

## Abp. Francis P. Keough Papers

### Biographical Note:

Francis Patrick Keough was born on December 30, 1889, to Irish immigrants Patrick and Margaret (Ryan) Keough, in New Britain, Connecticut, the youngest of two surviving children. He received his seminary education at St. Thomas Minor Seminary, Hartford, the Sulpician Seminary at Issy, France, and St. Bernard's Seminary, Rochester, New York, and was ordained for the Diocese of Hartford on June 10, 1916. He was engaged in pastoral work until he was named secretary to the bishop of Hartford in 1919. He held chancery assignments until he was appointed bishop of Providence in 1934, including as diocesan director of the Catholic Mission Society, which he built into one of the strongest programs in the country. He used his fundraising skills wherever he served to establish programs to serve those in need at the local level and abroad in the missions. One of his first major initiatives as bishop of Providence was to organize a Catholic Charity Fund Appeal to provide relief to victims of the Great Depression. He also relieved the diocese of its financial debts, while at the same time building dozens of schools, churches, and institutions to meet the needs of its growing and diverse Catholic population.

He was appointed to succeed Abp. Michael J. Curley of Baltimore in 1947 and was installed as the Archdiocese's eleventh archbishop in 1948. During his fourteen years in Baltimore, the Catholic population increased by fifty percent, necessitating a building program to meet the needs of its growing and increasingly mobile members that included the establishment of eighteen new parishes in the suburbs surrounding the city. Known as the "Archbishop of the poor," he organized a Catholic Charity Fund Appeal in Baltimore to help finance the Archdiocese's programs and institutions that included the building of Stella Maris Hospice for elderly housing and Villa Maria, a facility to house the Archdiocese's programs and services for children and youth. His major building project as Archbishop of Baltimore, however, was the Cathedral of Mary Our Queen, begun in 1954. The \$12.5 million project, funded by a bequest by Baltimore merchant Thomas O'Neill, comprised a cathedral, rectory, convent, and school and was dedicated in 1959.

Archbishop Keough was active in national organizations, serving as chair of several departments of the National Catholic Welfare Conference (today known as the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops), including the Administrative Board, and as an episcopal supervisor of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith in the United States. He also served on the boards of a number of organizations, including the Catholic Near East Welfare Association, The Catholic University of America, and the Pontifical North American College.

Declining health, which began with a major illness in 1954, resulted in his death on December 8, 1961, at the age of 71. He is interred beneath the main altar in the Cathedral of Mary Our Queen.

### *Further reading*

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

Thomas W. Spalding. "Traditions and Transitions: The Leadership in the Baltimore Church, 1948-1961," *U.S. Catholic Historian*, 7:1 (Winter 1988).

Entry for Abp. Francis P. Keough in the *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, vol 8. McGraw-Hill, 1967-1974.

**Extent:** Boxes: 14 records storage boxes; 8 document cases; 2 flat file boxes; 2 pamphlet boxes

**Date range:** c. 1911-1970 [bulk dates: 1948-1961]

### **Scope & Content:**

#### **Series 1: Correspondence, c. 1946-1961 – 4 record storage boxes**

This series contains the correspondence that spans Abp. Keough's tenure in Baltimore. It has been divided into three subseries: General, Apostolic Delegate, and Religious Communities.

##### **Subseries 1.1: General, c. 1947-1961 – 3.5 record storage boxes**

This subseries contains general correspondence with individuals, institutions, and organizations during Archbishop Keough's administration, arranged alphabetically by correspondent.

##### **Subseries 1.2: Apostolic Delegate, c. 1946-1961 – 10 folders**

This subseries contains correspondence with Apostolic Delegates Abp. Amleto Cicognani and Abp. Egidio Vagnozzi regarding official church matters, arranged chronologically.

##### **Subseries 1.3: Religious Communities – 4 folders**

This subseries contains correspondence with members of religious communities lacking surnames. The correspondence has been arranged alphabetically by community name, which has been sorted by gender. Religious communities have been identified by their popular names instead of their official ones, ex., Jesuits for Society of Jesus and Mercy Sisters for Religious Sisters of Mercy.

#### **Series 2: Subject Files, c. 1946-1961 – 6 record storage boxes and 2 document cases**

This series contains correspondence and related materials placed in files organized by subject regarding a specific event, individual, issue, or organization, including Associated Catholic Charities and the Cathedral of Mary Our Queen. The files have been organized alphabetically by subject.

#### **Series 3: Organizations, c. 1948-1961 – 5 record storage boxes and 2 document cases**

This series contains the files maintained by Abp. Keough for the boards he served on (excluding the National Catholic Welfare Conference which has been given its own series): Catholic Near East Welfare Association, The Catholic University of America, the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, and Pontifical North American College.

**Series 4: National Catholic Welfare Conference, c. 1948-1961 – 4 record storage boxes**

This series contains the files Abp. Keough maintained for the NCWC during his term as archbishop of Baltimore, c. 1948-1961, which included serving six one-year terms as chair of the Administrative Board and as chair of the Education, Legal, and Social Action Departments.

**Series 5: Diaries & Calendars, 1947-1960 – 1 slim document cases and 1 pamphlet box**

This series contains Abp. Keough's Episcopal Diary, in which he recorded his daily appointments and engagements from 1947 through 1961. This series also contains Abp. Keough's Liturgical Desk Calendars, in which appointments, meetings, and liturgical events are recorded. The series includes desk calendars for the years 1950-1953, and 1956-1960. (Note: the calendars for 1954 and 1955 are missing.)

**Series 6: Addresses, Homilies, Statements, 1935-1961, n.d. – 1 slim document case**

This series contains surviving examples of Abp. Keough's addresses, homilies, and statements that date from his time as bishop of Providence.

**Series 7: Personal, c. 1947-1961 – 1 slim document case**

This subseries contains biographical information and correspondence and documentation regarding his coat of arms, honors and awards, death and estate.

**Series 8: Printed Material, c. 1948-1959 – 1 slim document case and 1 pamphlet box**

This series contains printed material and ephemera collected by Archbishop Keough, including books, reports, newsletters, and programs from special events.

**Series 9: Oversize Material, c. 1952-1962 – 2 flat storage boxes**

This series contains oversize drawings for the Cathedral of Mary Our Queen and plats held for several properties held by the Archdiocese in Baltimore County.

**Note:** Materials created by and relating to Abp. Keough can be found in other collections housed at the Associated Archives: scrapbooks containing photographs, letters, newspaper clippings, and ephemera documenting significant events in Abp. Keough's career, including his consecration as Bishop of Providence, installation as Archbishop of Baltimore, and ordination jubilees, and photographs that document his official duties as bishop of Providence and archbishop of Baltimore.