Lead Them in the Ways of Peace': The Catholic Peace Fellowship in the Vietnam Era" (PhD dissertation, Arizona State University, 2001); Moon, "Loyal Sons and Daughters of God?"

¹⁷⁷ Mollin, "Communities of Resistance," 31.

¹⁷⁸ See Peters, *The Catonsville Nine* for an exploration of the activism of Sister Elizabeth McAlister as part of his collective biography of the Catonsville Nine. For an example of women religious as characters in a larger narrative of a male-dominated Catholic Left see Meconis, *With Clumsy Grace*.

dynamics of the Catholic peace movement. Activist sisters drew on a Catholic feminist idea of sisters as exemplary women fighting for social justice and understood their peace activity as part of a sacred religious calling inherent in their mission as sisters of the order of Notre Dame de Namur. These sisters leveraged the support they received in their all-women organization to participate in mixed-gender organizing for peace, offering a new perspective on histories of women's peace organizing that previously have focused exclusively on either all-women groups or mixed-gender groups. The sisters belonged to both, bolstering activism through all-women networks of support while simultaneously acting as a part of a larger movement for peace involving priests, religious sisters, and laypeople. Thus, activist sisters drew on their religious identity to shape Catholic peace activity during the Vietnam War.

Many Maryland Province Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur adopted peace as their main form of religious service during and after the Vietnam War. Of the many activist sisters I identified, Sisters Mary Cain, Katherine Corr, Beverly Bell, Marjorie Shuman, Susan Davis, and Sarah Fahy stood out with particularly rich stories of peace ministry. In this chapter, I foreground the stories of these six activist sisters and examine them chronologically, uncovering the involvement of the Maryland Province Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur in several prominent acts for peace in the late 1960s and early 1970s. First, I examine the draft board actions undertaken by Sisters Beverly, Sarah, Marjorie, Susan, and Mary as a part of the larger activist circles of the Catholic Left beginning in 1968. Next, I turn to the involvement of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur in political protest during the Harrisburg conspiracy trial in 1971 and 1972. Finally, I explore the White House pray-ins and their impact on larger Catholic peace movements.

“The Selective Service was still going on...you know what that is right?” Mary Cain asked during one of our four Wednesday afternoon phone interviews.¹⁷⁹ To my affirmative reply, she responded with a laugh, “I helped shut it down. I did and I am very proud of that.”¹⁸⁰ Mary was referring to her use of nonviolent direct action to destroy draft records and disrupt the Selective Service, the government agency responsible for conscripting male citizens into military service during the Vietnam War. Between 1968 and 1972, members of the Catholic Left took direct action against the state in at least fifty-three Selective Service raids across the United States.¹⁸¹ One of the first draft board raids occurred in 1968 when the Catonsville Nine, a group of Catholic activists including priests Daniel and Philip Berrigan, removed draft files from the Selective Service office in Catonsville, Maryland, torched them in the parking lot with homemade napalm, and then calmly prayed while they awaited arrest.¹⁸² This event triggered a series of Catholic draft board actions across the United States with the participation of over two hundred priests, sisters, and laypeople in direct action against the draft.¹⁸³

¹⁷⁹ Mary Cain, interview with author, October 7, 2020.

¹⁸⁰ Mary Cain, interview with author, October 7, 2020.

¹⁸¹ For a list of actions and members of the new Catholic Left see Meconis, *With Clumsy Grace*, 153-66. For more on the estimated number of draft raids see Mollin, *Radical Pacifism in Modern America*, 171, 240.

¹⁸² For an in-depth description of the events surrounding the Catonsville Action see Peters, *The Catonsville Nine*, 97-107. The official first draft board raid occurred when Philip Berrigan, Tom Lewis, David Eberhardt, and James Mengel, a group dubbed the “Baltimore Four,” poured blood on 1-A draft files at the Customs House in Baltimore in 1967. This event did not gain the national prominence the Catonsville action did, and the Catonsville Nine action is generally considered the beginning of the draft board actions of the Catholic Left. For an analysis of Catonsville as the beginning of draft action from the Catholic Left and discussion of the origins of the term see McNeal, *Harder Than War*, 173-76. Other members of the Catonsville Nine included Christian Brother David Darst, former Maryknoll Brother John Hogan, Tom Lewis, former Maryknoll sister Marjorie Melville, former Maryknoll priest Thomas Melville, George Mische, and Mary Moylan.

¹⁸³ Meconis, *With Clumsy Grace*, xi-xii.

By the time the Catholic Left became active in peace protest, the Vietnam War — and protest against it — had been going on for four years. Anxious to stop the spread of communism in Southeast Asia during the height of the Cold War, the United States intervened in the civil war between North and South Vietnam to provide military and economic support to the anti-communist South Vietnamese forces. Although the United States had been involved militarily and economically in Vietnam since the 1940s, in 1964 President Lyndon Johnson escalated U.S. involvement by committing troops in direct conflict against the North Vietnamese communist forces. The first U.S. troops arrived in Vietnam in 1965 and by 1968, the U.S. stationed over half a million troops in Vietnam.¹⁸⁴ In January 1968, at a time when the American public believed victory was near, North Vietnamese forces launched the Tet Offensive. Americans watched the massive and bloody offensive play out on the nightly news, and when the Tet Offensive concluded, a majority of Americans viewed U.S. involvement in Vietnam as a mistake.¹⁸⁵ While public opinion polls conducted in 1965 showed a sixty-seven percent approval of President Johnson's policies in Vietnam, by February 1968 the public disapproved of continued U.S. involvement in Vietnam.¹⁸⁶

The anti-Vietnam War movement began in 1964 and developed steadily with Johnson's escalation of the war in Southeast Asia. A part of a growing New Left political movement in the 1960s, over 1,200 separate organizations took part in antiwar activism and advocated for peace in Vietnam between 1964 and 1973.¹⁸⁷ Antiwar activism took a

¹⁸⁴ David Anderson, *The Vietnam War* (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), viii.

¹⁸⁵ DeBenedetti and Chatfield, *An American Ordeal*, 209-10.

¹⁸⁶ Amy Rutenberg, *Rough Draft: Cold War Military Manpower Policy and the Origins of Vietnam-Era Draft Resistance* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2019), 162; DeBenedetti and Chatfield, *An American Ordeal*, 123, 211-12.

¹⁸⁷ Mitchell Hall, *Because of Their Faith: CALCAV and Religious Opposition to the Vietnam War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), 2; DeBenedetti and Chatfield, *An American Ordeal*, 1-2. For

variety of forms including lobbying, petitioning, teach-ins, marches, and rallies and drew activists from liberal, pacifist, leftist, and student groups. Activists vocally opposed the draft, and many pointed out inequalities in the granting of Selective Service deferments that resulted in the drafting of more African American men and working-class men.¹⁸⁸ Organizations like the Students for a Democratic Society, the War Resisters League, and the American Friends Service Committee developed anti-draft campaigns and young men burnt their draft cards as a symbol of antiwar protest, refusing induction into the Selective Service system.

Catholics participated in secular antiwar protest and also launched their own religious organizations to protest for peace with the creation of Pax in 1962 and the Catholic Peace Fellowship (CPF) in 1964. Pax primarily worked as a small, non-demonstrative group that lobbied the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops to declare their opposition to the Vietnam War.¹⁸⁹ The CPF formed as a Catholic affiliate group within the interfaith organization Fellowship for Reconciliation. Dominated and led by lay Catholics, the CPF embraced an educational peace mission with activists participating

more on the development of the New Left in the 1960s see Jim Miller, *"Democracy is in the Streets": From Port Huron to the Siege of Chicago* (New York, NY: Simon and Schuster, 1987); John McMillian and Paul Buhle, eds., *The New Left Revisited* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 2003).

¹⁸⁸ Michael Foley, *Confronting the War Machine: Draft Resistance During the Vietnam War* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2003); D. Michael Shafer, "The Vietnam-Era Draft: Who Went, Who Didn't, and Why It Matters," in *The Legacy: The Vietnam War in the American Imagination*, D. Michael Shafer, ed. (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1990); Christian Appy, *Working-Class War: American Combat Soldiers and Vietnam* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1993). For an in-depth examination of the inequities of the deferment process and the impact of Cold War military manpower policy on Selective Service deferments during the Vietnam War see Rutenberg, *Rough Draft*. During the Vietnam War twenty-five percent of the men who served were draftees, a lower percentage compared with World War II and the Korean War. However, draftees experienced more combat during Vietnam than in previous conflicts, with higher casualty rates and service rates among draftees than among volunteers, who generally served in support regiments rather than in combat positions. See George Flynn, *The Draft, 1940-1973* (Lawrence, KS: Kansas University Press, 1993), 170-72.

¹⁸⁹ Piehl, *Breaking Bread*, 227-29; McNeal, *Harder Than War*, 94-104.

in draft card burnings and other protests.¹⁹⁰ As Catholics began to participate in a distinctly Catholic peace movement through the antiwar work of the CPF and Pax, the Catholic Left launched a new form of radical Catholic resistance to the Vietnam War with their actions at Catonsville in 1968.

Individuals in the Catholic Left anchored their actions in their Catholic faith, arguing their actions stemmed from a denouncement of American society's secular values and the materialism, racism, and militarism of the dominant culture. These activists adopted an anti-capitalist, anti-racist, and anti-imperialist ideology and targeted the war in Vietnam as the manifestation of violent systems of racism and capitalism in American society.¹⁹¹ Connecting this ideology with Catholic teachings about the sanctity of life, they took nonviolent direct action against the state in an effort to alleviate human suffering.¹⁹² Activist religious sisters from the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, in addition to asserting a Catholic identity in their peace activism, also added a gendered identity to these religious explanations for peace activism. The sisters centered their identity not just as Catholics but as Catholic religious sisters, using this distinct identity to shape both the rationale and form of their actions for peace while drawing on their religious community of women to sustain their activism. Activist sisters motivated their peace work through an identification with the teachings of the Catholic Church and a philosophy of peace and justice, developed over the course of the previous decade and linked to the specific beliefs and mission of their religious community.

¹⁹⁰ Moon, "'Peace on Earth, Peace in Vietnam,'" 1043-44; Piehl, *Breaking Bread*, 234-36; McNeal, *Harder Than War*, 139-46.

¹⁹¹ McNeal, *Harder Than War*, 174.

¹⁹² Piehl, *Breaking Bread*, 136.

Mary Cain remembered the trial of the Catonsville Nine in October 1968 as her initiation into Catholic peace activism. She attended the hearing at the request of another sister who did not want to attend alone. Speaking of two of those tried for the destruction of government property, she recalled: “We heard Mary Moylan and...David Darst, we heard them testify. I was just so impressed by these people; the clarity of vision and ability to express where they stood.”¹⁹³ This moment proved crucial to Mary Cain’s involvement in the Catholic Left, and she credited her awakening to other people. “I didn’t come up with this learning on my own,” she insisted, “There were other people who introduced me to ways of being and ways of doing.”¹⁹⁴ In particular, she remembered her sisters as central to her engagement with peace, saying of the woman who took her to the Catonsville trial: “I have always been very grateful to that sister.”¹⁹⁵ Mary’s introduction to the peace movement demonstrates the centrality of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur as an organization, and the women-centered networks it provided, to the peace witness of individual activist sisters. Sisters like Mary were introduced to the peace movement by their sisters and then continued their activism based on their convictions.

After the trial, Mary joined the Catholic Left and began work with the Catonsville Nine Defense Committee. After she awakened to the ways war conflicted with her beliefs, she understood her faith as requiring a commitment to peace work and explicitly connected her explanations for joining the peace movement with the teachings of the

¹⁹³ Mary Cain, interview with author, September 25, 2020.

¹⁹⁴ Mary Cain, interview with author, October 7, 2020.

¹⁹⁵ Mary Cain, interview with author, September 25, 2020. Out of concern for privacy, Mary did not name the sister who brought her to the Catonsville Nine trial. It is likely this individual was either Sister Beverly Bell, Marjorie Shuman, or Susan Davis, all members of the staff at Martin de Porres Community Center alongside Mary Cain in 1968. See Reilly, *Women of Courage*, 217.

Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur as a religious order. In a letter to her Maryland Province sisters in October 1969, Mary explained she was leaving her position at the Martin de Porres Community Center in Baltimore to work full-time for the Catonsville Nine-Milwaukee Fourteen Defense Committee.¹⁹⁶ She wrote of her involvement with the Defense Committee as the “logical extension” of her previous work as a religious sister whose “ministry of reconciliation as Sisters of Notre Dame includes concrete efforts toward racial and social integration, and promotion of a world vision of international peace and unity...The two are irreconcilably related.”¹⁹⁷ She went on to stress the importance of work for both peace and justice, arguing that the work of the Defense Committee was “informed and relevant: in short, a significant contribution to the Institute, the Church, and society.”¹⁹⁸ To Mary, working for peace meant working for social justice, and these two ideals were intimately tied with her work and calling as an SNDN. It was precisely her identity as a religious sister, specifically an SNDN, that compelled her to claim peace as an apostolic calling.

The women-centered networks of the SNDN also sustained and strengthened Sister Mary Cain’s activism. After becoming involved with the Catholic Left, Mary traveled frequently between New York and Philadelphia to engage in peace work. In the same letter, she wrote of her travels and a desire to “avail [herself] of opportunities for formal and informal discussion, retreat days, and liturgical celebrations in these communities.”¹⁹⁹ Mary paired her desire for involvement with SNDN communities in

¹⁹⁶ Shapiro, “Mary Scoblick,” January 14, 1972.

¹⁹⁷ Letter from Sister Mary Cain to the Maryland Province of Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, October 24, 1969, Sister Mary Hayes Papers, Trinity Washington University Archives (hereafter TWUA).

¹⁹⁸ Letter from Sister Mary Cain to the MD Province of SNDN, October 24, 1969, TWUA.

¹⁹⁹ Letter from Sister Mary Cain to the MD Province of SNDN, October 24, 1969, TWUA.

New York and Philadelphia with a motivation to engage her sisters in the peace community. She wrote that several sisters had already volunteered to help with research and office work for the Catholic Left and of her hope that more sisters would respond similarly.²⁰⁰ Mary's letter demonstrates her commitment to her religious community even as she moved from a community service ministry to a radical ministry for peace. She stayed connected with the religious order's rituals of discussion, retreat, contemplative prayer, and liturgical celebration despite a change in location and a new apostolic orientation toward peace work. Additionally, she drew on the order's networks to engage other sisters in peace activity. Mary closed the letter by stating, "I depend on the interest, prayers, and encouragement of all the Sisters," indicating the support she drew from the woman-centered community of the Maryland Province of Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur to sustain her activity for peace.²⁰¹

Mary's initial involvement with peace work was through the Catonsville Nine-Milwaukee Fourteen Defense Committee, an all-volunteer organization that worked to raise funds for the legal defense of the Catonsville Nine and to publicize the issue of peace central to the trial. The police arrested the Catonsville Nine in May 1968, and their trial began in October of the same year. The group was found guilty of destruction of U.S. property, criminal conspiracy, and interference with the Selective Service Act.²⁰² Before, during, and after the trial, the Defense Committee worked to keep public attention focused on the peace witness at the center of the trial. These efforts included a full-page advertisement in *The National Catholic Reporter* urging Catholics to contribute

²⁰⁰ Letter from Sister Mary Cain to the MD Province of SNDN, October 24, 1969, TWUA.

²⁰¹ Letter from Sister Mary Cain to the MD Province of SNDN, October 24, 1969, TWUA.

²⁰² Peters, *The Catonsville Nine*, 118-19.

funds, attend the trial, and take action against the Vietnam War.²⁰³ The Defense Committee continued their activism during the 1969 trial of the Milwaukee Fourteen, a group of activists who burned nearly ten thousand draft files in Wisconsin in September 1968.²⁰⁴ Joining the Defense Committee after the Catonsville Nine trial was in progress, Mary Cain attended rallies and worked to raise funds and publicize peace issues during the trial of the Milwaukee Fourteen.²⁰⁵ She became involved in direct action against the draft through her work in this organization. She remembered that after Catonsville, the Catholic Left “had these things called retreats which I discovered were recruiting sessions that you could get invited to in New York. So, when I was invited, I went.”²⁰⁶ She described recruitment as “talking to people and seeing how they would react and what they would say...why they were interested in participating.”²⁰⁷ Recruited because of her political and religious convictions against the war in Vietnam, in 1969 Mary became an active member of the Catholic Left.

Sisters Mary Cain, Beverly Bell, Susan Davis, and Marjorie Shuman were all heavily involved in the draft board actions of the Catholic Left. To conduct raids, peace activists staked out Selective Service offices and hid in the building during operating hours.²⁰⁸ Then, at a pre-arranged time in the night, the activists left their hiding spots and removed draft files. The goal was to “get rid of them, to remove them so that they

²⁰³ “A Call to Men of Conscience,” *National Catholic Reporter*, September 18, 1968. For more on the activities of the Catonsville Nine Defense Committee and other defense organizations during the trial see Peters, *The Catonsville Nine*, 159-69.

²⁰⁴ Peters, *The Catonsville Nine*, 157.

²⁰⁵ Letter from Sister Mary Cain to the MD Province of SNDN, October 24, 1969, TWUA; Shapiro, “Mary Scoblick,” January 14, 1972.

²⁰⁶ Mary Cain, interview with author, October 7, 2020.

²⁰⁷ Mary Cain, interview with author, October 7, 2020.

²⁰⁸ Mary Cain, interview with author, October 7, 2020.

couldn't be put back together."²⁰⁹ This action had both concrete and symbolic significance. It clogged the bureaucratic processes of the Selective Service and prevented the conscription of men with high draft numbers, but it also represented a radical position against a state the activists viewed as morally corrupt.²¹⁰ By destroying government property, activists protested what they viewed as a corrupt militaristic, racist, and materialistic state. They asserted the true detriment to society was not their own destruction of property, but the state's imperialist violence. Mary Cain participated in draft raids in New York City and Boston in 1969, and in subsequent raids in Philadelphia and Delaware in 1970.²¹¹ That same year, Sisters Beverly Bell and Marjorie Shuman removed files from a Selective Service office in New Haven, Connecticut and wrote letters to draft registrants to tell them their draft records had been destroyed.²¹² Sister Susan Davis was a member of a Catholic organization called the East Coast Conspiracy to Save Lives, which destroyed records in Philadelphia and Washington, D.C. in 1970.²¹³ The sisters participating in draft board actions between 1968 and 1970 drew on the larger SNDN religious community for both material and spiritual support.

Sister Sarah Fahy exemplifies the type of support the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, as a community of women religious, provided to their sisters' peace activism. In

²⁰⁹ Mary Cain, interview, October 7, 2020. Mary described several methods activists used to dispose of draft records, including her participation in draft raids in Boston where she removed draft files and then handed them out to participants at a march in Washington, D.C. later that week. Draft files were also burned, doused in blood, shredded, or thrown into dumpsters.

²¹⁰ Peters writes of the ways draft board raids slowed the processes of the Selective Service. In New York City in 1969 draft board offices closed early every day to give clerks time to reorganize files that had been destroyed by activists and draft offices in Chicago hired forty additional employees for four months to recreate files that were destroyed. See Peters, *The Catonsville Nine*, 251.

²¹¹ Mary Cain, letter to author, November 20, 2020. According to Mary two draft raids occurred in New York City the first on August 2, 1969 in the Bronx and the second on August 15, 1969 in Jamaica, Queens. The Boston Eight's draft raid took place on November 8, 1969. The raids in Philadelphia and Delaware were in February 1970.

²¹² Meconis, *With Clumsy Grace*, 78, 154-56.

²¹³ "New Activists Surface: Draft, G.E. Files Destroyed," *Catholic Advocate*, March 5, 1970.

1970, Sister Sarah was studying for a Ph.D. in sociology at Temple University in Philadelphia, working on a dissertation examining the relationship between religion and politics in the Catonsville Nine action.²¹⁴ While at Temple University, Sister Sarah served as a key source of support for Mary Cain during her participation in Selective Service raids in Philadelphia and nearby Wilmington, Delaware. Mary remembered, “Sarah...when it was time to go into the Philadelphia draft boards, gave me a home so that I could be there.”²¹⁵ In addition to providing living space, Sister Sarah allowed activists to plan draft board raids at her home, living upstairs with Mary Cain but devoting the first floor to peace activity.²¹⁶ While activists cased Selective Service offices for the raid in Philadelphia, someone tipped off the police, who arrested and beat one of the male activists.²¹⁷ After the police busted the raiders, Sister Sarah bailed out imprisoned activists and endured an FBI raid at her house.²¹⁸ Despite intimidation, surveillance, and violence enacted against peace activists, Sister Sarah chose to participate in the Catholic peace movement through her trusted connections in the SNDN. She offered material support to the movement by giving her home as an organizing space and contributing bail money.

²¹⁴ Sarah Fahy, “The Catonsville Nine Action: A Study of an American Catholic Resistance Position,” (PhD dissertation, Temple University, 1974).

²¹⁵ Mary Cain, interview with author, October 7, 2020. Sister Sarah Fahy lived at Shalom House in Philadelphia, a community center run by Temple University students and religious sisters. Occupants of Shalom House, located at 3007 West Susquehanna Street in Philadelphia, served the largely Black community by providing social services. See O’Rourke, *The Harrisburg 7 and the New Catholic Left*, 99, 126; Meconis, *With Clumsy Grace*, 64.

²¹⁶ Mary Cain, interview with author, October 7, 2020.

²¹⁷ Mary Cain, interview with author, October 7, 2020. Mary remembered fellow activist Paul Couming’s arrest by the Philadelphia police and recounted that the Police Commissioner at the time, Frank Rizzo, had a nasty reputation and often acted outside his authority. According to Mary, Paul reported being beat by the police as they interrogated him while searching for further information on the planned raid.

²¹⁸ Mary Cain, interview with author, October 7, 2020; Fahy, “The Catonsville Nine Action,” i.

In addition to material and moral support from their sisters, activist members of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur also drew on a distinctly Catholic identity forged through their belonging to an order of women religious. After dark on February 6, 1970, Sister Susan Davis, along with ten other priests, religious sisters, and laypeople, slipped into three Selective Service offices in downtown Philadelphia and destroyed draft files. The next day, the group traveled to Washington, D.C. to the downtown lobbying offices of General Electric (GE), the second-largest military contractor in the United States at the time, and systematically shredded their documents. They targeted the company “because GE exploits its workers both at home and overseas, and...to point out the collusion between the military system, giant corporations and the government.”²¹⁹ The group avoided arrest but later “surfaced” at a press conference in Georgetown to claim responsibility for the acts and decry the war in Vietnam, the draft, and the complicity of corporations profiting off of the war.²²⁰ In a prepared statement, the group, calling themselves the East Coast Conspiracy to Save Lives, proclaimed, “We feel a responsibility, as victims of a system which places profit above life, to confront institutions of death.”²²¹ The eleven individuals in the East Coast Conspiracy to Save Lives did not explain their actions as merely concerned U.S. citizens. Instead, they added their own unique identities as Catholic religious sisters, priests, and students, stating, “We wish to confront by our actions those institutions with which we are affiliated — church and education — and to force them to decide whether or not they will continue to serve

²¹⁹ Duarte, “Peace Activists Vow More Disruptions,” February 23, 1970; East Coast Conspiracy to Save Lives Statement, 1970, Sister Mary Hayes Papers, TWUA. The ten other members of this group were Nancy Assero, Richard Bidwell, Dominican sister Susan Cordes, John Finnegan, Jesuit priest Peter Ford, Ted Glick, Charlotte Lacey, Josephite priest Phillip Linden, Mike Panella, and Father Joseph Wenderoth.

²²⁰ Duarte, “Peace Activists Vow More Disruptions,” February 23, 1970.

²²¹ East Coast Conspiracy to Save Lives Statement, 1970, TWUA.

the needs of American power or begin to serve the needs of man.”²²² Drawing on the larger Catholic ethos of draft board raiding, the group used their statement to highlight that they each brought their own identities, affiliations, and rationales to their action for peace.

Through her membership in the East Coast Conspiracy to Save Lives, Sister Susan took an active role in forming an organizational philosophy for peace based on her identity as a Catholic religious sister. Her peace activism took direct action against the draft but also challenged the complicity of the Catholic Church — an institution to which she had vowed poverty, chastity, and obedience and devoted her life’s work through religious calling — in war. Sister Susan’s participation in draft board actions and the statement of the East Coast Conspiracy to Save Lives reflects the way religious identity served as the framing device for the activism of many women in the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, who posited their identity as religious sisters as the defining factor and spiritual and moral framework for their peace action. As a part of a mixed-gender group for peace, one including both laity and clergy, she engaged in group debates over tactics and philosophy through the lens of her identity as an SNDN and, as a result, played a crucial role in determining the methods and ideology of this prominent action community in the Catholic Left.

Mary Cain’s formal break with the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur also suggests the centrality of an identity as a Catholic religious sister to peace activity. In 1970, Mary Cain officially left religious life. Despite her formal break with the order, her identification with the mission and identity of the SNDN remained key to her peace

²²² East Coast Conspiracy to Save Lives Statement, 1970, TWUA.

activism. Speaking of her status as a former sister, Mary adamantly refuted the rumor perpetuated in the press that she left the order solely to marry former priest Anthony Scoblick.²²³ Instead, she left the order because “there was surveillance, open surveillance. I saw what happened...from the time things weren’t right in Philadelphia. I had a concern about my religious community. I didn’t want them to get a bad rap.”²²⁴ The press, operating under the assumption that personal relationships and familial commitments were a higher priority for women than political activism or religious conviction, obscured Mary’s political and religious commitment by claiming she left the order to marry. Instead, Mary’s 1970 wedding to Tony Scoblick reflects the very state surveillance she feared would damage her religious order. FBI agents arrived at the wedding unannounced to search for Daniel Berrigan, who had gone underground to evade a prison sentence for his role in the Catonsville action.²²⁵ Agents surrounded and searched the church, questioned guests, and trailed the couple as well as their friends and relatives for weeks after the event.²²⁶ Mary Cain’s political and religious convictions did not waiver, rather she left the order to protect the sisters from state surveillance and potential damage to the order’s reputation.

Despite the decision to formally sever ties with the order, Mary Cain did not give up her identity as a Sister of Notre Dame de Namur. She firmly stated, “I never left. I just didn’t. I am at present what we call an associate which is someone who is familiar with the ideals of...Julie, the foundress, and carries that into their everyday life which I think

²²³ Shapiro, “Mary Scoblick,” January 14, 1972; Weldon Wallace, “Baltimore Defendants: Similar Paths to Activism,” *Baltimore Sun*, June 15, 1971.

²²⁴ Mary Cain, interview with author, October 7, 2020.

²²⁵ Letter from Mary and Tony Scoblick to relatives and friends, July 28, 1970, Sister Mary Hayes Papers, TWUA.

²²⁶ Letter from Mary and Tony Scoblick to relatives and friends, July 28, 1970, TWUA.

I've always done."²²⁷ Mary's commitment to her religious community was strong, and she possessed a profound love and respect for her religious sisters, causing her to leave the order to protect them from legal scrutiny. Her identification with the SNDN and with a gendered identity as a Catholic woman religious did not cease when she left the order. She continued to conduct her peace witness in the spirit of the order's foundress and her religious calling even though she served as an associate rather than a vowed member of the SNDN.

As Mary Cain's testimony demonstrates, a distinct identity as Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur motivated the draft board actions of activist sisters, and the woman-centered religious community of the SNDN sustained their activism. Her assertions serve to de-center the role of the Berrigans in the Catholic peace movement, showing how the forms of peace activism fostered in communities of women religious shaped larger Catholic organizing for peace. Speaking about Philip Berrigan's role in the activism of the Catholic Left, Mary remembered, "I didn't have a leader. I think the last time somebody tried to lead me I was nine years old...I was not what you would call a follower. There weren't very many followers in the peace movement."²²⁸ Mary's bold statement about not being a follower contradicts popular understandings of the role of women religious in the Catholic Church and, subsequently, in the Catholic peace movement.

²²⁷ Mary Cain, interview with author, September 25, 2020. Associations to religious orders, which became popular after Vatican II, allow lay associates to commit to praying, working, and learning with sisters with the goal of furthering the religious mission of the order. Associates do not take formal vows like sisters and are not consecrated by the Church, but they work to fulfill the same calling as sisters in the religious order. See Zoe Ryan, "Associates Embrace Orders' Charisms," *National Catholic Reporter*, September 27, 2011; Dan Stockman, "Growing Number of Associates Partner with Religious Communities to Quench Spiritual Thirst," *Global Sisters Report*, July 18, 2016.

²²⁸ Mary Cain, interview with author, October 7, 2020.

As a religious sister swearing a vow of obedience, the Church expected Mary and her sisters to defer to the leadership of male clergy. Mary, however, saw her peace witness as contributing to this vow in a different way. To Mary, this vow encouraged “odience [*sic*] to the basic laws of creation, [and a] refusal to comply with orders to kill.”²²⁹ Instead of seeing herself as subservient to male authority within the Church, she interpreted obedience as a calling to enact God’s work. Mary emphasized the individual conviction that went into draft board actions, showing how the identity, conscience, and outlook of women religious shaped Catholic peace activism. As a member of the peace movement, she saw herself as fulfilling God’s calling and the sacred mission of the SNDN rather than bowing to the authority of male clergy.

For activist members of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, this outlook stemmed from their identity as Catholic sisters and centered on the calling of religious life. Individual conviction, formed within the larger community of SNDN, was the most important element of peace activism and these individual convictions coalesced into a larger, group philosophy for peace. Thus, the gendered religious identities of activist Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur had an impact on the ground. Peace activism was not dictated from above by the Berrigan brothers, superiors within the order, or the Catholic hierarchy, but was instead the result of a group synthesis of individual identities and convictions. This religious identity-based motivation for sisters’ peace activism continued in the dramatic and high-profile legal proceedings of the Harrisburg trial in 1971 and 1972.

²²⁹ Letter to family and friends from Mary and Tony Scoblick, c. 1972, Sister Mary Hayes Papers, TWUA. Mary’s use of the vow of obedience in this letter, written during the Harrisburg proceedings and after Mary’s dispensation from her formal vows as a sister, reveals her lasting ties to the religious vows of the SNDN and her deep understandings of her peace witness as shaped by a religious calling.

The draft actions of the SNDN and their allies, conducted in disparate locations across the East Coast, culminated in the 1972 conspiracy trial of a group nicknamed the Harrisburg Seven.²³⁰ In January 1971, a grand jury indicted six individuals from the Catholic Left for an alleged plot to kidnap national security advisor, Henry Kissinger, and blow up the heating systems of federal buildings in Washington, D.C.²³¹ The group included Fathers Philip Berrigan, Joseph Wenderoth, and Neil McLaughlin, all three clergy at the time of their indictment, and Sister Elizabeth McAlister, a sister of the Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary.²³² Anthony Scoblick, a former priest and Mary Cain's husband at the time, was also named as a conspirator, as was Eqbal Ahmad, a non-Catholic citizen of Pakistan and a fellow at the Adlai Stevenson Institute for International Affairs.²³³ This group of priests, women religious, Catholic laypeople, and non-Catholics faced trial for federal conspiracy charges. At the time of the indictment, the grand jury named both Sister Beverly Bell and Marjorie Shuman, along with four other individuals, as unindicted co-conspirators in the trial.²³⁴ The U.S. government took no further legal action against the unindicted co-conspirators, as the grand jury deemed there was not enough evidence to indict them.²³⁵ Even though there were no legal repercussions for unindicted co-conspirators, these individuals were associated with the alleged plot,

²³⁰ The Harrisburg trial was named after the city where the trial took place, not where the alleged conspiracy occurred. The number of defendants also fluctuated, but ultimately resulted in the trial of seven individuals. See Peters, *The Catonsville Nine*, 297.

²³¹ Fred Graham, "Plot to Kidnap Kissinger is Charged; Philip Berrigan and 5 Others Indicted," *New York Times*, January 13, 1971; Walter Cordon, "Jury Says War Opponents Were Prepared to Strike Next Month in Capital," *Baltimore Sun*, January 13, 1971. For more on the political machinations of the charges and J. Edgar Hoover and the FBI's animosity toward the Catholic Left see Peters, *The Catonsville Nine*, 297-98; Meconis, *With Clumsy Grace*, 84-88.

²³² Graham, "Plot to Kidnap Kissinger is Charged," January 13, 1971.

²³³ "Grand Jury Names 10 Priests, Nuns," *National Catholic Reporter*, January 22, 1971.

²³⁴ "Grand Jury Names 10 Priests, Nuns," January 22, 1971. Other unindicted co-conspirators included William Davidson, Thomas Davidson, Paul Mayer, and Sister Joques Egan of the Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary.

²³⁵ "Grand Jury Names 10 Priests, Nuns," January 22, 1971.

subjected to public scrutiny, and called to testify in the trial. In April 1971, the grand jury indicted Mary Cain and Ted Glick as additional conspirators.²³⁶ Early in 1972, the Justice Department also named Sister Susan Davis as an unindicted co-conspirator in the trial.²³⁷

The trial of the Harrisburg Seven called witnesses from the Catholic Left across the East Coast. The federal grand jury investigating the alleged conspiracy subpoenaed Sister Sarah Fahy to testify, along with Sister Beverly, Sister Susan, and Marjorie Shuman.²³⁸ These women refused to testify against their former sister and the other activists. By refusing to testify, these sisters turned the trial into a site of political protest and risked jail time for contempt of court. The indicted conspirators also used tactics to shift focus and turn the trial into an arena of political protest against the war in Vietnam. All seven individuals, including Mary Cain, refused to plead to the charges against them, and instead issued statements asserting the charges were “designed to stifle opposition to the Vietnam War.”²³⁹ Thus, the trial of the Harrisburg Seven became an arena of peace protest for activist members of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur.

Sister Sarah, in particular, leveraged her refusal to testify as an act of protest motivated by her understanding of religious community. In a statement prepared for the press, she linked her decision not to testify to the specific religious calling of the Sisters

²³⁶ Theodore Hendricks, “Jurors, Acting on Unsigned Letters, Indict Two More in Kissinger Case,” *Baltimore Sun*, May 1, 1971; “New Names Added to Berrigan Indictment,” *Catholic News Service*, May 3, 1971. Ted Glick chose to represent himself during the trial while the other alleged conspirators chose to be represented by legal counsel. As a result, Glick was severed from the trial, turning the Harrisburg Eight into the Harrisburg Seven. He faced the jury on his own at a later date. See Ted Glick, *Burglar for Peace: Lessons Learned in the Catholic Left’s Resistance to the Vietnam War* (Oakland, CA: PM Press, 2020), 109-113.

²³⁷ “2d Nun Named in Plot to Kidnap Kissinger,” *Washington Post*, January 8, 1972.

²³⁸ “Nine Refuse to Testify in Plot Probe,” *Chicago Tribune*, April 27, 1971; “Harrisburg Jury Indicts Witness; Catholic Peace Workers Asked to Testify,” *National Catholic Reporter*, April 30, 1971; Letter from Sister Sarah Fahy to Maryland Provincial Assembly, May 7, 1971, Sister Mary Hayes Papers, TWUA.

²³⁹ Bill Kovach, “Seven in the Berrigan Case Refuse to Plead to Charges,” *New York Times*, May 26, 1971.

of Notre Dame de Namur. The first sentence of her statement centered her identity as an SNDN, “whose special concern historically has been ‘the poor in the most abandoned places.’”²⁴⁰ Speaking of her calling as an SNDN she wrote “my own experience and the re-evaluation of the meaning of religious life within my order have convinced me that the most effective way for me to manifest this concern is through work for peace.”²⁴¹ Citing these reasons, she refused to testify in front of the grand jury. In deciding not to testify, Sister Sarah drew attention to the newly cemented religious identity of the SNDN as central to her conviction and peace activism. In doing so, she created new opportunities for acts of political protest during the legal proceedings in Harrisburg.

Writing to the Provincial Assembly of the Maryland Province of SNDN, Sister Sarah also called her fellow sisters to action: “as members of Sisters of Notre Dame we have pledged ourselves to work together to foster in our society the Gospel values of peace, brotherhood, and justice.”²⁴² Spurring her religious community toward activism, Sister Sarah invoked the mission and vows of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur as well as a strong sense of women working together in community to achieve their mission. Sharing a common struggle and using it to sustain peace activism among sisters eventually led her to co-found the Reflection Center at Trinity College in 1971.²⁴³ The Reflection Center served as a space for discussion about justice and peace among SNDN until the mid-1980s.²⁴⁴ As the work and identity of the SNDN solidified following the changes in religious life that began in the mid-1950s, activist sisters’ identity as Catholic

²⁴⁰ Statement Prepared for Press by Sister Sarah Fahy, May 7, 1971, Sister Mary Hayes Papers, TWUA.

²⁴¹ Statement Prepared for Press by Sister Sarah Fahy, May 7, 1971, TWUA.

²⁴² Letter from Sister Sarah Fahy to Maryland Provincial Assembly, May 7, 1971, TWUA.

²⁴³ Sister Mary Hayes, interview with author, September 1, 2020.

²⁴⁴ Sister Mary Hayes, interview with author, September 1, 2020.

women devoted to God's mission as well as their order's community of like-minded women, motivated and strengthened their peace activism.

During the peace actions and legal proceedings initiated by the Harrisburg trial, activist Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur continued to draw on their convictions as religious sisters and their larger community of women to sustain and support their activism. Writing to members of the Maryland Province about the Harrisburg trial, Sister Sarah discussed the meaning of community and the centrality of an identity as a religious sister to promote the involvement of other sisters in peace activism: "We need not engage in the same works, nor endorse the same methods, but I do not know what community means if it does not entail in some way sharing a common struggle."²⁴⁵ In her calls for community and a common struggle, she pointed to an idea of support and sisterhood among the SNDN as a group united by their religious convictions. To Sister Sarah, being an SNDN meant remaining true to a religious calling that supported the order's mission, despite differences of opinion or disagreements over how best to fulfill the callings of religious life.

During the Harrisburg trial, the Maryland Province of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur provided peace activist sisters with the crucial support they needed to sustain their peace activism despite legal battles, public disapproval, and media scrutiny. Sister Mary Hayes remembered "in the Maryland Province there was public support of the activism of our sisters...even more of our sisters had been involved in working with the underprivileged, the underserved. There was an awareness."²⁴⁶ According to Sister Mary, this awareness and public support stemmed from an understanding of peace as part of the

²⁴⁵ Letter from Sister Sarah Fahy to Maryland Provincial Assembly, May 7, 1971, TWUA.

²⁴⁶ Sister Mary Hayes, interview with author, September 1, 2020, 10.

religious mission of the SNDN. Support came from both individuals and larger groups of sisters. Responding to the naming of Sister Beverly Bell and Marjorie Shuman as co-conspirators in the Harrisburg trial, thirty-seven members of the Maryland Province released a statement of solidarity praising the sisters who were “prepared to be the unwelcome disturbers of the false peace and complacency, our own as well as others, that conceal the often inarticulate misery of two-thirds of our brothers.”²⁴⁷ As a group, the public support of the Maryland Province sisters reflected their commitment to pursuing social justice and how they understood peace as embedded in the mission and calling, the very identity, of the SNDN. The sisters’ support was also extended to Marjorie Shuman, who left the religious order by 1971, demonstrating the strength and longevity of the support networks created by these women.

Support for peace activism also came from superiors within the Maryland Province. Shortly after the grand jury named Sister Beverly Bell and Marjorie Shuman as co-conspirators Sister Rosalie Murphy, the provincial superior at the time, extended public support for Sister Beverly. Sister Rosalie, herself active in peaceful marches and vigils but not a participant in draft board raids, assured Sister Beverly of the order’s solidarity with her actions, framed as a part of the order’s religious calling.²⁴⁸ Interviewed

²⁴⁷ “De Namur Sisters Back Accused ‘Conspirators,’” *National Catholic Reporter*, March 19, 1971; “Notre Dame Nuns Support Two Named in Bombing Charges,” *Catholic Transcript*, March 12, 1971.

²⁴⁸ Sister Rosalie served as the provincial superior for the Maryland SNDN from 1969 to 1975. She participated in antiwar vigils held outside the White House in 1971, joining with twenty other national religious leaders from different denominations. See Betty Medsger, “Antiwar Clergy Hold Vigil: Churchmen Take Protest to White House,” *Washington Post*, November 29, 1971. Sister Rosalie was also a member of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious Peace and Justice Committee. In 1972 the Peace and Justice Committee endorsed Senator George McGovern for president. The Peace and Justice Committee was also active in advocating for amnesty for draft resisters after the end of the Vietnam War and for increased peace education. See “LCWR Region Meeting Set for Richmond,” *Pittsburgh Catholic*, October 20, 1972; “Nun’s Justice Committee Endorses McGovern,” *National Catholic Reporter*, October 27, 1972; Peace and Justice Committee Outline Report, April 17-19, 1974, Series II-D, Box 9, Folder 5, Leadership Conference of Women Religious of the United States Records, UNDA.

in *The Washington Post*, Sister Rosalie proclaimed, in reference to the conspiracy charges leveled against Sister Beverly: “The whole thing is preposterous.”²⁴⁹ Public support from the provincial superior for a sister accused of conspiring against the U.S. government was a controversial and monumental action. During the Harrisburg proceedings, the Catholic Church offered no formal support for the clergy and sisters charged by the FBI, and many lay Catholics decried the actions of peace activists.²⁵⁰ It was remarkable for Sister Rosalie, in her role as superior in the order of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, to take such a public stance.

In addition to public support from the provincial superior, Sister Mary Hayes also remembered more general support among the sisters. She recalled most members of the religious community were “glad that some people were being prophetic about these issues.”²⁵¹ Sister Beverly valued the expressions of support she received from Sister Rosalie and other members of the order, but, “she valued still more their expressions of trust, because ‘trust means I am totally innocent.’”²⁵² Despite the controversy and media storm surrounding the grave charges alleged during the Harrisburg trial, the leadership and membership of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur publicly asserted their support for and trust in their sisters’ activism for peace as aligning with their religious identity and mission. This enabled the accused sisters to withstand the legal and media battles surrounding the Harrisburg trial. Their women-centered community insisted on their

²⁴⁹ Morton Mintz, “Nun Calls Kidnap Case ‘Incredible,’” *Washington Post*, January 17, 1971.

²⁵⁰ McNeal, *Harder Than War*, 207; “Some Praise Actions, Others Write Shame,” *Baltimore Sun*, January 24, 1971; Bill Kovach, “Berrigan Case Called a Social Threat,” *New York Times*, May 25, 1971; Homer Bigart, “Prospective Berrigan Jurors Asked for Personal Feelings on Vietnam War and Catholics,” *New York Times*, January 26, 1972; Robert McAfee Brown, “The Role of the Church as a Community of Dissent,” *National Catholic Reporter*, April 6, 1973.

²⁵¹ Sister Mary Hayes, interview with author, September 1, 2020.

²⁵² Mintz, “Nun Calls Kidnap Case ‘Incredible,’” January 17, 1971.

innocence and stood with them in solidarity, united by a common calling to do God's work despite differences in the manifestation of this work among individual sisters.

The support received by Sister Beverly Bell from her religious sisters was also notable because sisters offered their support despite personal disagreements within the religious order over the methods used by Catholic activists pursuing peace. Sister Mary Hayes remembered the impact of the interview with Sisters Beverly and Rosalie appearing in a national newspaper: "I lived with a sister at Trinity who...in 1943, she joined the Navy and became a WAVE....So when she saw that interview...with our provincial supporting Beverly Bell she went ballistic."²⁵³ In an interview conducted by Sister Mary Reilly in the 1980s, Sister Beverly remembered: "The FBI monitored the building for nine months, and came knocking on our door...The FBI chased Sister Rosalie all the way from Ilchester to New York. She found out that eight of our houses' phones had been tapped...Rosalie was very supportive of all of us. She was personally supportive but somewhat puzzled."²⁵⁴ The recollections of Sister Mary and Sister Beverly reveal dissent among sisters in the SNDN over the radical mode activist sisters chose. Despite disagreements over the methods sisters employed for peace, however, general action in support of Sister Beverly demonstrates the ability of many of the sisters to come together as a community to work for a common struggle, united by a specific SNDN religious calling.

During the Harrisburg proceedings, Mary Cain continued to explain her peace activity as a religious calling, often supported by the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur.

²⁵³ Sister Mary Hayes, interview with author, September 1, 2020. The WAVES were the Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service, the women's branch of the Navy Reserves during World War II.

²⁵⁴ Sister Beverly Bell, quoted in Reilly, *Women of Courage*, 198.

Despite Mary's decision to leave the order, her sisters continued to offer their support for her religious convictions for peace, stating in a letter to Baltimore Church officials, "We believe that one of the most valid Christian responses to the evils of poverty, war and racism is nonviolent civil disobedience. We rejoice that our community has been directly involved in the struggle for peace and justice."²⁵⁵ As Mary's former religious community publicly expressed their support to Baltimore religious leaders, Mary took on new forms of protest, which she explained using a religious identity forged in her former religious community. At her bail hearing, Mary read a statement asking "that the court respect my wish that no money be spent on me for bail. My practice of voluntary poverty should not be contradicted. Furthermore, it is an insult to pretend that money can buy either my time or my life."²⁵⁶ Even though Mary formally left the order in 1970, she continued to uphold the SNDN vow of poverty. Through this commitment, she continued to identify with Catholic sisters' willingness to make great personal sacrifices in pursuit of a religious calling. Mary thus continued to root her protest for peace in her religious convictions as an SNDN.

The Harrisburg proceedings ended on April 2, 1972 with a hung jury and the acquittal of the defendants on conspiracy charges.²⁵⁷ The Harrisburg trial is widely recognized as the end of draft board action by the Catholic Left.²⁵⁸ Still, the trial

²⁵⁵ Shapiro, "Mary Scoblick," January 14, 1972.

²⁵⁶ "Father McLaughlin Eighth Conspiracy Defendant, Refuses to Plead," *Catholic News Service*, June 3, 1971.

²⁵⁷ "Both Sides Claiming Victory in Harrisburg Verdict," *Pittsburgh Catholic*, April 14, 1972; O.A. Ernest, "Harrisburg Jury Ignored Judge's Advice, Charges," *National Catholic Reporter*, April 14, 1972. Elizabeth McAlister and Philip Berrigan were convicted of minor charges of smuggling letters into federal prison, charges which the federal government later dropped. See Meconis, *With Clumsy Grace*, 116.

²⁵⁸ Meconis, *With Clumsy Grace*, 116-17; McNeal, *Harder Than War*, 208. The subsequent trial of another draft raiding group, the Camden Twenty-Eight, is also commonly cited in conjunction with the Harrisburg trial as the end of draft board actions.

unleashed questions about “the supposed impropriety of priests and nuns ‘getting involved’ in political activity” when they were previously thought only “to deal with the things of the spirit.”²⁵⁹ In addition to the religious element behind public disapproval for the activism of the Catholic Left, activist sisters also experienced a gendered element of public critique. During her involvement in the Harrisburg trial, Marjorie Shuman was frequently asked, “What’s a nice girl like you doing in a mess like this?”²⁶⁰ The presence of these Catholic sisters in radical action for peace was further complicated by stereotypes of religious sisters, whom the majority of Catholics conceived of as pure, unassuming, and naïve.²⁶¹ By destroying government property and placing themselves in the public spotlight, these women contradicted public assumptions of religious sisters as timid and meek, even as they asserted peace activism as central to their identity as Catholic feminist sisters involved in service to the poor and marginalized.

Catholic sisters from the Maryland Province of Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur insisted peace was integral to their calling as women religious. As we have seen, sisters construed peace work as a calling equally as valid and spiritually fulfilling as teaching in parochial schools or direct service to the poor. Activist members of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur rooted their peace advocacy in their religious order’s founding spirit and received the robust support of their sisters and superiors in undertaking radical activism for peace. In doing so, they continued to cultivate a commitment to peace and social justice within their own religious community. These activists also brought their specific

²⁵⁹ Brown, “The Role of the Church as a Community of Dissent,” April 6, 1973. For more on the response of Catholics to the Harrisburg charges see “Some Praise Action; Others Write, ‘Shame,’” January 24, 1971.

²⁶⁰ Cook, “The Troubled, Uneasy World of the Women in the Berrigan Case,” May 26, 1971.

²⁶¹ For more on the stereotypical image of nuns as naïve, unassuming, and chaste see Coburn and Smith, *Spirited Lives*, 3; Sullivan, *Visual Habits*, 7-13.

ideas about the identity of women religious and peace advocacy to the larger Catholic peace movement. Sisters refused to testify based on their religious order's mission, provided corporate support for their sisters despite the Roman Catholic Church's silence, and issued press statements that their religious calling made radical peace activism a necessity. Activist members of the Maryland Province of SNDN formed an integral component of the Catholic Left's draft board raids and shaped the philosophy of Catholic organizing for peace through the actions and ideals of their women-centered religious community.

Although draft board raids became less common after the Harrisburg trial, sisters, including Sisters Katherine Corr and Beverly Bell, participated in other prominent acts of civil disobedience as a form of peace witness after 1972. Sisters Katherine and Beverly, along with Sisters Judith LaFemina and Cita Lamb, began the pray-ins described at the beginning of this chapter. Sister Katherine described this event as "civil disobedience. We were going to pray. We were going to invite people to pray who were on that tour to see the White House, for an end to the Vietnam War... We just stopped everything. We just stepped over a little rope on the east side and invited everyone to pray."²⁶² Arrested by the Secret Service, the four sisters spent the afternoon in jail and were released on a personal recognizance bond late that evening.

By the time the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur knelt in prayer at the White House in July 1973, the U.S. had ended direct military involvement in Vietnam. When

²⁶² Sister Katherine Corr, interview with author, June 25, 2020. Although Sister Katherine was arrested before she could notice if any of the tourists joined them in prayer, a newspaper account of subsequent protests stated that when protestors "began the 'Our Father,' children on the tour chimed in." This speaks to the ritual and symbolism of the protest as well as its powerful assertion of the immorality of war. Prayer was an act so familiar to Catholics everywhere that even children could participate. See Garry Wills, "How Dare They Pray in the White House," *Baltimore Sun*, August 15, 1973.

President Nixon took office in 1969, he implemented his “Vietnamization” policy, a plan to train and equip South Vietnamese forces for increased combat duties while simultaneously decreasing the number of U.S. combat troops. Despite his call for Vietnamization, Nixon expanded the war, ordering U.S. troops to invade Cambodia in 1970.²⁶³ Nixon also altered the Selective Service System, hoping to quell anti-war protests by instituting a lottery system for the draft.²⁶⁴ In January 1973, after nearly ten years of conflict and over fifty-eight thousand American casualties, Richard Nixon announced the withdrawal of U.S. combat troops from Vietnam.²⁶⁵ Even though the Nixon administration ended direct military involvement in Vietnam in 1973, the U.S. continued to financially support the war and bombed Cambodia until August 1973. The 1973 pray-ins of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur at the White House occurred in direct response to the continued bombing of Cambodia, and they called on President Nixon to immediately end all financial and military aid to the conflict in Vietnam.²⁶⁶

Sister Katherine cited community with other Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur as a strong influence on her decision to take action for peace: “I made a big decision. I didn’t make it lightly but with a few Sisters of Notre Dame, we met every month to consider doing civil disobedience. We were reading a book called *Resistance and Contemplation* by Jim Douglass.”²⁶⁷ The reflection, reading, discussion, and prayer conducted in communion with other sisters led to the decision to express her dissent against continued

²⁶³ DeBenedetti and Chatfield, *An American Ordeal*, 278.

²⁶⁴ Rutenberg, *Rough Draft*, 171-72.

²⁶⁵ DeBenedetti and Chatfield, *An American Ordeal*, 346-47.

²⁶⁶ Sehlstedt, “4 Nuns Arrested in White House,” July 7, 1973; Katherine Corr, interview, June 25, 2020; Please Join Us in Prayer, July 1973, Box 8, Folder 9, Catholic Peace Fellowship Records, UNDA.

²⁶⁷ Sister Katherine Corr, interview with author, June 25, 2020. James Douglass, a Catholic Worker, writes of the duality of liberation as dependent on both active resistance and contemplation, arguing true liberation cannot occur without a deep understanding of self. See James Douglass, *Resistance and Contemplation: The Way of Liberation* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1972).

U.S. involvement in Southeast Asia by praying inside the White House in 1973. Sister Katherine described the group's rationale for choosing prayer as a form of protest against the war as "we need[ed] to speak out, we need[ed] to do it in a way that capture[d] our tradition and [was] true to the Church's position."²⁶⁸

Prayer was an integral part of the spiritual life of the Church, adding to the religiosity of the protest, but it also served as a way for Sister Katherine and her fellow sisters to express their dissent in a form consistent with their identity and traditions as Catholic religious sisters. Prayer was a key part of religious life for women with their lives defined by a semi-monastic schedule of prayer and a nightly Great Silence.²⁶⁹ Through prayer, they demonstrated their convictions for peace fit within the larger practices of women religious in the United States. Newspaper accounts of the pray-ins at the White House also detailed that the sisters were "dressed in non-religious, casual clothes but wearing crosses around their necks" and as part of their action they knelt and sang the Lord's Prayer before the Secret Service arrested them.²⁷⁰ The four sisters had also been fasting for twelve days to protest President Nixon's veto of a bill that would have cut off funding for the continued bombing of Cambodia.²⁷¹ In a prepared statement, Sister Beverly explained that they knew they would be arrested and "attempted the protest 'to invite President Nixon in a change of heart and policy.'"²⁷²

²⁶⁸ Sister Katherine Corr, interview with author, June 25, 2020.

²⁶⁹ Sister Katherine spoke multiple times about the centrality of prayer and contemplation to her life as a Catholic sister. See Sister Katherine Corr, interview with author, June 25, 2020. Mary Cain also spoke about the rhythms of religious life, discussing the Great Silence as well as the practice of prayerful meditation. See Mary Cain, interview with author, September 30, 2020; Mary Cain, interview with author, September 25, 2020. For more on Catholic devotional and prayer life see James McCartin, *Prayers of the Faithful: The Shifting Spiritual Life of American Catholics* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010).

²⁷⁰ Sehlstedt, Jr., "4 Nuns Arrested in White House," July 7, 1973.

²⁷¹ "Police at White House Arrest 4 Praying Nuns," *New York Times*, July 7, 1973.

²⁷² "Four Nuns Arrested at White House Protest," *Catholic News Service*, July 9, 1973.

The intense Catholicity of the civil disobedience undertaken by the sisters is striking. Wearing crucifixes around their neck, fasting, kneeling, and chanting the Lord's Prayer added drama and a distinctly Catholic symbolism to the peace action of these sisters. The continuation of the protests after the sisters' arrest took on an element of pilgrimage, with Catholic peace activists traveling from across the East Coast to participate in the action. Through a symbolically Catholic opposition to the war, these sisters drew on their specific identity as Catholic religious sisters. This identity was central to their philosophy of peace and the decision to act against the war and thus manifested publicly in the form of protest they undertook. Identity as a sister in a Catholic religious order was central both to the formation of the activism of these sisters and to the impact of their protest in the press and society at large.

Sister Katherine experienced the same support and sense of community from her religious order as her sisters who participated in draft board actions. When Sister Katherine undertook her act of civil disobedience in 1973, she was under consideration for the position of director of the novitiate for the Maryland Province of SNDN. Recalling her action at the White House she said, "It was my best honest decision and the sisters supported me. They had voted me in this position [as novice director] and because I took this [peace] action the council needed to have a choice to reconsider and they still voted me in."²⁷³ Despite her arrest for unlawful entry and prosecution by the U.S. District attorney for her actions, Sister Katherine was appointed to a leadership role within the Maryland Province of Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur. She served as the novice director for eight years, working with newly professed sisters and guiding them in study and

²⁷³ Sister Katherine Corr, interview with author, June 25, 2020.

prayer.²⁷⁴ Sister Katherine's appointment demonstrates the support activist sisters received from their superiors and their religious community of like-minded women. The order cultivated and sustained peace activism and welcomed a peace activist sister into its leadership ranks, shaping the ideals of the community as a whole and drawing on an identity as women committed to social justice.

The four sisters' peace activism indicates their actions, cultivated in the all-women spaces of the religious order of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, shaped the larger Catholic peace movement. The actions of the sisters arrested on July 6, 1973 served as the impetus for a larger series of pray-ins. Although the White House was a site of frequent protest during the Vietnam War, the Catholicity and drama of the White House pray-ins initiated by the sisters brought a specific set of activists to participate in continued protests for peace. According to Sister Katherine, her action was powerful because "many people followed us every day for thirty days."²⁷⁵ After the sisters' action, individuals from across the East Coast arrived at the White House in groups of three or four to stop tours and pray for an end to the bombing of Cambodia.

Catholic activists involved with the Catholic Peace Fellowship, the Catholic Worker Movement, and the Community for Creative Non-Violence participated in the

²⁷⁴ Sister Katherine Corr, interview with author, June 25, 2020. After their arrest and release on a personal recognizance bond, the sisters were represented in court by Carl Durkee, a Baltimore lawyer. Tried in the D.C. Superior Court, the case became embroiled in controversy when Durkee alleged that the government prosecutor told him the White House had intervened in the case to tell the U.S. Attorney to prosecute the case "all the way" rather than dropping the charges. Thus, the peace action of these sisters did not result in a simple arrest and release, but a long, drawn out, and controversial legal process. This further attests to the strong support for these activists within the order as they appointed Sister Katherine director of the novitiate amidst these proceedings. See Philip Shandler, "Lawyer Charges Pressure: White House Hit in Bomb Protest Case," *Washington Star-News*, August 7, 1973, Community for Creative Nonviolence Records, Swarthmore Peace Collection (hereafter SPC); Maurine Beasley, "Garment Denies Role in Prosecution," *Washington Post*, August 24, 1973.

²⁷⁵ Katherine Corr, interview with author, June 25, 2020.

White House “prayer raids.” Pegg Kerr, a member of the Community for Creative Non-Violence, joined the protests after hearing about the arrest of the sisters on the radio and “the thought flashed in her head, ‘That’s it, that’s what I need to do.’”²⁷⁶ Individuals of all ages, genders, and religious affiliations participated in the pray-ins. The youngest member, age sixteen, spent time in a juvenile detention center after his arrest. Comedian and civil rights activist Dick Gregory participated in the pray-ins on August 7, delivering a statement about a fast he was undertaking to advocate for peace and justice.²⁷⁷ The actions of the four sisters compelled individuals from a variety of life situations to protest the continued bombing of Cambodia.

The diversity of participants in this peace action demonstrates how the peace philosophy created in the women-centered spaces of the religious order influenced Catholic organizing for peace, even after the U.S. withdrew its direct military presence from Vietnam. The sisters embarked on this action as a result of reflection and discussion within a group of like-minded women from their religious order, and it was undertaken as a result of careful contemplation as a group. Seeing peace activism as intimately tied to the mission of their religious community, these women felt called to participate in civil disobedience in the form of prayer. Subsequent protestors felt a connection with this type of action and adopted it to suit their own peace agenda. While the Secret Service arrested protestors for prayer inside the White House, other activists stood outside passing out leaflets with information on the bombing of Cambodia and copies of the prayers being

²⁷⁶ Murphy, “Prayer Raids,” October 1973, UNDA.

²⁷⁷ Murphy, “Prayer Raids,” October 1973, UNDA; An Age is Coming When Peace and Understanding Shall Be the Order of the Day recited by Dick Gregory, August 7, 1973, Community for Creative Nonviolence Records, SPC; Charles Del Vecchio, “Calm Before the Prayer,” *Washington Post*, August 8, 1973, Community for Creative Nonviolence Records, SPC; “No More Laughter,” *Washington Star-News*, August 9, 1973, Community for Creative Nonviolence Records, SPC; “Gregory Seized at White House,” *Washington Star-News*, August 7, 1973, Community for Creative Nonviolence Records, SPC.

recited inside.²⁷⁸ Prayers included Catholic liturgical standards like the Magnificat, the Lord's Prayer, and the Litany of Saints in addition to more creative choices like Mark Twain's War Prayer.²⁷⁹ All the prayers were signed by the protestors reciting them, and some contained hand-drawn symbols of peace or religious iconography.²⁸⁰ The pray-ins served as a way for Catholic peace activists to act on their convictions but, as the copies of prayers indicate, these individuals changed the specific elements related to the SNDN to fit their own traditions, reciting prayers like a prayer entitled "Bearers of Life, Women Reaffirm Life."²⁸¹ At the pray-ins, Catholic peace activists acted on their consciences, and individuals changed the specific elements of the protest to fit their own personal outlooks.

The actions of the SNDN reflect peace witness beyond the activity of the Berrigan brothers, revealing a form of grassroots activism shaped by the religious identities of Catholic sisters rather than the leadership of priests. Daniel Berrigan eventually participated in the pray-ins, joining a group of protestors from Baltimore who prayed and broke bread on the White House portico on August 14, 1973.²⁸² The media attention Daniel Berrigan received for his participation overshadowed the role of Catholic sisters in initiating the peace witness. An article in *The Pittsburgh Catholic* about the pray-ins reported exclusively on the role of Berrigan in the protest, making no mention of the larger context of the protests or the prominent role of women religious and lay people in

²⁷⁸ Sister Katherine Corr, interview with author, June 25, 2020; Brendan Walsh, "Prayers and Protestors: Decry Cambodia Bombing," *Catholic Worker*, July-August 1973.

²⁷⁹ White House Prayers, Box 8, Folder 9, Catholic Peace Fellowship Records, UNDA.

²⁸⁰ White House Prayers, 1973, UNDA.

²⁸¹ Mark Twain's War Poem recited by Edward Guinan and Mitch Snyder, July 12, 1973, Box 8, Folder 9, Catholic Peace Fellowship Records, UNDA; Bearers of Life, Women Reaffirm Life recited by Kathleen Thorsby, Jean Gregory, Rachelle Linner, and Ginny Ives, July 13, 1973, Box 8, Folder 9, Catholic Peace Fellowship Records, UNDA.

²⁸² Murphy, "Prayer Raids," October 1973, UNDA.

the proceedings.²⁸³ However, before Berrigan's participation obscured the origins of this peace action, the press reported on the events as breaking with the popular image of the Catholic Left, one "embodied by the Berrigan brothers. Sources agreed that neither Philip or Daniel Berrigan played a role in organizing the White House Demonstrations."²⁸⁴ Although the media eventually obscured the activism of the SNDN, originally it was widely recognized that the Berrigans did not organize these events, revealing the presence of grassroots activism by religious sisters. It was Catholic sisters, not prominent clergy, who inspired these dramatic acts of peace protest and shaped the direction of Catholic organizing for peace.

The 1973 pray-ins initiated by the SNDN illustrate the centrality of the gendered, Catholic identity of these women to the actions they undertook for peace. These women engaged in a form of protest that reflected their devotion to prayer and a community-centered approach to decision making. Although each sister prayed at the White House because of her own political convictions, the group found support in their community of like-minded women and chose a distinct form of protest that reflected their belonging in a Catholic community of women religious. The actions undertaken by these sisters also demonstrate the way peace protest conceived in all-women spaces influenced mixed-gender Catholic organizing for peace, as exhibited by the continuation of the pray-ins after their initiation by the sisters and by the diversity of individuals participating in continued protests for an end to the bombing of Cambodia. The sisters' identity as Catholic women religious who belonged to an all-woman community served as the

²⁸³ "\$50 Suspended Fines Given for Pray-In," *Pittsburgh Catholic*, October 12, 1973.

²⁸⁴ "Catholics Arrested for White House Prayers," *National Catholic Reporter*, July 20, 1973.

inspiration behind these dramatic acts of peace protest and ultimately impacted the form and content of Catholic organizing for peace.

For Catholic sisters belonging to the Maryland Province of Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, an identity as women religious supported and sustained their peace activism. Sisters explained their peace work as a calling as spiritually fulfilling as teaching in parochial schools or direct service to the poor. Activist members of the SNDN rooted their peace advocacy in the spirit of their religious order and received the robust support of their sisters and superiors. These women refused to testify against their sister based on their religious order's mission, provided corporate support for their sisters despite the Roman Catholic Church's silence, and issued press statements that claimed their radical peace activism was crucial to fulfilling their religious calling. In doing so, they cultivated a commitment to peace and social justice in their own religious community. As we will see in Chapter Three, their focus on peace lasted far beyond the end of the Vietnam War and activist sisters continued to frame their identity as women religious around work for peace and justice. It was Catholic women religious, not the men who dominate the histories of these movements, who showed a lasting commitment to the ideals of peace exemplified in their religious identities and ensured the continuation of the Catholic peace movement.

Chapter Three: Continued Peace Activism, 1973-Present

“Women who don’t go along with the crowd who question why things are the way they are who defy the belief that satisfaction in life comes from having, getting, taking.”²⁸⁵

On a crisp fall day in 1992, Sister Katherine Corr walked from Baltimore to Washington, D.C. Marching in step with Baltimore’s Mayor Kurt Schmoke, U.S. Congressman Parren J. Mitchell, and the “Mother Teresa of Baltimore” Bea Gaddy, Sister Katherine began the thirty-eight-mile journey.²⁸⁶ She was one of forty individuals who completed the trek from Baltimore to D.C., holding teach-ins and community events during stops along the way.²⁸⁷ Arriving in the capital, the marchers joined three thousand Baltimoreans with a radical peace agenda. The protestors demanded the U.S. government redirect billions of dollars in defense spending to instead “invest in housing, in jobs, in schools; defend civil rights and protect the environment; develop the urban economy; support a national health plan for all Americans.”²⁸⁸ Nearly twenty years after her arrest for praying at the White House, Sister Katherine was still advocating for peace. As the director of Baltimore Jobs With Peace and the co-chair for the Baltimore Save Our Cities coalition, her commitment to peace remained rooted in her identity as a Maryland Province Sister of Notre Dame de Namur, and her work for Jobs With Peace is just one example of the long and rich careers of peace activists in the SNDN.

This chapter examines how the religious identity of the Maryland Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, formed in the 1950s and 1960s and serving as the motivating factor behind their peace activism during the Vietnam War, contributed to the longevity of the

²⁸⁵ Religious Women...A Special Breed brochure, late 1970s, UNDA.

²⁸⁶ Save Our Cities Bulletin, 1992, Jobs With Peace Baltimore Records, SPC.

²⁸⁷ Sister Katherine Corr, interview with author, June 25, 2020; Save Our Cities Bulletin, 1992, SPC.

²⁸⁸ Save Our Cities Bulletin, 1992, SPC.

Catholic peace movement. Standard narratives of Catholic peace activism emphasize the activity of the Berrigan brothers and their male contemporaries as representative of the entire Catholic peace movement. According to these narratives, as the Harrisburg Seven and Camden Twenty-Eight trials concluded in 1973, the radical peace activism of the Catholic Left began to dwindle.²⁸⁹ Activist women, both lay and religious, were the first to abandon the peace movement, disgusted by the sexism of male leaders and the privileged positions afforded to the clergy.²⁹⁰ As women moved away from the movement, historians spotlight a few prominent Catholic clergy who remained committed to peace activism as representative of the entire Catholic peace movement during the period following the Vietnam War. The establishment of the peace organization, Jonah House, by Philip Berrigan in 1973, Daniel and Philip Berrigan's 1980 participation in the Plowshares Movement against nuclear submarines, and Father Ed Guinan's activity with the Community for Creative Non-Violence are cited as examples of the clergy's perpetuation of the Catholic peace movement after the end of the Vietnam War.²⁹¹ The traditional narrative of the Catholic peace movement emphasizes the activism of Guinan and the Berrigans as stalwarts of radical activism within the Roman Catholic Church even after the Vietnam War's conclusion.

A close examination of the activities of the Maryland Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur following the Vietnam War reveals a different story. I argue that instead of

²⁸⁹ Meconis, *With Clumsy Grace*, 116-17; McNeal, *Harder Than War*, 208.

²⁹⁰ Polner and O'Grady, *Disarmed and Dangerous*, 298; Meconis, *With Clumsy Grace*, 104-5; Peters, *The Catonsville Nine*, 306.

²⁹¹ For more on Jonah House see Meconis, *With Clumsy Grace*, 131-34; Peters, *The Catonsville Nine*, 323-24; McNeal, *Harder Than War*, 212-14; Polner and O'Grady, *Disarmed and Dangerous*, 326-36. For more on the Plowshares Movement see McNeal, *Harder Than War*, 214-16; Polner and O'Grady, *Disarmed and Dangerous*, 347-50. For more on Father Ed Guinan see McNeal, *Harder Than War*, 232-34; Meconis, *With Clumsy Grace*, 135.

drifting away from Catholic peace activism following the conclusion of the Vietnam War, women religious formed the backbone of radical peace activism within the Catholic Church. After the abolition of the draft in 1973 and the Fall of Saigon in 1975, many in the Catholic Left moved away from peace activism to focus on other forms of Leftist action. Although a few men like the Berrigans and Guinan continued their peace activism, many of those who remained active for peace left their official positions within the Church. Additionally, by the 1980s mainstream American Catholics perceived clergymen like the Berrigans as advocating for peace from outside the bounds of clerical respectability.²⁹² Liberal Catholic activists who used less radical methods for peace saw these clergymen as damaging to future Catholic peace initiatives as they hoped to win the approval of the Catholic hierarchy.²⁹³ In contrast to Berrigan and Guinan, activist members of the Maryland Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur remained committed to peace *and* their religious order. With an ideology for peace cemented in their religious identity and an understanding of the intersecting axes of war, poverty, and racism, these sisters rooted their institutional work in a philosophy of peace. The sisters defined peace not just

²⁹² Moon, "Loyal Sons and Daughters of God?" 21-22.

²⁹³ Moon, "Loyal Sons and Daughters of God?" 22. One such organization was Pax Christi-USA, which evolved in 1971 from the small Catholic peace organization Pax. Pax Christi-USA was the American affiliate of Pax Christi, a worldwide Catholic peace organization. Pax Christi remained "committed to its role in the institutional church, respectful of the church's traditions, and sensitive to the majority of Catholics." Its goals were to make individual Catholics aware of peace and as a result transform the entire Catholic Church into an institution devoted to peace. Pax Christi adopted a liberal approach to peace, accepting proponents of the Just War doctrine as well as pacifists within its ranks and focusing on peace education rather than civil disobedience or overt forms of public protest. In the early 1970s, Ed Guinan served as secretary of Pax Christi-USA but ultimately resigned in 1974, after tensions emerged over his radical outlook and strategies for achieving peace. Pax Christi-USA sought recognition as a "respectable" peace group, eschewing involvement with more progressive peace activists and demonstrations. Since its founding in 1971, members of the SNDN have been active in the peace education activities of Pax Christi. This thesis focuses on the progressive peace activism of the Maryland SNDN within the traditional institution of the Roman Catholic Church, not more moderate organizations like Pax Christi. More work is needed to explore the way women religious, including sister from the SNDN, participated in Catholic peace activity through liberal organizations and structures like Pax Christi-USA. See Piehl, *Breaking Bread*, 229; McNeal, *Harder Than War*, 230-36.

as an end to war, but as an end to all forms of violence, deprivation, and suffering. As a result, the sisters viewed peace as crucial to the success of the various anti-poverty and educational missions they undertook in the 1980s, 1990s, and 2000s. By remaining committed to their religious community and sustaining their peace-centered identity, members of the Maryland SNDN maintained episcopal and lay support while also cultivating progressive spaces and communities for peace within the official structures of the Roman Catholic Church.

The continued peace activism of the Maryland Province of Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur was set against a decidedly different religious backdrop than activism during the Vietnam War. In the 1970s, the Roman Catholic Church in the United States experienced a conservative retrenchment in response to the changes instituted in the Church during the Second Vatican Council.²⁹⁴ The response to these changes was a proliferation of conservative Catholic groups — including Catholics United for the Faith and the Traditionalist Catholic movement — and increasing polarization within the Church.²⁹⁵ This conservative resurgence, as well as Pope Paul VI's encyclical, *Humanae*

²⁹⁴ Joseph Komonchak, "Interpreting the Council: Catholic Attitudes toward Vatican II," in *Being Right: Conservative Catholics in America*, Mary Jo Weaver and R. Scott Appleby, eds. (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1995), 17-36; Moon, "Loyal Sons and Daughters of God?" 12. This conservative retrenchment also occurred in part as a response to the radical and visible peace activism of Catholics in the 1960s and 1970s.

²⁹⁵ Father Gommar DePauw founded the anti-reform Catholic Traditionalist movement in 1965. Traditionalist Catholics follow the teachings and practices of the Catholic Church as they existed prior to the reforms of Vatican II, including the Latin Mass, women wearing a head covering in church, frequent confession, and kneeling to receive Communion directly on the tongue. See Patrick Allitt, *Catholic Intellectuals and Conservative Politics in America, 1950-1985* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1993), 125-62; Michael Cuneo, *The Smoke of Satan: Conservative and Traditionalist Dissent in Contemporary American Catholicism* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997). Catholics United for the Faith was founded in 1968 and the organization is committed to ideals of traditional family life and a strict interpretation of Church documents and Biblical teachings. See James Sullivan, "Catholics United for the Faith: Dissent and the Laity," in *Being Right: Conservative Catholics in America*, Mary Jo Weaver and R. Scott Appleby, eds. (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1995), 107-37. Although American Catholicism was by no means unified prior to the mid-1960s and varying shades of political identification have always existed within the Church, the period following the Vietnam War was marked by the rise of strong, vocal, and at times competing conservative movements. See Todd Scribner, *A Partisan*

Vitae, rejecting birth control, paradoxically led to a greater acceptance of Catholic protest. While in the 1960s the majority of American Catholics looked upon public protest as opposing the teachings of Catholicism, by the 1980s they were more accepting of public dissent as a form of religious witness.²⁹⁶ The publication of *Humanae Vitae* in 1968 led to a surge in Catholic involvement in public protest against legalized abortion in the 1970s and 1980s, which made it difficult to oppose other forms of protest by Catholics.²⁹⁷ As a result, sisters in the SNDN conducted their peace activism within a Church that was both more conservative and more accepting of Catholics' vocal interventions on social or political issues.

At the same time that the Church experienced a rightward shift, women's religious orders experienced a decline in new vocations. Membership in Catholic women's religious orders reached its height in 1965 before declining steadily as a result of both decreased rates of entry and increased departure rates. While there were 179,954 Catholic religious sisters in 1965, by 2015 the number of vowed women religious in the U.S. was just under fifty thousand, a 72.5 percent decrease from 1965. In 2015, only nine percent of sisters were under the age of sixty.²⁹⁸ Sociologist Helen Rose Ebaugh attributes the dramatic decline in vocations to increased career and life opportunities for women outside the Church beginning in the mid-1960s. While previously religious life offered one of the few alternatives to domestic life or low-wage labor for women, mass

Church: American Catholicism and the Rise of Neo-Conservative Catholics (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2015), 1-10.

²⁹⁶ Moon, "Loyal Sons and Daughters of God?" 16. The Americanization and modernization of Catholicism also led to a new acceptance of public protest. See McGreevy, "Introduction," in *Catholics in the American Century*, 1-18.

²⁹⁷ Moon, "Loyal Sons and Daughters of God?" 22; McGreevy, "Introduction," in *Catholics in the American Century*, 6.

²⁹⁸ Ebaugh, *Women in the Vanishing Cloister*, 47-50; Tom Roberts, "New Study: Number of US Women Religious About the Same as a Century Ago," *Global Sisters Report*, December 9, 2015.

movements for women's advancement in the 1960s and 1970s increased the educational and career opportunities available to many women.²⁹⁹ As second-wave feminism carved new paths for women outside the home and family in the 1960s, the number of new postulants in women's religious orders declined.³⁰⁰ The emergence of a more organized Catholic feminist movement in the 1970s also heightened existing frustrations over male dominance within the Catholic Church and the lack of opportunities for women's ordination. While some women left religious life because of their concerns about the Church's treatment of women, the constraints of celibacy, and the strict forms of authority practiced by the Church, many Catholic feminist sisters chose to remain in religious life.³⁰¹ These sisters saw the Catholic Church as both the motivation for their feminist ideals and the target of their feminist reforms, embracing the ambiguity inherent in this position.³⁰² The majority of peace activists in the Maryland SNDN belonged to this second category of Catholic feminists, remaining committed to their position as religious sisters while also claiming a Catholic feminist identity through work for social justice and reform within the Catholic Church.

²⁹⁹ For more on increased opportunities for women brought about by mass movements for women's rights in the 1960s and 1970s and the diversity of these movements see Alice Echols, *Daring to Be Bad: Radical Feminism in America, 1967-1975* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1989); Sara Evans, *Tidal Wave: How Women Changed America at Century's End* (New York, NY: Free Press, 2004); Kimberly Springer, *Living for the Revolution: Black Feminist Organizations, 1968-1980* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2005); Dorothy Sue Cobble, *The Other Women's Movement: Workplace Justice and Social Rights in Modern America* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004); Susan Hartmann, *The Other Feminists: Activists in the Liberal Establishment* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1998); Stephanie Gilmore, "Thinking About Feminist Coalitions," in *Feminist Coalitions: Historical Perspectives on Second Wave Feminism in the United States*, Stephanie Gilmore, ed. (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2008).

³⁰⁰ For Ebaugh's commentary on the second-wave feminist movement's gains for women and its impact on the declining number of postulants in religious life see Ebaugh, *Women in the Vanishing Cloister*, 26-29.

³⁰¹ Ebaugh, *Women in the Vanishing Cloister*, 26-29; Allitt, *Catholic Intellectuals and Conservative Catholics in America*, 125-26; Henold, *Catholic and Feminist*, 69.

³⁰² Henold, *Catholic and Feminist*, 36-37.

Activist members of the Maryland Province of Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur built on strategies they cultivated during the Vietnam War to navigate this changed political, social, and religious context in the 1980s, 1990s, and 2000s. Due to their dwindling numbers, these sisters found that the religious philosophy of peace and justice shared by their community of women religious was not sufficient to maintain a successful peace movement in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. As they did during the Vietnam War, the Maryland Province of SNDN reached outside their community of like-minded women to forge strategic alliances and coalitions, ones that connected them with both secular and religious organizations and broadened the impact of their work for peace and justice. Through these alliances, the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur ensured the continuation of their distinct mission for peace even as the number of vowed religious sisters in the United States dramatically declined. Additionally, as the Church developed new, highly conservative factions but embraced public dissent, sisters began to advocate for Catholic feminist reforms that would grant them more power within the leadership structures of the Catholic Church, including women's ordination and increased representation for women religious in the Catholic hierarchy.

To demonstrate the centrality of women religious to the longevity of the Catholic peace movement, this chapter traces the different forms of peace work undertaken by the Maryland Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur following the Vietnam War. First, I examine the activism and religious involvement of priests and laymen from the Catholic Left following the end of the Vietnam War. Next, I turn to the ways the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur continued to cultivate a religious identity for peace and committed themselves to advocating for reforms within the Roman Catholic Church, rather than working outside

religious life. During this period, the Maryland SNDN returned to anti-poverty work, but as a result of their understandings of the interrelated nature of injustice, they embedded peace advocacy in their work to combat poverty. To show the continuities between peace activism during and after the Vietnam War, I focus on the activities of sisters most active in the Catholic Left during the Vietnam War, including Sisters Katherine Corr, Rosalie Murphy, Mary Cain, Beverly Bell, and Sarah Fahy. I examine how a mission for peace, now inextricably intertwined with the identity of the Maryland SNDN, manifested itself as these women rejected capitalism and employed strategies of civil disobedience to combat systems of economic, racial, and social injustice. These activities included the SNDN's establishment of the Julie Community Center in Baltimore, their leadership in the Baltimore Jobs With Peace and Save Our Cities campaigns, and the creation of important alliances with other organizations. The activities of these activist sisters, who maintained a strong mission and identification with their religious order, show their success in carving out progressive spaces within the Roman Catholic Church in an era of conservative ascendancy.

* * *

During the Vietnam War, many men active in the Catholic peace movement took direct action against the Selective Service system because of the role the draft played in their own lives. Priests were exempt from the draft, but Catholic laymen risked conscription into military service. Clergy were eligible for the draft prior to joining the priesthood, and first-hand experiences of war profoundly shaped their activism. The U.S. Army conscripted Philip Berrigan in 1943 and he fought in World War II, and Ed Guinan, leader of the Community for Creative Non-Violence, served in the Navy for two

years in the mid-1950s before joining the priesthood.³⁰³ While religious conviction was a central component of their activism, Catholic men also had personal motivations for targeting the draft. Even those who were exempt from military service had clear understandings of what the draft entailed and how the Selective Service affected the lives of young men. After President Richard Nixon abolished the draft in favor of an all-volunteer military in 1973, many men involved with the Catholic Left shifted their focus. These men did not abandon their religious convictions, but without the threat of the draft and with the end of overt conflict in Southeast Asia, many viewed working for peace as less urgent than it had been during the war.

The post-Vietnam activities of the men charged in the Harrisburg trial are indicative of this phenomenon. While Joseph Wenderoth returned to parish ministry as a Catholic priest, Neil McLaughlin and Tony Scoblick opened businesses.³⁰⁴ Ted Glick and Eqbal Ahmad moved to other types of Leftist organizing, with Glick working for Progressive politicians and Ahmad becoming a member of the Institute for Policy Studies, a left-wing think tank.³⁰⁵ Of the over 150 men active in the peace activism of the Catholic Left between 1968 and 1972, only fifteen men still engaged in direct peace work in 1979.³⁰⁶ The Selective Service system had been the target of their actions, and when active conscription ended in 1973, these men refocused their efforts.

³⁰³ McNeal, *Harder Than War*, 181; Polner and O'Grady, *Disarmed and Dangerous*, 76-79; Colman McCarthy, "J. Edward Guinan, Former Catholic Priest Who Ministered to the Homeless, Dies at 78," *Washington Post*, January 3, 2015.

³⁰⁴ Meconis, *With Clumsy Grace*, 161, 164-65. Weldon Wallace, "And Now? Two of 'Harrisburg 7' Forgive, Forget," *Baltimore Sun*, October 23, 1976.

³⁰⁵ Meconis, *With Clumsy Grace*, 153, 158; Glick, *Burglar for Peace*, 179.

³⁰⁶ Charles Meconis collected data on the core membership of the Catholic Left in the 1960s and 1970s. This index lists names, actions involved in, and occupation following the end of the Vietnam War. Meconis, *With Clumsy Grace*, 153-66.

Additionally, during this time Philip Berrigan and Ed Guinan — two of the most visible clergy active in the peace movement — shifted away from an official identification with a religious community and faced disapproval from many lay Catholics. In 1974, Guinan left the priesthood to marry fellow peace activist Kathleen Thorsby. After participating in the 1973 White House pray-ins, he continued his peace activism through the Community for Creative Non-Violence where he combined “militant antiwar activism with equally militant advocacy for society’s broke and broken.”³⁰⁷ The CCNV maintained its connections with the Catholic faith, but because Guinan left the priesthood, this organization did not operate within canon law in the Catholic Church. Philip Berrigan also reduced his authority within the Catholic Church in 1973 when he announced his marriage to fellow peace activist and a former sister in the Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary, Elizabeth McAlister.³⁰⁸ Following their marriage, the couple founded the Jonah House community in Baltimore to promote civil disobedience in the name of peace. While Jonah House continued peace activism through the Plowshares Movement for nuclear disarmament, it did so outside the direct confines of the Catholic Church.³⁰⁹ Berrigan’s peace advocacy became more secular over time, and he recalled that by the late 1970s the movement “wasn’t religious in the deep sense

³⁰⁷ McCarthy, “J. Edward Guinan, Former Catholic Priest Who Ministered to the Homeless, Dies at 78,” January 3, 2015.

³⁰⁸ Berrigan and McAlister exchanged wedding vows in secret in 1969 while Berrigan was still a Josephite priest and McAlister was a Sister of the Sacred Heart of Mary. In 1973, they legally registered and publicly announced their marriage leading to their expulsion from their respective religious orders. Polner and O’Grady, *Disarmed and Dangerous*, 301-2; Allitt, *Catholic Intellectuals and Conservative Politics in America*, 126.

³⁰⁹ McNeal, *Harder Than War*, 213-16; Meconis, *With Clumsy Grace*, 131-32; Philip Berrigan and Elizabeth McAlister, *The Time’s Discipline: The Beatitudes and Nuclear Resistance* (Baltimore, MD: Fortkamp Publishing Company, 1989). In 1980, Berrigan and McAlister along with Daniel Berrigan and five others began the Plowshares Movement when they broke into a General Electric plant and attempted to damage the nose cones of nuclear warheads.

of having deep roots and a sense of identity to sustain us.”³¹⁰ It was not uncommon for Catholic peace activists to drop their affiliation with religious life following the Vietnam War’s end, with over half the clergy most closely associated with both the Catholic Left and a religious institution leaving their positions in the Church to work for peace as lay Catholics.³¹¹

The intense media attention placed on these clergymen, especially the media’s portrayal of the scandal of priests marrying in the 1970s, led many mainstream Catholics to reject their actions as unrespectable.³¹² Lay Catholics decried Berrigan’s hypocrisy not for marrying, but for keeping his marriage to Elizabeth McAlister a secret for several years, dismayed that “[n]ow we discover that these very persons who were among the knights and ladies battling deception, were themselves living a deception.”³¹³ Others expressed their frustration with Berrigan’s seemingly flippant attitude toward Catholics’ most sacred institutions: “They have condemned both Church and State on many occasions...but now, too, they have also condemned the institution of the priesthood and religious life — as well as the institution of marriage.”³¹⁴ While many Catholics were willing to accept dissent against the state, they drew the line at outright deception and what they perceived as disdain for the time-honored and sacred traditions of religious life.

³¹⁰ Philip Berrigan quoted in Polner and O’Grady, *Disarmed and Dangerous*, 298.

³¹¹ Charles Meconis found that of the fifty individuals most closely associated with both the Catholic Left and a religious institution over half of them left their religious role during their involvement with the peace movement. Meconis, *With Clumsy Grace*, 95.

³¹² Moon, “Loyal Sons and Daughters of God?” 21-22; Weldon Wallace, “A Case is Based on Gentle Letters,” *Baltimore Sun*, March 6, 1972; “The Berrigans: Conspiracy and Conscience,” *Time Magazine*, January 25, 1971; Jerry Filteau, “Berrigan and Wife Excommunicated,” *Catholic News Service*, June 8, 1973; “Phil Berrigan, Wife Excommunicated,” *Pittsburgh Catholic*, June 15, 1973.

³¹³ “Mixed Reaction to Berrigan Marriage,” *Catholic News Service*, June 4, 1973.

³¹⁴ “Mixed Reaction to Berrigan Marriage,” June 4, 1973.

Thus, many clergy members left religious life and advocated for peace outside the official boundaries of the Catholic Church and without widespread support from lay Catholics.

Even as male participants moved toward other forms of Leftist organizing or dropped their overt religious affiliation, current and former Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur remained committed to organizing for peace while maintaining an image of respectability within the Catholic Church. During the Vietnam War, religious sisters were removed from the personal threat of the draft experienced by male activists. Laywomen frequently leveraged their role as mothers to protest the Vietnam War, but religious sisters did not have maternal motivations personally connecting them to the draft.³¹⁵ Instead, as explored in the previous chapters, the Maryland SNDN rooted their peace activism in their calling and identity as Catholic religious sisters. By linking peace activism with their identity as Catholic women religious, these sisters were moved to continue their activism even after military conscription ended in 1973 and U.S. troops completely withdrew from Vietnam in 1975. By embedding peace into their mission as a religious order, activist members of the SNDN maintained their image and good standing with the Catholic Church. This enabled them to conduct radical peace work as part of their institutional mission. Indeed, the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, because of the centrality of peace to their religious identity, remained active for peace into the twenty-first century.

Promotional materials published by the order to recruit new sisters in the late 1970s reveal that the SNDN continued to identify as radical, activist women even after

³¹⁵ For more on the way women used their role as mothers and ideas of maternalism to motivate peace activism during the Vietnam War see Swerdlow, *Women Strike for Peace*; Gill, "From Maternal Pacifism to Revolutionary Solidarity;" Mollin, *Radical Pacifism in Modern America*.

the end of the Vietnam War. From 1954 to 1971, the order of Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur underwent a complete transformation, with the peace activism of the SNDN in the late 1960s and early 1970s as the culmination of those seventeen years of transformation. Two recruitment brochures from the late 1970s demonstrate the permanence of this changed attitude. The first of these brochures was intended to recruit sisters from across the United States to the religious order, advertising the six provinces of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur in the United States. The cover of the brochure contains an illustration of an overturned applecart with the caption “Religious women...a special breed. We rock the boat / upset the applecart / make waves.”³¹⁶ The back of the brochure contains a poem entitled “We are gutsy women” written by Sister Patricia Knopp.³¹⁷ The poem asserts an image of sisters in the order as “gutsy women” who “are aggressive for the powerless, speakers for the voiceless” and “question why things are the way they are.”³¹⁸ Ideas of combating injustice and challenging the status quo were central to the way the SNDN perceived themselves and marketed their larger religious community.

In the poem, the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur expressed an identity as exceptional women called to serve God’s purpose. Lines reading: “We get tired but we don’t give up / We risk everything for God’s Kingdom” convey the way sisters in the order saw themselves as persistent in their service to God, bolstering a Catholic feminist vision of sisterhood, one that demanded they work together as women against racism, militarism, and poverty, to fulfill their religious mission.³¹⁹ The idea of being called or

³¹⁶ Religious Women...A Special Breed brochure, late 1970s, UNDA.

³¹⁷ Religious Women...A Special Breed brochure, late 1970s, UNDA. Sister Patricia Knopp was a Sister of Notre Dame de Namur based in Chicago, Illinois. See “Some Family Problems Caused by Unresolved Grief,” *Catholic Transcript*, October 28, 1977.

³¹⁸ Religious Women...A Special Breed brochure, late 1970s, UNDA.

³¹⁹ Religious Women...A Special Breed brochure, late 1970s, UNDA.

chosen to do God's work by fighting injustice in society was also present in the poem, "We are women of God for the people / of God; the few chosen for the / many called."³²⁰ Taken together, these elements reveal the way the SNDN framed their identity as a religious community. These sisters posited themselves as determined women, sacrificing everything for their religious calling to aid those harmed by systems of injustice and to dismantle the systems themselves.

While the first brochure speaks to a general identity among the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur forged during the 1960s and 1970s, a promotional brochure from the Maryland Province speaks to the radicalism of this specific community of women religious. The brochure's cover bears the title "Help Him" and a poem by the German poet, Dorothee Sölle. The poem, "When He Came By" published in Sölle's 1977 book *Revolutionary Patience*, speaks of the need for people on the ground to undertake God's work.³²¹ The poem describes the obligation of the faithful to combat evil in the world: "without you he's left hanging / goes up in dachau's smoke / is sugar and spice in the baker's hands / gets revalued in the next / stock market crash."³²² The inclusion of this poem in a recruitment brochure for the Maryland Province of SNDN is a statement of their commitment to fighting injustice. Sölle, a Christian socialist, was highly critical of U.S. capitalism and militarism.³²³ Sölle's work connected protest, prayer, and justice, and her work clearly resonated with the Maryland sisters. They chose her work to encapsulate their commitment to combating injustice created by economic and social systems in the

³²⁰ Religious Women...A Special Breed brochure, late 1970s, UNDA.

³²¹ For the complete poem see Dorothee Sölle, *Revolutionary Patience*, trans. Rita Kimber and Robert Kimber (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1977).

³²² Maryland Province of Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur Help Him brochure, late 1970s, Box 71, Folder 3, Religious Orders Printed Materials Records, UNDA.

³²³ For more on the theology of Dorothee Sölle see Sarah K. Pinnock, *The Theology of Dorothee Soelle* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press, 2003), 1-18.

United States. By the late 1970s, the Maryland Province of SNDN completely shifted their identity as a religious community. In the early 1960s, Mary Cain's superior reprimanded her for reading the work of Christian anarchist and philosopher Simone Weil, but by the end of the 1970s the order embraced an anti-capitalist and pro-peace stance to describe the work conducted by women in their religious order.

In addition to adopting the teachings of radical thinkers, the Maryland Province Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur explicitly referenced a return to their founding spirit and a mission based in working for peace and justice. The back cover of the brochure contains a portrait of the SNDN foundress Julie Billiart and describes her mission in revolutionary France to "help build a new society" through work with "the poor, the marginalized, and the powerless."³²⁴ The brochure boasts of the way "women still respond to her charism — her indefatigable response to the Scripture's call to do justice."³²⁵ The Maryland Province brochure also provides evidence of the ways the sisters incorporated this perspective into their official mission as an order of women religious. Quoting from the 1975 SNDN mission statement, the Maryland Province sisters wrote, "Knowing that injustice is one of the roots of suffering and deprivation, we shall be moved to work untiringly on behalf of the powerless."³²⁶ The order's official mission statement is tamer than the radical anti-capitalist and anti-fascist description and imagery in Dorothee Sölle's poem. However, the sisters of the Maryland Province linked their official mission to the more radical ideology of Sölle's poem by placing the heading "Without You He's Left Hanging," a direct quote from the poem, over the text of the

³²⁴ MD Province of SNDN Help Him brochure, late 1970s, UNDA.

³²⁵ MD Province of SNDN Help Him brochure, late 1970s, UNDA.

³²⁶ MD Province of SNDN Help Him brochure, late 1970s, UNDA.

mission statement.³²⁷ By associating their mission statement with Sölle's poem, the Maryland Province of Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur taught readers how to interpret their mission. Using the poem, they signaled their intended radical identity as crusaders for peace and justice despite a milder institutionalized mission to combat suffering through good works.

Remaining active in both peace work and the Catholic Church required a degree of compromise for the Maryland Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur. Traditional narratives of Catholic peace activism during the Vietnam War cite sexism and the attention placed on male clergy as reasons women left peace organizing.³²⁸ Women, including religious sisters, involved with the Catholic peace movement during the Vietnam War certainly faced sexism from men in the movement. Historian Marian Mollin writes, "The movement's values mirrored those of its religious base, which venerated priests above all others and excluded women from positions of authority and power."³²⁹ Scholars cite the treatment of women in the peace movement as the reason many women left the Catholic peace movement to instead pursue activism in the women's liberation movement.³³⁰ While many women did choose to leave the Church or the peace movement, the Maryland Province of SNDN remained committed to fulfilling their religious mission for peace and justice through a Catholic feminist ideology that involved combating sexism from within official Church structures.

³²⁷ MD Province of SNDN Help Him brochure, late 1970s, UNDA.

³²⁸ Polner and O'Grady, *Disarmed and Dangerous*, 298; Meconis, *With Clumsy Grace*, 103-06; Mollin, "Communities of Resistance," 49-50.

³²⁹ Mollin, "Communities of Resistance," 43.

³³⁰ Mollin, "Communities of Resistance," 31; Meconis, *With Clumsy Grace*, 139-40. Mollin and Meconis write about women leaving the Catholic Left to pursue feminist activism only after their attempts to apply feminist principles within the movement failed. These authors both cite the all-woman, explicitly feminist draft raiding group Women Against Daddy Warbucks as an example of women's inability to combat sexism within the Catholic Left.

The advocacy of members of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur for reforms that would grant women more power within the leadership structures of the Catholic Church indicates that their commitment to working for peace was rooted in their identity as women religious. The Maryland Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, who adopted a nascent Catholic feminism in the 1960s, embraced the newly organized Catholic feminist movement in the 1970s as they worked for reform within the Catholic Church. In this period, women's ordination and work for social justice became key issues for the Catholic feminist movement.³³¹ In 1979, Sister Theresa Kane, a Sister of Mercy from Potomac, Maryland, asked in a direct address to Pope John Paul II that the Catholic Church grant women the right to ordination as priests.³³² This event stirred great controversy among Catholics, but the Maryland Province of Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur vocally supported Sister Theresa. Sister Rosalie Murphy, who was working as the Director of the Division of Collegial Services for the Archdiocese of Baltimore at the time, publicly lent her support to Sister Theresa and the women's ordination movement.³³³ Quoted in *The Baltimore Sun*, she said that most of the sisters she knew were "'very grateful' for Sister Theresa's 'courageous' request to Pope John Paul [and she asked] that he... 'hear the call of women who represent half of humankind.'"³³⁴

³³¹ Henold, *Catholic and Feminist*, 23, 84-85.

³³² Stephenie Overman, "Women's Ordination – Everybody's Talking Except Pope and Nun," *Catholic News Service*, October 15, 1979. For more on Sister Theresa's activism as part of the larger Catholic feminist movement for women's ordination see Henold, *Catholic and Feminist*, 229-32.

³³³ Frank Somerville, "Nuns Divided Over Md. Sister's Appeal to Pope," *Baltimore Sun*, October 14, 1979. Sister Rosalie served as Superior of the Maryland Province from 1969 to 1975, and as described in Chapter Two, provided support and guidance for sisters involved in the peace movement during the Vietnam War. In 1977, Archbishop William Borders appointed her to work as the director of the Baltimore Diocesan Office of Collegial Services, later renamed the Council of Planning and Church Councils, where she brought together different archdiocesan councils to discuss Church operations and policies. She served in this position until her retirement in 2000. See Reilly, *Women of Courage*, 253-54; Frank Somerville, "6 Catholic Churches May Close," *Baltimore Sun*, May 14, 1994; Rasmussen, "Sister Rosalie Murphy, a Member of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, Dies," September 16, 2015.

³³⁴ Somerville, "Nuns Divided Over Md. Sister's Appeal to Pope," October 14, 1979.

In the 1980s, Sister Rosalie became a vocal advocate for women's ordination, leveraging her privileged position working for the Baltimore Archdiocese to work for change within the Catholic Church rather than leaving its ranks. In doing so, Sister Rosalie drew on the mission and identity of the Maryland Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur. She publicly argued that a large number of Catholics supported women's ordination and that women needed to press harder for reforms as the Vatican's central government — the Roman Curia — was "separated and isolated...not in touch with the sense of discrimination felt by women" in the Church.³³⁵ She joined with other Catholic women in expressing concerns over women's poverty and abuse, staying true to her SNDN mission of seeking peace through an end to all forms of violence and deprivation.³³⁶

Instead of leaving the Church, Sister Rosalie embodied the inclination of the Maryland Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur to remain committed to their religious mission for peace and justice by working for change within the Catholic Church. She remembered, "I was willing to stay with the church to help the process of change."³³⁷ In fact, experiences with peace advocacy during the Vietnam War convinced Sister Rosalie to remain involved in the Church. Her example contradicts traditional narratives suggesting that women left the Catholic peace movement as a result of the discrimination

³³⁵ Frank Somerville, "A Woman's Place is in the Church," *Baltimore Sun*, November 25, 1985.

³³⁶ Somerville, "A Woman's Place is in the Church," November 25, 1985; Rafael Alvarez, "Sister Murphy is Honored with Sarah's Circle Award for Female Spirituality," *Baltimore Sun*, April 1, 1994. Another Maryland Sister of Notre Dame de Namur, Sister Charlene "Cita" Lamb, was active in the women's ordination movement. After her involvement in the White House pray-ins, Sister Cita remained active in the Church and began organizing with the women's ordination movement. In 1977, she petitioned the Vatican to allow women in the priesthood at the Call to Action Conference. See Marjorie Hyer, "Resolve Set By Catholics for Equality," *Washington Post*, February 4, 1977; Reilly, *Women of Courage*, 251. For more on the Call to Action Conference see Henold, *Catholic and Feminist*, 186-88.

³³⁷ Alvarez, "Sister Murphy is Honored With Sarah's Circle Award for Female Spirituality," April 1, 1994.

they faced in this movement. For Sister Rosalie, it was connecting with other women in the peace movement over shared experiences of discrimination led her to commit to working for change in the Catholic Church. It was “through her activity in the Vietnam War peace movement [that] she met women...who convinced her...[they] needed to get together and talk candidly about the crosses they had to carry.”³³⁸ These experiences led Sister Rosalie to work for change with the “goal...to help people shape the church.”³³⁹ Throughout her advocacy, she remained committed to her faith, her order, and the Church. She considered herself both a feminist and a Catholic, declaring: “To be either/or does not fit with me.”³⁴⁰ She demonstrated a willingness to fight for peace, justice, and equality within the Church. In 1990, while serving as a top aide to Archbishop William Borders of Baltimore, she received the *Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice* Medal, the Church’s highest papal honor, for her work.³⁴¹ She leveraged her position of authority and respect in the Church to advocate for dramatic changes, carving out spaces for progressive ideas in a traditional and conservative institution.

Committed to working for change within the Church, some activists from the Maryland Province of Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur felt free to concentrate more exclusively on the anti-poverty plank of their peace and justice platform as U.S. presence

³³⁸ Alvarez, “Sister Murphy is Honored With Sarah’s Circle Award for Female Spirituality,” April 1, 1994.

³³⁹ Alvarez, “Sister Murphy is Honored With Sarah’s Circle Award for Female Spirituality,” April 1, 1994.

³⁴⁰ Rasmussen, “Sister Rosalie Murphy, a Member of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, Dies,” September 16, 2015.

³⁴¹ Reilly, *Women of Courage*, 254. Sister Rosalie worked primarily with Baltimore’s Archbishop William Borders who was known for his more liberal policies. Archbishop Borders expanded Catholic Charities and supported anti-poverty initiatives, like the Julie Center, run by sisters. He also approached the organized Catholic feminist movement with a spirit of collaboration and worked to create a women’s commission within the executive offices of the Archdiocese. He was less enthusiastic about progressive peace activism, preferring instead liberal organizations like Pax Christi-USA that worked with bishops. See Spalding, *The Premier See*, 471-85; Eugene Meyer, “Catholics’ Roots Run Deep in MD,” *Washington Post*, September 19, 1995.

in Vietnam diminished. In 1973, Sisters Sarah Fahy, Beverly Bell, and Katherine Corr moved into a rowhouse in the Upper Fells Point neighborhood in East Baltimore.³⁴² Sister Beverly told reporters, “We moved here because we wanted to live in a low-income neighborhood and share with the community.”³⁴³ Their relocation was motivated by the order’s mission to “build a more just, a more human world community” and “to work untiringly on behalf of the powerless.”³⁴⁴ Drawing on her identity as a Maryland SNDN, Sister Sarah began the process of forming a community center, which she named the Julie Community Center. The aim was to provide health, housing, and social services to the community “under the general philosophy of providing a decent existence for the poor and disadvantaged.”³⁴⁵ The Julie Center provided a People’s Rights Office dedicated to helping community members file for welfare benefits, a health center, and a community organizing division. The sisters’ goal, cultivated through higher education and in discussions within their woman-centered community, was to work to create a sense of “self-determination and empowerment” in the ethnically and racially diverse working-class neighborhood.³⁴⁶

³⁴² “Role of Julie Center is People’s Advocate,” *Baltimore Sun*, March 11, 1978. The sisters moved into a house on the 100 block of South Wolfe Street in Baltimore.

³⁴³ “Role of Julie Center is People’s Advocate,” March 11, 1978.

³⁴⁴ Reilly, *Women of Courage*, 238; MD Province of SNDN Help Him brochure, late 1970s, UNDA.

³⁴⁵ “Role of Julie Center is People’s Advocate,” March 11, 1978. The Julie Community Center was officially established in 1975.

³⁴⁶ John Strausbaugh, “East Baltimore’s Julie Center: Nuns, Lay People Join Forces,” *Baltimore Sun*, October 11, 1982; “Role of Julie Center is People’s Advocate,” March 11, 1978; Reilly, *Women of Courage*, 238-40. The Julie Center also assisted in the creation of two independent community groups: the Concerned Citizens for Butchers Hill and Jubilee Baltimore. See “Tenant Unit Buys Own Buildings,” *Baltimore Sun*, April 4, 1978; Michael Dresser, “And Now? Butchers Hill Tenants Now Own Homes,” *Baltimore Sun*, October 7, 1978. The Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur showed a commitment to community self-determination in their anti-poverty work. They expressed similar ideas when working at the Martin de Porres Center, the Julie Community Center, and in other community organizing projects throughout the 1980s and 1990s. The sisters, many of whom pursued higher education in sociology and social work, brought theories and ideas learned in the classroom into small group discussion like the Reflection Center or other informal discussion groups where they further cultivated these ideas. See Reilly, *Women of Courage*, 251.

The Julie Community Center attracted the same group of Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur who were heavily involved with the activism of the Catholic Left and also garnered financial support from the grassroots and hierarchy of the Catholic Church in Baltimore. Sisters Katherine Corr, Beverly Bell, Sarah Fahy, and Mary Cain — who by this point was an associate of the SNDN — volunteered their services by running community programs for citizens and helping individuals navigate the federal agencies administering welfare and social security.³⁴⁷ The sisters' new community center received financial support from a number of organizations officially sanctioned by the Catholic Church including the Maryland Province of Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, the Legion of Mary, the Society of the Little Flower, individual Catholic parishes, and the Baltimore Archdiocese.³⁴⁸ Together, these sisters created a strong women-centered community, and the Julie Center became a site of radical politics, financially endorsed by the Catholic Church. These activists received grassroots Catholic support as well as institutional support at the highest reaches of the American Church.

By the 1980s, the sisters running the Julie Community Center were active in local and federal anti-poverty politics. In 1982, staff at the Center began politically organizing with neighborhood residents. Their community organizing campaign called on the city of Baltimore to provide better sanitation services and trash pick-up.³⁴⁹ Shortly thereafter, the sisters began to explicitly connect the poverty they saw first-hand in Southeastern Baltimore to President Ronald Reagan's federal policies. In 1981, President Reagan cut funding for Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) and encouraged states to

³⁴⁷ Reilly, *Women of Courage*, 239-40; Strausbaugh, "East Baltimore's Julie Center," October 11, 1982; "Role of Julie Center is People's Advocate," March 11, 1978.

³⁴⁸ Reilly, *Women of Courage*, 239.

³⁴⁹ Strausbaugh, "East Baltimore's Julie Center," October 11, 1982.

replace these grants with “workfare” programs that required labor in exchange for benefits.³⁵⁰ In direct response to cuts in welfare services, the sisters at the Julie Center created “two novel, even ‘radical’ programs.”³⁵¹ The first was a “Talent Exchange Fair” where community members exchanged goods and services for mutual benefit.³⁵² Using mutual aid techniques, the Julie Community Center relied on anti-capitalist philosophies depending on community solidarity to address the state’s failure to provide for its most disadvantaged citizens.³⁵³ Combining elements of charity with mutual aid techniques, the sisters sought to provide immediate assistance to disadvantaged community members impacted by the cuts to AFDC, while building an alternative to a capitalist economy. In doing so, activist members of the SNDN once again turned to the peace activism central to their identity as religious sisters.

The activities of Mary Cain and Sister Katherine Corr illustrate two different directions taken by peace activists within the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur in response to U.S. militarism and domestic spending cuts in the 1980s and 1990s. In 1981, following her term as novice director for the SNDN, Sister Katherine organized a Jobs

³⁵⁰ Marisa Chappell, *The War on Welfare: Family, Poverty, and Politics in Modern America* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010), 199-241. For more on the origins of Reagan’s welfare policies and an explanation of early workfare programs see Julilly Kohler-Hausmann, *Getting Tough: Welfare and Imprisonment in 1970s America* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2017), 168-69, 184.

³⁵¹ Strausbaugh, “East Baltimore’s Julie Center,” October 11, 1982.

³⁵² Strausbaugh, “East Baltimore’s Julie Center,” October 11, 1982.

³⁵³ The organizational theory of mutual aid involves the willing exchange reciprocal exchange of goods and services to the mutual benefit of both parties. Anarchist philosopher Peter Kropotkin popularized the term in the early 1900s and the theory became associated with radical political movements stressing egalitarianism and cooperation. Mutual aid operations are distinct from charities in that they are decentralized and target the roots of injustice rather than providing assistance without attempting to transform the conditions that brought on the need for aid. Julie Community Center cannot fully be classified as a mutual aid operation as it still has many of the signatures of a charity, but the sisters who created and volunteered at the Center certainly drew on radical mutual aid techniques as they sought to assist community members and work to alter systems of injustice that caused poverty. For more on the theory behind mutual aid see Dean Spade, “Solidarity Not Charity: Mutual Aid for Mobilization and Survival,” *Social Text* 38, no. 1 (March 2020): 131-51.

With Peace campaign in Baltimore. She spoke of her attraction to this particular organization as stemming from her identity as an SNDN: “The thing I was interested in [with] the peace movement was Jobs With Peace because that talks about reducing the military budget. That connects with [the SNDN] thing about the poor.”³⁵⁴ Jobs With Peace was a national organization that sought “to educate Baltimore residents about the excesses of military spending and how those misused tax dollars could be better spent developing new non-military industries and strengthening existing ones in order to generate sustainable employment for all Americans.”³⁵⁵ Jobs were at the center of their concerns regarding military spending, and the organization argued a reduction in military spending meant an increase in investment — and subsequently jobs — in industries like health, education, environmental protection, and crime prevention.³⁵⁶ Sister Katherine and her fellow organizers in Jobs With Peace were concerned not just with aiding the poor, but also with eliminating the roots of poverty. Through Jobs With Peace, organizers from the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur suggested a solution to issues of both poverty and war, one that would decrease U.S. military spending and in turn open up new jobs, ease unemployment, and decrease poverty rates. In doing so, they suggested peace meant not just an end to war, but also an end to all forms of suffering, deprivation, and violence.

³⁵⁴ Sister Katherine Corr, interview with author, June 25, 2020.

³⁵⁵ Baltimore Jobs With Peace Bulletin, December 1995, Jobs With Peace Baltimore Records, SPC. Cities across the United States voted on Jobs With Peace sponsored referendums in the 1980s calling for “butter over guns,” a shift from military spending to social service spending. Ballot measures included mandatory reporting on the amount of taxpayer money spent on military defense, calls to ban nuclear armament, and new “peace budgets” for cities. Over fifty cities launched grassroots Jobs With Peace campaigns in the early 1980s to contradict “Reaganomics” policies that cut welfare and social service spending while also cutting taxes on the richest Americans. Major cities involved with Jobs With Peace organizing included Atlanta, Pittsburgh, Milwaukee, Boston, Detroit, and San Francisco. See “Several Million to Vote on ‘Jobs With Peace,’” *Atlanta Daily World*, October 8, 1982.

³⁵⁶ Baltimore Jobs With Peace Bulletin, December 1995, SPC.

The Jobs With Peace goal of reducing military spending and reallocating these federal funds meshed neatly with the anti-poverty work of the Julie Community Center and led to widespread support from the Maryland Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur. In 1982, the Julie Center's community board permitted Sister Katherine to set up a Jobs With Peace campaign office at the Center to recruit neighborhood volunteers.³⁵⁷ Sisters staffing the Julie Center eagerly embraced the Jobs With Peace campaign, "agree[ing] that Jobs With Peace is consistent with the church's more active role in social concerns."³⁵⁸ Sister Katherine also remembered "all the while...I'm in dialogue with the sisters about this...[in] so many different ways they're supporting, helping...there were many sisters who were engaged."³⁵⁹ Peace activism was still central to the mission and identity of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, intertwined with their commitment to aid the poor by going after an interrelated system of poverty, racism, and war. The sisters relied on each other as a network of support and continued to identify their work as consistent with the teachings of not just their religious order, but the entire Catholic Church. Unlike so many peace activist clergy who distanced themselves from the Catholic Church, activist members of the Maryland Province of Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur continued to advocate for peace and carve out radical political spaces, like the Julie Community Center, within this traditional institution.

The Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur also formed strategic alliances to widen the impact of their work beyond their dwindling group of women religious. As the director and chief organizer of Jobs With Peace, Sister Katherine's work resulted in the successful

³⁵⁷ Strausbaugh, "East Baltimore's Julie Center," October 11, 1982.

³⁵⁸ Strausbaugh, "East Baltimore's Julie Center," October 11, 1982.

³⁵⁹ Sister Katherine Corr, interview with author, June 25, 2020.

amendment of the Baltimore City Charter in favor of peace in 1982. The amendment “require[d] the city government to make an annual appeal for cuts in the nation’s military budget” and also mandated the city publish a yearly report on the amount of taxpayer money spent on the military.³⁶⁰ The amendment required ten thousand signatures before placement on the ballot for a referendum during the general election. The organizing work conducted to collect signatures reveals the ways the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur continued their peace organizing within the framework of the Catholic Church, even as they expanded the scope of their advocacy by forming strategic alliances with non-Catholic organizations.

The core of the Jobs With Peace campaign to amend the Baltimore City Charter remained decidedly Catholic and under the control of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, who spearheaded organizing efforts. As a result of their leadership, “Most of the names on the petitions were collected after Sunday Masses at more than 40 Catholic churches in the city.”³⁶¹ Sister Katherine described her work with different Catholic parishes in Baltimore during the campaign but also stated, “I work in this because I’m Catholic, but whoever wants to work in this who can identify with these values. Let’s work together.”³⁶²

This willingness to collaborate with individuals and organizations outside the Catholic Church was apparent in the petition drive, which both Catholic and non-Catholic organizations sponsored. Sponsoring organizations included the Women’s International

³⁶⁰ Frank Somerville, “City Pressed to Urge Military Budget Cuts,” *Baltimore Sun*, August 14, 1982; Sister Katherine Corr, interview with author, June 25, 2020; Michael Burns, “Ballot Proposals on Arbitration, Jobs With Peace Are Approved,” *Baltimore Sun*, November 3, 1982. The Jobs With Peace referendum passed in 1982 with 53,110 votes in favor and 35,961 votes against.

³⁶¹ Somerville, “City Pressed to Urge Military Budget Cuts,” August 14, 1982.

³⁶² Sister Katherine Corr, interview with author, June 25, 2020.

League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAMAW), the National Committee for a Sane Nuclear Policy (SANE), and other national and local organizing groups.³⁶³ Sister Katherine and her fellow peace organizers in Jobs With Peace brought together individuals from labor unions, secular women's peace organizations, and religious groups to form a powerful coalition enabling them to enact change both within and beyond the Catholic Church. These alliances proved effective; the referendum passed, and Sister Katherine remembered the amendment "lasted for twenty-one years before they figured out how to get it out of the City Charter."³⁶⁴

As she did during the Vietnam War, Sister Katherine related her peace activism in the 1980s and 1990s to her mission and religious identity as a Sister of Notre Dame de Namur. She asserted that the SNDN "have a slogan, 'education broadly conceived'...even though we're not in the classroom...we're still always trying to educate, invite people's thinking and facilitate conversation." She linked her peace activism with Jobs With Peace to her educational mission as a religious sister, noting her role in generating discussion and educating citizens about military spending practices.³⁶⁵ Sister Katherine also spoke of the usefulness of her identity as a religious sister in building coalitions beyond the Catholic Church, stating, "Think of all the people you have to talk to: machinists, the union...Because I was a sister I had an 'in' to get the

³⁶³ Somerville, "City Pressed to Urge Military Budget Cuts," August 14, 1982. The presence of the Catholic Church in political organizing in Baltimore and the success of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur's organizing was also likely in part due to the long history of the Catholic Church in Baltimore. See Spalding, *The Premier See*.

³⁶⁴ Sister Katherine Corr, interview with author, June 25, 2020.

³⁶⁵ Sister Katherine Corr, interview with author, June 25, 2020; Eileen Canzian, "Nun Leads Effort to Stem U.S. Arms Buildup," *Baltimore Sun*, October 18, 1982. Through the Jobs With Peace campaign Sister Katherine was also active in promoting a peace curriculum in Baltimore public and parochial schools. See Frank Somerville, "Few Turn Out to Rally for Jobs With Peace," *Baltimore Sun*, April 11, 1983.

conversation going.”³⁶⁶ Sister Katherine attributed her continued involvement in peace organizing to her deep commitment to peace as a religious sister and claimed her success was the result of people’s respect for the role of Catholic sister. Individuals in the predominately Catholic city of Baltimore recognized the position of religious sister as one imbued with spiritual authority and, as a result, were more likely to engage with peace advocacy when urged to do so by a woman religious. During her eleven years as an organizer for Jobs With Peace, Sister Katherine wrote editorials in *The Baltimore Sun* decrying federal military spending practices, facilitated petitions and demonstrations to amend the City Charter, and organized two Save Our Cities marches in Washington D.C. to protest cuts in federal urban aid to Baltimore.³⁶⁷

In 1991, after a decade of peace work through Baltimore Jobs With Peace, Sister Katherine became involved with organizing a Save Our Cities march on Washington. The Save Our Cities organizers outlined four key demands for their march. Marchers called for a reduction in defense spending commensurate with the end of the Cold War, “an immediate ‘peace dividend’ investment of \$40 to \$50 billion,” a progressive tax on the wealthy, and the “repeal [of] any laws that prevent the needed expansion of domestic federal spending.”³⁶⁸ This last demand was aimed specifically at the Gramm-Rudman-

³⁶⁶ Sister Katherine Corr, interview with author, June 25, 2020.

³⁶⁷ Katherine Corr, “Jobs with Peace,” *Baltimore Sun*, October 26, 1982; Katherine Corr, “\$245 Billion is Hardly ‘Irrelevant,’” *Baltimore Sun*, October 8, 1983; Canzian, “Nun Leads Effort to Stem U.S. Arms Buildup,” October 18, 1982; Frank Somerville, “Peace Activists Seek City Panel on Defense Spending,” *Baltimore Sun*, June 6, 1986; Laura Sessions Stepp, “Baltimore Marchers Bring Plea to Capitol: Leaders Call for U.S. to Restore Urban Aid,” *Washington Post*, October 13, 1991; Ann LoLordo, “Save Our Cities Marchers Want Peace Dividend Spent Wisely,” *Baltimore Sun*, May 11, 1992; Sister Katherine Corr, interview with author, June 25, 2020.

³⁶⁸ Save Our Cities Bulletin, 1992, SPC; Baltimore Marches on Washington flyer, 1992, Jobs With Peace Baltimore Records, SPC; Baltimore Jobs With Peace Bulletin, September 1991, Jobs With Peace Baltimore Records, SPC. Following the Save Our Cities marches in 1991 and 1992, Jobs With Peace activists also lamented that the end of the Cold War in 1991 did not yield the “peace dividends” promised by President George H.W. Bush. See Baltimore Jobs With Peace Bulletin, December 1994, Jobs With Peace Baltimore Records, SPC.

Hollings Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985, which led to across-the-board spending cuts for domestic departments and programs in order to reduce the budget deficit. Signed into law by President Ronald Reagan in December 1985, the law was amended several times and upheld through George H.W. Bush's presidency.³⁶⁹ Save Our Cities activists objected to cutting essential federal spending on domestic issues to ease the budget deficit, especially when military defense spending remained high in comparison. Ultimately, their goal was to call on the federal government to redistribute wealth and resources to support cities, like Baltimore, that saw the federal portion of their city budget decline dramatically during the 1980s and 1990s.³⁷⁰

Sister Katherine's leadership in the Save Our Cities marches reveals the way activist members of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur maintained the religious elements of their mission for peace even as they cultivated connections beyond their community. Speaking of the process of organizing Save Our Cities marches in 1991 and 1992, Sister Katherine recalled, "I'm somebody who likes to do my prayer. I like my quiet and then here I am doing two marches."³⁷¹ Sister Katherine considered peace activism as equally important to her mission as a Maryland Sister of Notre Dame de Namur as traditional acts of prayer and meditation. By speaking of her preference for prayer, she highlighted the idea of peace activism as a religious calling, a personal

³⁶⁹ Save Our Cities Bulletin, 1992, SPC; U.S. Congress, Senate, *Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985*, S 1702, 99th Congress, introduced in the Senate September 25, 1985; Jasmine Farrier, *Passing the Buck: Congress, the Budget, and the Deficits* (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 2004), 82-164.

³⁷⁰ Peter Honey, "Riots Spur March on D.C. for Urban Aid," *Baltimore Sun*, May 15, 1992. The federal portion of the Baltimore city budget declined from 39.1 percent in 1980 to 13.4 percent in 1992. This decline was the result of decreased federal support rather than increased city spending. A 1991 article in *The Washington Post* reported \$23 million in state and city budget cuts proposed by Maryland Governor William Schaefer due, in part, to decreased federal support. See Stepp, "Baltimore Marchers Bring Plea to Capitol," October 13, 1991.

³⁷¹ Sister Katherine Corr, interview with author, June 25, 2020.

sacrifice necessary to fulfill God's will through the SNDN's mission to serve the poor and work for justice.

Although Sister Katherine's peace activism remained firmly tied to her mission and identity as a religious sister, she and her fellow organizers continued to forge strategic alliances with other organizations. Responding to cuts in federal aid for social services in cities during President George H.W. Bush's presidency, Jobs With Peace began working with the U.S. Conference of Mayors, particularly Baltimore Mayor Kurt Schmoke, and other politicians like Baltimorean and former U.S. Congressman Parren Mitchell.³⁷² In addition to banding together with local politicians, the sisters mobilized both religious organizations and women's groups to participate in the march. A list of organizations endorsing Save Our Cities shows support from over eighty organizations including peace groups, community groups, labor unions, congregations from multiple religious denominations, women's groups, and civil rights organizations.³⁷³ Sister Katherine also asserted that organizers widened their appeal by changing the way they marketed the march, as they modified their name from Jobs With Peace to Save Our Cities "so everybody [would] feel included."³⁷⁴ By removing peace from the name of the

³⁷² Sister Katherine Corr, interview with author, June 25, 2020; Save Our Cities Bulletin, 1992, SPC; Stepp, "Baltimore Marchers Bring Plea to Capitol," October 13, 1991. Parren J. Mitchell was a co-chair of the Save Our Cities steering committee.

³⁷³ While the core of religious participation in the Save Our Cities march was Catholic, the march also received support from a considerable number of Quaker, Jewish, and Protestant organizations. Women's groups, like the House of Ruth battered women's shelter and the YWCA, were vocal advocates during the march as they recognized the disproportionate effects of poverty on women, and the ways welfare cuts dramatically impacted women's lives. Civil rights organizations like the Baltimore NAACP or the Associated Black Charities were active in these activities as well, dedicated to combatting racism and the ways welfare cuts and politicians targeted Black women. Partial List of Save Our Cities Endorsing Organizations, 1991-1992, Jobs With Peace Baltimore Records, SPC; Save Our Cities Bulletin, 1992, SPC; Stepp, "Baltimore Marchers Bring Plea to Capitol," October 13, 1991; Sister Katherine Corr, interview with author, June 25, 2020.

³⁷⁴ Sister Katherine Corr, interview with author, June 25, 2020. Jobs With Peace did not disappear with the creation of the Save Our Cities march, the organization remained a supporter of the march and also

organization during the marches, Sisters Katherine expanded the reach of the organization's message, even though peace remained central to their goals. The wide array of supporting organizations indicates the sisters' success at identifying peace as a solution to systemic injustice in the United States, not merely the pastime of a shrinking group of Catholic sisters devoted to a specific religious mission.

Even as Jobs With Peace and the Save Our Cities marches became large, multi-organizational events with defined leadership, Sister Katherine worked to maintain the grassroots elements of her organizing work. She recalled during "the second [Save Our Cities march] I walked all the way to Washington from Baltimore with the neighbors."³⁷⁵ She never lost sight of the roots of the organization: in the neighborhoods of Southeast Baltimore, the Julie Community Center, and the Maryland Province Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur. Jobs With Peace and the Save Our Cities marches maintained an identity as grassroots, community-based organizations that relied on what Sister Katherine called "people power" and "reaching everyday people."³⁷⁶ Sister Katherine also cited the support and hard work of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur as crucial to the success of Jobs With Peace's organizing. Throughout her eleven-year tenure as the lead organizer for Jobs With Peace, she was "in dialogue with the sisters" and received both their material and spiritual support.³⁷⁷ Thus, even as Jobs With Peace and Save Our

continued after the marches. The organizers of Jobs With Peace and Save Our Cities were the same core group of individuals, including Sister Katherine and members of the SNDN.

³⁷⁵ Sister Katherine Corr, interview with author, June 25, 2020. The first march, held in October 1991 and described at the beginning of this chapter attracted three thousand participants, a smaller number than expected because it was held the same weekend Anita Hill brought her charges of sexual harassment against Clarence Thomas in front of the Senate. The second march, held in May 1992, attracted a group of over ten thousand individuals. Both marches involved a thirty-eight-mile march from Baltimore to Washington, D.C. See Honey, "Riots Spur March on D.C. for Urban Aid," May 15, 1992.

³⁷⁶ Sister Katherine Corr quoted in Reilly, *Women of Courage*, 261.

³⁷⁷ Sister Katherine Corr, interview with author, June 25, 2020. For example, in 1983 the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, along with other orders of women religious in Baltimore, funded the creation and

Cities grew into large organizations, leadership did not lose touch with their religious mission for peace and ideals of community solidarity.

Mary Cain also expressed a lifelong commitment to peace organizing as a result of her association with the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, but her peace activism took a different form. Mary remembered that after the Harrisburg trial she “tried to get over the whole worldwide publicity thing and just hide.”³⁷⁸ Settling in the Fells Point neighborhood in East Baltimore, she joined the Fells Point Community Organization and assisted in the soup kitchen. At the soup kitchen, “Everybody got served. They were at little tables with water and bread on the table, it was real butter [and] you could have more. No standing in line except waiting to get in.”³⁷⁹ As with her community work in Washington, D.C. in the 1950s, Mary Cain remained devoted to the SNDN mission of caring for the poor in both body and spirit. Her work with the Fells Point Community Organization reflected a desire to offer the poor dignity and joy as well as material sustenance.

Although she left the SNDN in 1970, Mary continued to live out the religious identity of an SNDN and remained connected with the work of her sisters. She did so by volunteering at the Julie Community Center and with community organizations working against the gentrification of Fells Point and other East Baltimore neighborhoods.³⁸⁰ Like her sisters involved with the Julie Community Center, Mary saw her community work

printing of a twelve-page “peace budget” for the city of Baltimore to use in advocacy and educational work surrounding the Jobs With Peace campaign. See Somerville, “Few Turn Out to Rally for Jobs With Peace,” April 11, 1983.

³⁷⁸ Mary Cain, interview with author, October 14, 2020. Wallace, “And Now? Two of ‘Harrisburg 7’ Forgive, Forget” October 23, 1976. During this period Mary Cain was married to Anthony Scoblick, a co-defendant in the Harrisburg trial. Mary eventually separated from Scoblick and now goes by the name Mary Cain.

³⁷⁹ Mary Cain, interview with author, October 14, 2020.

³⁸⁰ Mary Cain, interview with author, October 14, 2020; Reilly, *Women of Courage*, 239.

after the Vietnam War as a continuation of her calling, now as an associate, of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur. Speaking of her work immediately following the Harrisburg trial, she recalled, “I went back to the basic things.”³⁸¹ She classified this period of her life as a return to her original calling as a Maryland Province Sister of Notre Dame de Namur to remedy injustice by working for the poor.

Mary saw her commitment to the poor as extending beyond material assistance, understanding peace and nonviolence as central to ensuring justice for all. After her period of recovery, Mary returned to peace activism and “went to every demonstration in D.C. for the next thirty years...except two...peace marches, women’s marches, whoever was marching I just went.”³⁸² Her commitment to peace activism was so strong that while on vacation in London in the 1980s she happened upon a peace march held by the Committee for Nuclear Disarmament and felt compelled to join the protests.³⁸³ She described her involvement with peace demonstrations as a practice “that started in the convent and is continuing.”³⁸⁴ Mary Cain maintains a connection with her identity and mission as a Sister of Notre Dame de Namur, citing this identity as central to her continued peace activism.

Over the course of her life, Mary also developed her own definition of peace activism, based in her religious convictions as an associate of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur. She stressed the importance of language because “words have meaning and

³⁸¹ Mary Cain, interview with author, October 14, 2020.

³⁸² Mary Cain, interview with author, October 14, 2020.

³⁸³ Mary Cain, interview with author, October 14, 2020. Mary was most likely referring to the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND), as the Committee for Nuclear Disarmament does not exist. The CND, active in Great Britain from 1957 to 1983, advocated for nuclear disarmament both at home and abroad. The logo used by their organization is now used as the universal symbol for peace. See Jodi Burkett, “The Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament and Changing Attitudes Towards the Earth in the Nuclear Age,” *The British Journal for the History of Science* 45, no. 4 (December 2012).

³⁸⁴ Mary Cain, interview with author, October 14, 2020.

impact” and decried the persistence of “the war vocabulary.”³⁸⁵ Instead, she believes “peace is the standard,” a philosophy that defines her life’s work and is linked to her religious convictions.³⁸⁶ She asserted: “I have nothing but respect for everybody on this earth, even the ones I don’t want to talk about.” This ideal is rooted in Catholic beliefs about the sanctity of life and an SNDN understanding of the interconnected nature of poverty, war, and injustice.³⁸⁷ Mary views peace as central to justice and all other arenas of activism, a philosophy that guided her activism during the Vietnam War and continues to shape her work for peace and justice.

Mary’s continued peace activism also took more organized forms, and she currently serves as an organizer for Women in Black. Her work with Women in Black, an international network of women devoted to peace, reflects her commitment to remedying larger systems of injustice through peace. Women in Black groups employ “a feminist understanding: that male violence against women in domestic life and in the community, in times of peace and in times of war, are interrelated.”³⁸⁸ The network eschews maternalism, making it clear “women-only peace activism does not suggest that women, any more than men, are ‘natural born peace-makers.’”³⁸⁹ Rather, the group seeks to demonstrate the role gender plays in the many forms of violence enacted in society. The Maryland Women in Black group, with branches in both Frederick and Baltimore, furthers a “mission to engender dialogue, understanding, peace, restorative justice, and

³⁸⁵ Mary Cain, interview with author, October 14, 2020.

³⁸⁶ Mary Cain, interview with author, October 14, 2020.

³⁸⁷ Mary Cain, interview with author, October 14, 2020.

³⁸⁸ “Who Are Women in Black?” Women in Black, 2021, <http://womeninblack.org/about-women-in-black/>. Women in Black began in Israel in 1988 to protest the Israeli occupation of Palestine. The network is involved in a number of progressive women’s issues, but their main priority and action orientation is peace.

³⁸⁹ “Who Are Women in Black?” Women in Black, 2021.

nonviolence” by calling attention to “violence against women, the cost of war, and the commemoration of lives lost to violence and war.”³⁹⁰ These ideas mesh neatly with the Maryland SNDN’s definition of peace as the opposition to all forms of violence.

Mary’s organizing with Women in Black also indicates the ways current and former Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur formed strategic alliances to continue their peace mission within the Catholic Church. The Maryland Women in Black group holds vigils every Friday afternoon in downtown Baltimore with members dressed in black to signify mourning and holding signs “with just the word ‘peace’ in different languages.”³⁹¹ The group also organizes a Peace Path silent demonstration every year on September 11 to remember victims of violence and advocate for peace.³⁹² As the result of the intense organizing efforts of Mary and other members of Women in Black, the Peace Path demonstration in 2003 drew hundreds of participants, including high school students from Notre Dame Preparatory School, small business owners, congregants from churches and synagogues, and college students from Loyola University.³⁹³ Currently, the now eighty-two-year-old Mary continues to participate in weekly vigils and serves as an organizer “who calls people on our list for our Baltimore downtown group” to encourage their involvement.³⁹⁴ Through concerted organizing work, Maryland Women in Black brings together a diverse group of participants in their peace activism.

³⁹⁰ “Maryland,” Women in Black, 2021, <http://womeninblack.org/vigils-around-the-world/america/united-states-of-america/maryland/>.

³⁹¹ Mary Cain, interview with author, October 14, 2020.

³⁹² Liz Bowie, “Residents Join to Forge 12-Mile Peace Path,” *Baltimore Sun*, September 11, 2002; “Maryland,” Women in Black, 2021. Early Peace Path demonstrations also served as protests against the Iraq War.

³⁹³ Bowie, “Residents Join to Forge 12-Mile Peace Path,” September 11, 2002; “Maryland,” Women in Black, 2021.

³⁹⁴ Mary Cain, interview with author, October 14, 2020.

As an active member and organizer with Women in Black, Mary's work with this network serves as a bridge between Catholic and secular peace organizing. Mary, in her commitment to the identity and mission of the SNDN, brings her religious convictions to her work and stands out as a vocal advocate for peace within the Catholic Church. However, as the number of Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur and their associates declines, she understands the importance of joining forces with organizations that share her goals. She tries "to keep track of what the sisters are doing around the world" and to live her ideals both within and outside the confines of the Catholic Church.³⁹⁵ She is an active participant in movements for peace through secular organizations, like Women in Black, that promote a strong sense of women-centered community. As an associate of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, she continues to root her peace protest in religious identity and even seeks out new communities of like-minded women to cultivate her convictions.

The peace activities of the SNDN are ongoing and Sister Katherine is also active for peace in the present moment. After she retired from her Jobs With Peace and Save Our Cities organizing positions in the mid-1990s, Sister Katherine turned to two new projects associated with an SNDN organization called Notre Dame Mission Volunteers (NDMV). Through NDMV she partnered with AmeriCorps to train recent college graduates in literacy education, and she currently conducts mission work in Haiti.³⁹⁶

³⁹⁵ Mary Cain, interview with author, October 14, 2020.

³⁹⁶ Sister Katherine Corr, interview with author, June 25, 2020; Lee Ann Alfreds, "For Missionaries, Help Comes From the Heart," *Baltimore Sun*, September 21, 1996; "Haiti," Notre Dame Mission Volunteers, 2019, <https://www.ndmva.org/serve/international/haiti/>; "Learn," Notre Dame Mission Volunteers, 2019, <https://www.ndmva.org/learn/>. Notre Dame Mission Volunteers was founded by the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur in 1992 and the organization works to promote literacy. In 1995, NDMV partnered with AmeriCorps and in 2006 the organization launched an international program. Sister Katherine began to work with NDMV in 1994. She served as the program's executive director until 2017.

Discussing her latest projects, Sister Katherine asserted, “It could look like I’m leaving peace work, but no it’s just back to the original expression.”³⁹⁷ Speaking to reporters about her work with NDMV, she also declared, “That’s all we’re trying to do as Notre Dame [de Namur] sisters. We believe in making the impossible possible: that injustice can be turned into justice and peace...we believe in God’s power to bring this about.”³⁹⁸ Sister Katherine views peace as the framework beneath her different forms of work as a Sister of Notre Dame de Namur and roots her current work in her religious identity.

The sisters know women’s religious life is declining and that women still cannot be ordained or hold positions of power in the Church hierarchy. Despite this, Sister Katherine insisted on the importance of the unique position and identity of religious sisters: “people need to understand why it’s so valuable, this life...it’s just God’s work...we have a goal here that can be so helpful.”³⁹⁹ Sister Katherine also attributed her ability to work for peace as resulting from her renewed identity as a Maryland SNDN: “It all depends on what we do with our freedom...we have this freedom...that comes from being steeped in our tradition.”⁴⁰⁰ Sisters in the Maryland Province of Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur believe strongly in the power of sisters to advocate for peace and the importance of fighting for justice within the context of the Roman Catholic Church. It is precisely because of their identity as religious sisters, and the strong mission for peace they cultivated and sustained through the years, that these sisters continue to work for peace and justice.

In 2017, she became involved with the Notre Dame Mission Volunteers’ international work. Now, at the age of eighty she is involved with building a bakery as a part of NDMV anti-poverty projects in Haiti.

³⁹⁷ Sister Katherine Corr, interview with author, June 25, 2020.

³⁹⁸ Colman McCarthy, “Mary: Multiple Images Enshroud the Virgin,” *Baltimore Sun*, December 21, 1997.

³⁹⁹ Sister Katherine Corr, interview with author, June 25, 2020.

⁴⁰⁰ Sister Katherine Corr, interview with author, June 25, 2020.

The rich and varied peace careers of religious sisters from the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur reflect the ways a motivation for peace based in an identity as women religious impacted the longevity and vibrancy of Catholic peace organizing. Many men in the Catholic Left shifted their focus to other forms of activism once the draft was no longer a pressing concern or they continued their peace activism while severing their official ties with the Catholic Church. In contrast, the women who forged their peace activism in the women-centered community of the Maryland Province of SNDN and rooted their activism in the mission and identity of their religious order worked to carve out progressive spaces within the Catholic Church and continued to advocate for peace well beyond the Vietnam War's conclusion. These sisters allied with other activists and organizations, both Catholic and non-Catholic, while continuing to center their religious identity and convictions. Thus, religious identity and a commitment to peace as social justice were intertwined for these sisters, pointing to the centrality of women religious to the history and longevity of Catholic peace organizing.

Conclusion

On October 14, 2020, I came to the end of my last formal interview with Mary Cain. I asked her if she had any parting thoughts before we hung up the phone, and she replied, “I wrote this down to say to you...I need to see my successors coming along and I’m convinced that you’re one of them.”⁴⁰¹ I was stunned and honored. How could I, a non-Catholic graduate student, be considered the successor to a Catholic sister who burned draft files? As I mulled this over, I was struck by what Mary’s comment tells us about the significance of the Maryland Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur’s peace activism and the practice of women’s history and oral history. Over the years, countless journalists interviewed Mary, eager to hear about the Berrigan brothers or learn sordid details about the marriage of a former sister to a former priest.⁴⁰² But no one asked about her identity as a religious sister, her daring actions for peace, or her cherished community of like-minded women. In the 1980s, when Sister Mary Reilly did ask these questions, they were locked away in an archive to be viewed only by other sisters or diocesan officials.

Listening to the stories of these sisters has power. Their oral histories tell us not just that sisters existed in a history that seeks to ignore them, but also that the presence of religious sisters in peace organizing impacted the form, content, and longevity of Catholic peace activism. The sisters are eager to pass the torch to a new generation of women activists, and for Catholics and non-Catholics alike to understand the gravity and legacy of their work. They also reveal the wide range of women active for peace, and the different ideologies and perspectives that composed twentieth century women’s peace movements. Working with other individuals and organizations, both Catholic and secular,

⁴⁰¹ Mary Cain, interview with author, October 14, 2020.

⁴⁰² Mary Cain, interview with author, September 25, 2020.

these women help us understand how social change actually happens. Social change is not achieved through consensus, instead, it is messy and fragmented and manifests as different groups working toward various goals related to the same issue. As we continue to work for a more peaceful and just society, historians need to ensure we write histories reflecting the true diversity, complicated methods, and political aims of women's movements for peace.

Although excluded, minimized, or obscured in the historical record, sisters in the Maryland Province of SNDN were crucial to the longevity and substance of peace organizing within the Roman Catholic Church. In the 1960s and 1970s, the presence of women religious in peace organizing baffled the press and the public. As women who devoted themselves to God rather than husbands and families, they defied traditional expectations of femininity. The Catholic Church elevated these women to a position of holiness within the Church but replaced the patriarchal constraints of marriage with a hierarchy of bishops and cardinals. Both the Church and society expected sisters to be meek women who served God by obeying the archbishop. As a result, press coverage of sisters either focused on their dress, their looks, their relationships with men, or journalists ignored women religious to focus instead on more easily understandable male priest activists. The Maryland Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, however, had their own ideas about what it meant to serve God and Church.

Between 1954 and 2021, the Maryland Province Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur became radical advocates for peace. These sisters drew on a strong religious identity and mission for peace and justice, developed as a result of the changes that took place in religious life both before and after the Second Vatican Council in 1965. Individual

religious sisters were active in forming a new identity for peace during this period, combining their religious, academic, and real-world experiences to form a nuanced understanding of the systemic nature of injustice. In doing so, they cemented a definition of peace as working to end multiple forms of violence and deprivation and thus necessary to fulfill their traditional calling to serve the poor. Between 1968 and 1973, activist sisters in the Maryland Province of SNDN put these understandings to the test, using their specific religious identity and mission to motivate their peace activism during the Vietnam War. The sisters also relied on the women-centered networks and community of their religious order to sustain their activism despite media and public scrutiny. After the Vietnam War ended in 1973, these sisters remained committed to peace activism and their position within the Church. As many men moved away from the Church or peace organizing, the Maryland Province of Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur fought for reform within the Catholic Church and advocated for both radical anti-poverty measures and peace.

Although the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur did not end the Vietnam War or U.S. militarism, they were successful in pushing the Catholic Church to re-evaluate its position on the validity of war. The Catholic Church traditionally promoted the Just War doctrine, arguing that war is morally acceptable if it is conducted for justifiable reasons.⁴⁰³ As a result of dissent against the Vietnam War from clergy, laity, and women religious, the American Catholic hierarchy declared the Vietnam War an unjust war in 1971.⁴⁰⁴ In 1983, the National Conference of Catholic Bishops published a document entitled *The Challenge of Peace*, establishing pacifism as a valid position for American

⁴⁰³ Au, *The Cross, the Flag, and the Bomb*, 42.

⁴⁰⁴ McNeal, *Harder Than War*, xiii.

Catholics to hold in addition to continuing to affirm the Just War theory.⁴⁰⁵ More recently, Pope Francis' October 2020 encyclical *Fratelli Tutti* critiqued the Just War doctrine while also lamenting the failures of market capitalism.⁴⁰⁶ These changes in Catholic teachings reflect a philosophy of peace and justice long-held by many sisters in the Catholic Church. The Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur challenged Catholic women and men to take a stand for their religious and moral beliefs and in doing so encouraged the Church to enact the values they preached.

The story of activist members of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur is one of persistence and conviction, attesting to the way women's networks and communities have strengthened existing activism for peace. These sisters offer us new ways of thinking about religious motivations for peace activism and the prominent role of women's communities and the idea of sisterhood in strengthening and sustaining peace activism over long periods. The stories of these women are incredible and informative, providing us with a deeper understanding of who fought for peace and why they did so, urging us to continue the hard work necessary to ensure a more just and peaceful world.

⁴⁰⁵ National Conference of Catholic Bishops, *The Challenge of Peace: God's Promise and Our Response* (Washington, D.C.: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1983).

⁴⁰⁶ Francis, *Fratelli Tutti* (Vatican City: Vatican Press, 2020).

Appendix

A Note on Sources

Why are the stories of women religious not readily available in the historical record? Pledging their lives to God and the Catholic Church, women religious are often obscured by their institutional affiliation. Archives for religious orders preserve constitutions, community annals, parish school records, and provincial council meeting minutes. In these records, focus is placed on the Church, the order, and its ministry, rather than on the lives, work, and perspectives of individual sisters. Documenting the lives and stories of the Maryland Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur required a different set of tools and resources, reaching beyond traditional archives. Much of my research for this thesis, a collective biography of peace activist members of the Maryland SNDN, draws on oral histories and newspaper accounts in addition to archival collections to uncover the lives and legacies of these women.

I seek to center oral history sources in my work. Oral history is now an established and accepted methodology in the field of history, yet historians still treat oral history as “a panacea designed to fill in the blanks in women’s or traditional history...compensating when we have no other sources.”⁴⁰⁷ Instead, I place oral history testimony from peace activist sisters at the center of my narrative and analysis, using archival sources and newspaper accounts to contextualize and supplement oral sources. In centering the voices of women, I claim a feminist philosophy for oral history that is

⁴⁰⁷ Joan Sangster, “Telling Our Stories: Feminist Debates and the Use of Oral History,” *Women’s History Review* 3, no. 1 (1994): 7.

motivated by an ethics of care.⁴⁰⁸ The process of recording oral histories is not only an act of collection, but also an act of collaboration requiring radical listening and empathy.

The women religious I interviewed provided a counternarrative disputing the claims of the leadership of the Berrigans in the Catholic Left and introducing new voices into a historical record that previously silenced them. The life stories of these sisters stand alone as compelling narratives, but also “reveal something new about a social position defined by and of interest to the analyst but more legible through an insider’s view.”⁴⁰⁹ The stories of these sisters reveal the importance of a religious identity and mission to the peace work of the SNDN, one that would remain opaque if not for the insider insight provided by oral histories with these women. My work seeks to center these women’s voices in the history of their own lives and works, employing the valuable insight they provided rather than relegating them to the sidelines of their story.

Oral histories are always the result of the complex relationship between interviewer and interviewee, and it is important to acknowledge both the processes I employed when recording the stories of these sisters as well as my positionality as a researcher and interviewer.⁴¹⁰ As an outsider and non-Catholic, I was introduced to interview subjects through inquiries to the SNDN Provincial archivist, Sister Kimberly Dalgarn. She provided me names and contact information with sisters. After an initial interview with Sister Katherine, I was connected to other sisters active for peace through the snowball method, one illuminating the strong women-centered communities of the

⁴⁰⁸ Michelle Caswell and Marika Cifor, “From Human Rights to Feminist Ethics: Radical Empathy in the Archives,” *Archivaria* 81 (Spring 2016); Susan Hodge Armitage, Patricia Hart, and Karen Weathermon, eds., *Women’s Oral History: The Frontiers Reader* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2002).

⁴⁰⁹ Maynes, Pierce, and Laslett, *Telling Stories*, 6.

⁴¹⁰ Maynes, Pierce, and Laslett, *Telling Stories*, 98-125; Elizabeth Tonkin, *Narrating Our Pasts: The Social Construction of Oral History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

SNDN. Unfortunately, many of the women the sisters recommended I interview were unable to speak due to health concerns or difficulties with memory. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, I was also unable to meet my interviewees in person and instead conducted interviews on Zoom or over the phone. Interviewees were asked to sign a consent form and all interviews were recorded, with the permission of the narrator. I transcribed all the interviews verbatim. I employed a life narrative approach to oral history, one that traced the sisters' history from childhood to present. I provided my narrators with a list of questions prior to our interview. I found, however, I needed to ask very few questions. The sisters I interviewed presented clear narratives of their life, cultivated through decades of reflection and meditation on their mission and identity as Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur. As a result, most of my interjections in the interviews came in the form of specific follow up questions, tailored to their responses. The list of questions provided to the sisters before their initial interview can be seen below.

Although I sought to center oral testimony in my work — not viewing it as supplementary but as crucial to examining the peace activist history of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur — interviews also served to fill gaps in the historical record surrounding these women. Archives regarding the Maryland SNDN are limited in what they record. Michel-Rolph Trouillot writes of the way silences enter the process of historical production at moments of fact creation, assembly, and retrieval.⁴¹¹ The institutional lives of these women are well-recorded through community annals, constitutions, and parish records. Their personal experiences, identities, and recollections are much harder to locate, as until Vatican II these women were seen first as servants of

⁴¹¹ Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1995), 26.

God and Church and second as women and individuals.⁴¹² Thus, the voices of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur are silenced at the moment of source creation and assembly.

Silences also shape historical production surrounding the SNDN at the moment of fact retrieval as a result of restrictive access policies. In 1986, Sister Mary Reilly recorded and transcribed two hundred oral histories with sisters in the order. These recordings and transcripts were placed in the Archives of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, Maryland Province in Ilchester, Maryland.⁴¹³ In 2011, records were transferred to Cincinnati, Ohio when the Maryland Province merged with the Ohio Province.⁴¹⁴ In the foreword to her 1992 book, *Women of Courage*, Sister Mary Reilly described her goals in conducting these oral histories. She wrote, “rather than hiding the lights of so many sisters’ lives under the bushel basket of anonymity, they should shine for all to see.”⁴¹⁵ Unfortunately, Sister Mary’s intentions did not come to fruition. The oral histories are currently maintained in the Ohio Province Archives under a highly restrictive access policy, which can be seen below. As an outside researcher, I was unable to view the contents of these oral histories. This policy serves to further silence the voices of women religious. As a result of these restrictions, I have chosen to use quotes from the oral histories used by Sister Mary Reilly in *Women of Courage*, trusting she quoted accurately with minimal editing. I also work to corroborate these accounts, as well as the accounts given by the sisters I interviewed, whenever possible with newspaper and archival research.

⁴¹² Quiñonez and Turner, *The Transformation of American Catholic Sisters*, 88-90.

⁴¹³ Reilly, *Women of Courage*, vii.

⁴¹⁴ “Sisters of Notre Dame Complete Merger,” *Catholic Review*, January 19, 2012.

⁴¹⁵ Reilly, *Women of Courage*, vii.

In addition to restrictive access policies, I also faced restrictions due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. As a result of closures due to public health concerns, I was unable to visit archives in person. I gained access to archival collections that were previously digitized and relied on the generosity of archivists willing to scan materials for me. Although I was able to access the records most essential to the history of peace activism among the Maryland Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, the re-opening of archives when it is safe to do so will only lead to greater detail on the peace activism of these sisters.

Combining oral histories, newspaper accounts, and archival records I have attempted not only to uncover the voices of religious sisters in histories of Catholic and women's peace activism, but also to help us understand why it is crucial we include these women in our historical narratives. I am privileged to have had the opportunity to listen to these women's incredible stories. I hope my work does justice to their conviction and strength in working for peace and justice.

Oral History Questions Provided to Participants

- Tell me a little bit about your childhood. (As much as you feel comfortable with!)
 - What year were you born?
 - Where did you grow up?
 - Were you raised Catholic?
- How did you come to join the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur?
 - What called you to serve in this religious order in particular?
 - What year did you join the order?
- Can you tell me about your early years with the order?
 - What sort of ministry were you involved in?
 - Where were you located? Were you always in the Baltimore area?
 - How did your outlook and ministry evolve and change during this period?
 - What sort of training did you receive for your ministry?
 - What drew you to this ministry in particular?
- As you know, my project is specifically about peace activism — why did you become involved in peace activism?
 - What forms did this peace activism take?
 - What was your position on the Vietnam War?
 - Were you involved with protests, sit ins, pray ins, and other events? Can you tell me more about these?
 - Were you involved with any peace organizations within or outside of the Church?
 - Were there any writers, thinkers, or leaders who inspired you when thinking about peace and justice?
- What was the general opinion within the order about peace activism?
 - Were there other sisters involved in advocacy?
 - What was the consensus of your superior and the Church more generally on peace activism?
- Did your work for peace continue after the 1960s and 1970s?
 - What sort of work did you conduct during the 1980s, 1990s, and 2000s?
- Can you tell me more about your current work?

- Is there anyone else you can think of who was involved with SNDN peace activity who I might contact?
- If you think of anything later that you would like to add you can always contact me via email or phone!

Access Policy for Personal Files and Oral History Recordings/Transcripts⁴¹⁶

- If a sister is living, confidentiality is respected, and contents are only shared with the permission of the sister.
- If a sister is deceased, her records are available for internal research only.
 - If a request comes from family members, content may be shared at the archivist's discretion.
- If an external request for information is received, confidentiality of living members included in the contents must be respected. The archivist will review the oral history and share only sections pertinent to the research request.
- If a sister has left the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, or transferred to another order, her files are restricted to access by leadership only.

⁴¹⁶ Policy provided by SNDN Ohio Province archivist Sister Kimberly Dalgarn, email message to author, October 13, 2020.

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Hayes, Mary. Interview with Sara Ludewig. September 1, 2020.

Archival Collections

Swarthmore College Peace Collection, McCabe Library, Swarthmore, PA

Community for Creative Non-Violence Records

Jobs With Peace Baltimore Records

Trinity Washington University Archives, Sister Helen Sheehan Library, Washington, D.C.

Sister Mary Hayes Papers

University of Notre Dame Archives, Hesburgh Library, South Bend, IN

Catholic Peace Fellowship Records

Leadership Conference of Women Religious Records

Printed Materials of Religious Orders Records

Newspapers

The Atlanta Daily World

The Baltimore Sun

The Catholic Advocate
The Catholic News Service
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