

SS097.mp3

Judy Schultz- Say a few words and I think if Joan you would say something, and the mic can sort of pick up your voice. This is May 21<sup>st</sup> 1968 we are in the parlor of St. Peter's home for children. In the room is Mrs. Joan Beifuss, Bishop Durrick I am Judy Schultz and the observer Tony Ossler. We would like to thank you very much Bishop Durrick for participating in this and I would like very much if you Joan might begin with some of your preliminary questions that you had thought about.

Joan Beifuss- Well I was just wondering bishop Durrick if you could give us a little information about the Catholic Diocese of Nashville the number of Catholics and that type of information.

Bishop Joseph Durick- Yes thank you very much and I am delighted to participate in this first of all, we are coterminous with the state and therefore the Diocese of Nashville comprises the state of Tennessee and we are 95,000 Catholics, 80 parishes, 120 priests around 500 teaching sisters and others and we have several colleges here in Memphis and a junior college in Nashville. The educational program has always been one which has been highly developed by my predecessor bishop Adrian who has retired but has not resigned, he is still Diocese of, he is still the bishop of the diocese of Nashville and I am sometimes called the apostolic agitator so at any rate this gives you perhaps or gives you a little picture of our missionary aspects of our diocese we are about 3% or less here. But I hope a strong 3%.

Joan Beifuss- As a non catholic can I ask you what is meant by an apostolic..

Bishop Joseph Durick- Administrator, yes well it means that I have the buck and can't pass it. For all intensive purposes I am in charge of the diocese, though at liturgical functions and as a matter of priority the bishop of Nashville would take first place in anything that might come up in those lines.

Joan Beifuss- But you do make decisions?

Bishop Joseph Durick- Yes, yes I am the one in charge of the diocese.

Joan Beifuss- Now does that mean all functions does that mean educational and charity wise and all the functions of the catholic church?

Bishop Joseph Durick- All the divisions that is right, yes, social concerns and educational right down the line.

Joan Beifuss- Bishop Durrick how many of the Catholics in the Diocese are in Memphis?

Bishop Joseph Durick- Roughly I would say half, 45,000 in greater Shelby county which is about half our diocese, catholic wise, and this church is very strong over here it seems to me, catholic wise, and have been very proud to have worked with the people here in Memphis. We do have some conservative elements and that was evident in the recent difficulties between here and Tennessee.

Joan Beifuss- Can I ask you one other thing about the diocese as such. Are there not some areas of the state for instance a priest is serving three and four churches?

Bishop Joseph Durick- Yes there is one area called the Harryman missions, Harryman Tennessee. Which I believe is as large as the state of Connecticut however one figures that into his mind, that is one area and we have several other areas which are quite large in extent. Out of the 95 counties whatever the number right in there that we have here in this volunteer state half of our counties have no priest or an altar or as I always say raise to living, god, so we have much work to do as a missionary diocese, great work has been done it seems to me and I must say that. I came up from Alabama four years ago in 1964 and it has been, it is really one of the garden spots of the catholic church in the south. Most of the priests here are native and you better not talk about any of them because one is kin to the other or it seems that way..

Joan Beifuss- Well are you a native southerner?

Bishop Joseph Durick- I was born in Dayton Tennessee, as whoever said it first to be near my mother, but I was reared in Alabama. I came from a family of 12, 9 of us still living so a nice big family. I grew up in Vesper Alabama actually and worked there as a priest in the state of Alabama up until 1964 I became a bishop and was ordained in 1940 became a bishop in 1955 as auxiliary bishop there and to archbishop (Muffled) in Alabama and came here as (muffled) bishop in 1964.

Joan Beifuss- Where did you have your seminary training?

Bishop Joseph Durick- At St. Bernit Alabama with the benediction fathers and St. Mary's seminary in Baltimore (muffled), and then I went to the urban college of the propagation in Rome for 4 years. We used to call it the propaganda college but that is a bad word now and we...

Joan Beifuss- Oh the word propaganda originally started in the roman church.

Bishop Joseph Durick- That is right.

Joan Beifuss- I teach that in my course and have at Memphis state.

Bishop Joseph Durick- It is a direct translation from the Latin and we used to call it propaganda college and one fellow said I knew you had one of those places.

Judy Schultz- Now Bishop Durrick there is no seminary in Tennessee is there?

Bishop Joseph Durick- We have no major nor minor seminary in Tennessee.

Judy Schultz- Where do most of the priests get there training?

Bishop Joseph Durick- Well we give them a choice, of their philosophy in theology and it has to be an accredited school. In theology they have a choice of three or four schools which they may go one is St. Ambrose in Iowa, another is New Orleans,

Notre Dame, another Dallas Texas another St. Burnett Alabama. And before Little Rock the Little Rock seminary closed (muffled) to give them a choice and we feel that they will be just a little bit happier there at least that is the experiment which we are trying rather than to say you will be going to one of the other places.

Joan Beifuss- Now once they have completed their seminary work do priests have an opportunity to indicate where they want to go or is it strictly at random?

Bishop Joseph Durick- Well, once if a priest is ordained to in this diocese he is held to work within the confines of this diocese. We ask our seminarians and I am in the throws now, the June changes here in the diocese and we are so tightly knit and so short of personnel that it is really quite a problem now, but I do get indications and recommendations from various people, department of education like senior Elliot and Father Lynch who is head of the vocation directory in the diocese, we find out what these men would prefer if we possibly can we put them in those places, but there is a little snap where every once in awhile it used to happen in the military they used to say. But hopefully in a place where a man will be happier and that is the theory and we can't always do it but we try as well as we can in our days of stress and struggle.

Joan Beifuss- Well you spend a great deal of time then traveling around the state.

Bishop Joseph Durick- Yes quite great one of the reasons I gave a moment ago for not seeing the desk for a couple of days I have been over to Chattanooga and up to Oak Ridge Tennessee and back down into Nashville, or not Nashville but Chattanooga and then over here to Memphis. So I will be back tomorrow morning.

Joan Beifuss- Back here?

Bishop Joseph Durick- Yes.

Joan Beifuss- The you can get my letters.

Judy Schultz- Then you can read your own letter which will be superfluous then. Joan Beifuss- Ok then well bishop Durick I wonder then if we can get on to the period of Memphis in February through the death of Dr. King in April. Were you in and out of Memphis during February when the strike first started?

Bishop Joseph Durick- Yes I was. Yes I was. I was actually want to know about the strike just as everyone else did and I was very pleased to note that from the very beginning some of our priests along with the ministers and the rabbis here in Memphis were not only did they offer but in the beginning got into some open talks regarding negotiations with the city in regard to the sanitation workers strike. As both of you know it did not develop successfully but I was very happy to see that from the very beginning.

Joan Beifuss- Were, did you talk with any of the clergy who were involved, did you get any direct reports as to what was happening.

Bishop Joseph Durick- Yes from our dean here for one, (Monsenior Leopard?) and others who were interested and who also participated.

Joan Beifuss- Who were some of the priests who participated in?

Bishop Joseph Durick- Father Joseph for one, he is a Franciscan priest at St. Mary here in Memphis (Monsenior Leopard) I mentioned, Father Greenspun, who is a (muffled) who has come in to begin an inner city apostolate as we call it and later on other priests went in and those I know where there from the very beginning.

Joan Beifuss- And you do have a chance to talk wit them about what had happened.

Bishop Joseph Durick- Yes I did yes.

Joan Beifuss- Did you have any impressions of the strike at the very beginning before the entrance of the black ministers into the labor dispute, just as a labor dispute did you have any reaction towards?

Bishop Joseph Durick- Well the initial reaction was that of a municipal government versus a union and the complications I think were compounded by assertions and I didn't look up the law that in saw places the check off the dues check off was used and in other place sit was not allowed by municipalities, that seems to be a grievance form the very beginning or rather a difference of opinion, or conviction whatever it was and the assertion to that according to a I don't know whether it was a ruling of the supreme court, again I didn't get into that, that they were not to strike against the public wheel or however it was put. These general statements and no one realizing of course at that time that this would snow ball and develop into what it did, thinking that day by day or day after day one would finally see the need of this.

Joan Beifuss- Oh off hand do you know if any of the sanitation workers were parishioners of catholic churches here in Memphis?

Bishop Joseph Durick- About that I do not know, I assume that there would have been a few. Our numbers here in Tennessee catholic wise among the negros was rather limited. We hoped there were more but rather limited I would say.

Joan Beifuss- One of the members of our committee is a negro teacher who, she is at St. Peter's? Anne Benson but anyway she was one of the member of our committee that is a negro.

Bishop Joseph Durick- I see, yes we had some fine leadership in the catholic church in Memphis among our negros.

Joan Beifuss- Well now bishop when did the seriousness of what was happening in Memphis become more apparent to you?

Bishop Joseph Durick- Well I think it was certainly a very gradual thing so as far as I was concerned. I noted it became a little more complicated and began to take a

certain tinge it seemed to me. As it went along, when that was, I don't recall now, so many things were happening and I was making no notion of how and where or rather when these things were developing but it seems to have. It began to become racial I suppose oh after I don't know 2 or 3 weeks, that is my present recollection. I really don't recall what the time I was involved was. And I think of course from a certain point of view that was probably one of the difficulties. See, assumption that it had become racial and it was not a purely racial thing to begin with, now collective bargaining is not only a thing which is part of our great American experiment and dream but costs, I suppose had ramifications with the city and the public welfare and people who feel it immediately when their garbage isn't picked up it became quite personal there in many cases and so all these things that were said and then the opposite was being said, it was quite involved it seemed to me right down the line for a long time.

Joan Beifuss- Did you ever have any opportunity to talk with any of the city officials at any time during the strike about what was going on?

Bishop Joseph Durick- No I did not, I do not have this as a policy but I am very seldom if ever do anything like that I do ask some of our men either who are here on the scene and are well known to the mayor, one of our priests I presume it would be better not to mention his name, there is nothing secret about it but did go down and the mayor was kind enough to receive him and I think they had quite a long talk about the situation and what I suppose nothing came of it because nothing was settled, but certainly not only himself but also as you know the ministers on us down to see the mayor and I believe the good rabbi had been quiet up to that point. Suddenly he became very much involved like myself and I became involved by, I suppose I guess it was through the recommendation of the priest here in Memphis. They assembled together and they recommend that I give a \$1,000 donation, I say I but I mean the diocese, to the sanitation workers and then is when I began to join Rabbi Wax and being two of the most hated men in the area. Joan Beifuss-

Joan Beifuss- Now excuse me can I ask you something that was a recommendation of the priests?

Bishop Joseph Durick- The priests of Memphis yes it was.

Joan Beifuss- Was that, can you get that down in time at all, that would have been after you were over for the catholic interracial mass and dinner?

Bishop Joseph Durick- I don't recall but I believe that it was because publicity was given that immediately and frankly I think we handled it poorly as far as some people were concerned and I presume simplicity, we have it to the people representing the union and said this is for the poor amongst you and we know that you have to live and we are hopeful that this will be of some help to you. It was given that simply.

Joan Beifuss- What kind of criticisms?

Bishop Joseph Durick- Well criticisms so far as many of our Catholics were concerned and I suppose perhaps a few others but I didn't know our Catholics were very severe in some cases and writing to me by what right did I do this, why would I take sides. We had a diocese development fund program a few months ago and this money should not be taken from that fund. So I felt compelled finally to make a statement in the papers, since a man used a fictitious name, I could never find his name in the directory or the city directory, it wasn't there and I understand the newspapers will take fictitious letters if they know who it is and they never did tell me so I didn't bother but at any rate I did have to make statements. One was that this was not out of a charity fund, and it was to be given for a worthy cause and that was the stipulation it was given. And secondly that this did not mean that I took any sides regarding the labor issue versus the municipal city or government here and thirdly that the Catholic church had always been interested in the poor and would continue to be.

Joan Beifuss- Do you frequently find occasion where you say give some money to people whom you feel are in need?

Bishop Joseph Durick- We hope that we do our part, I don't recall any crying needs we have had since I have been here or any great crises, we would certainly want to do our part if there was any sort of a disaster, this was certainly they were human beings and we presumed they needed help at least it was recommended to me that they did. It was not very well known but however it was done and I am not competent to say how, but \$15,000 in food stamps was given by the municipal government here to this same cause, but somehow or other these people weren't worried about that they were worried about the \$1,000 given by the diocese. It was rather irritating that should be but that was the way some people reacted in this matter. That was the conservative element no doubt about it, they certainly have their right to their convictions but I don't, I think it was a bit of rash judgment at least I thought that it was. Assuming all this is so without asking even, without asking me to make a statement about it so that was one of the irritating features of it and they just assumed of course that I had not only taken sides but also taken the negro side here. The fact that they were negroes was incidental they were human beings and I am sure whether they had been or not, if they had been in need we would have responded and the priest would have recommended the same way.

Judy Schultz- Well now the increasing number of clergy who are actually participating, that is the nuns, who began marching and that type of activity, do you have a policy towards something like that, towards involvement of clergy, direct involvement of clergy.

Bishop Joseph Durick- Our policy is absolute freedom to follow one's conscience in this regard. If one wishes to do so, fine. I order in now or nor would my order be obeyed because this is a very much a matter of conscience with everyone. And we had one of the nuns who was on hunger strike as you may or may not know, that was her conviction and how deeply she felt about the whole thing. We did ask her to possibly do her witness in St. Louis church which she later did, at first she was at

city hall. SO for those who wish to do so, fine. Now the first march I did not go along I did not march. I was asked to, I sent word over here and asked the priest to gather and to give me a consensus as to whether they thought in the light of local conditions whether I should. This is the one that ended in a riot, I am not much of a marcher, we had protect equality here in this diocese and I work around the clock hopefully at least for the cause of human dignity and I hope the negros know that I am a friend of theirs in this state.

Joan Beifuss- Excuse me could you say something about project equality since you just mentioned it.

Bishop Joseph Durick- Well we are the only diocese in the south who has this particular equal opportunity program, it is interfaith. We are the principals, or the I suppose we, well we started here in Tennessee and invited others to join and they have to whatever extent they have been able but it call s for employers first of all cleaning their own house, physician heal thy self and people that we trade with we ask them not only to give us the three marks of good bye but also the fourth mark that they will not discriminate so far as that we combine Christian matters (muffled) immediately the boycott goes up as you may have noticed in the United Methodist tremendous meeting there in Dallas and that was debated quite widely down there, but I think it is a splendid program, the little pebble dropped in the you know it's ever wagging circles is a good example to me of what seems to be the effect or reaction, they Nashville we are very pleased you give us hope you give us encouragement. We have started two employment renewal offices in Nashville and there have been 4 or 5 success stories out of 120 applicants, people and negros and those of the disadvantaged here in our state principally but not entirely but there it is in many cases do you hear that, you give us some hope to hear something positive being done and I believe we have helped crank up a few other people around and I am breaking my elbow patting myself on the back but I don't mean it in that fashion, we are hopeful that whatever is done will be for the honor and glory of god. But by and large it has been most successful and not easy because you business men are just going to say that and we announced a year ago that it was supposed to be a loving approach there was to be no boycott there was to be no selected buyers list, now the national office uses that. They say that is a lever by which they are able to get into this. Whoever said it first it won't be the black and white to settle problems it will be the green. Now you know the economic power which is so powerful in so many cases in so many things.

Joan Beifuss- Go back to, you didn't march then in the first march?

Bishop Joseph Durick- No, only by reaching of the decision at which the priests seem to arrive at and that was their conclusion and recommendation and I followed that. Like I said I am not much of a marcher anyway, but I followed their recommendation anyway. I wasn't anxious to march but had they said so I would have.

Joan Beifuss- Did they give you any reasons why they did not think you should march in the first march.

Bishop Joseph Durick- There reasons were that the matter of that time was very complicated still and the city embroiled and all this and the issues were not clear cut enough at that time to take the stand which they felt it looked as if I would be taking if I marched in that particular demonstration, thinking as the priests did that it would be a sign of my taking sides in this issue. Hopefully the church is neither pro-labor or pro-management it is supposed to be pro justice and that is hard to arrive at and so that was their conclusion at that time. That it was just too complicated and the issues were not clear cut enough, we could see the human dignity involved and the racial issue had entered definitely. But it was still almost a well in so many, in the eyes of so many people a legal issue and battle and confrontation here as of course the racial overtones are getting stronger and it did become that.

Joan Beifuss- I was going to say that for instance when you came for the catholic council and interracial mass and banquet, now it seems to me at that point you were already pretty involved.

Bishop Joseph Durick- I have been involved since the beginning.

Joan Beifuss- Publicly?

Bishop Joseph Durick- Yes. Oh yes, I always have since I have been up here. That doesn't answer your question.

Joan Beifuss- No it seems to me at that point you had already taken a stand. That's because I wanted you to make a stand.

Bishop Joseph Durick- I don't recall making any statement.

Joan Beifuss- No you didn't but just by the fact of just being there and supporting it when the council itself..

Bishop Joseph Durick- Well I have been at there meetings every year for the last 4 years, the fact that I was there this year didn't prove anything. They were very anxious for me to be there because the visiting bishop was coming and how awful it would look if he went out there and I was up from St. Louis and why did they come ahead of us and, so I had to get myself back real fast. That indicated nothing really, the award was to Monsenior Leopard this year and I really wanted to be there to honor him in anyway that I could because he has really been an wonderful man so far as these things can be said.

Joan Beifuss- Well now are you a Memphis when Dr. king was shot?

Bishop Joseph Durick- No I was in Philadelphia to be exact and I was told by a taxi driver. So I made my apologies to him for whatever I represented of the white race for this terrible thing.



Joan Beifuss- He was a negro taxi driver.

Bishop Joseph Durick- Yes that is right, yes. I was there and I was going to be there the following day to see if I could call on several of the mother houses to see if we could recruit some more nuns to Tennessee.

Tony Ossler- Do you remember what you said to that taxi driver?

Bishop Joseph Durick- No I don't. No I don't. It came right from the heart of course as I recall, but I don't recall the exact words.

Joan Beifuss- Were you....

Judy Schultz- Excuse me I just want to, I just think this is really kind of interesting. Did he just suddenly turn to you and tell that Dr. King had been shot?

Bishop Joseph Durick- No he said did you hear the radio about Dr. King or Martin Luther King or whatever he called it, and I said no. He said well he has been shot and I think he is dead. I remember saying oh my god or something like that. When we got to the motel where I was staying I saw the report then and that is when I offered my condolences.

Judy Schultz- Had you met Dr. King ever?

Bishop Joseph Durick- Yes in Birmingham. I was one of the 6 who went to see president Kennedy when he was alive several months before he was assassinated and we were called up there various clergymen. I was one of the 6 who had been trying to do what we could and very difficult of course in Birmingham and possibly we were going about it in the wrong way. We were, I suppose, I guess we were the 6 to whom he wrote this letter from the city jail, because we were getting a municipal government in and we had asked him would he be kind enough to wait a week or two on these demonstrations, to give this new city government a chance to say yay or nay or to turn him down. But he wasn't willing and wrote this letter and said there is no good time for a demonstration or no bad time besides the many other things he said.

Joan Beifuss- I believe that was publicized?

Bishop Joseph Durick- Oh indeed it is in some of the textbooks around the country.

Joan Beifuss- Is that the letter from the Birmingham...

Bishop Joseph Durick- I got a telegram from one group or family over here that says you have come a long ways since Birmingham or since the Birmingham city jail statement. But we were in good faith then and what ever conviction we had we were sincere and try to be helpful because we knew of the explosive nature I think and we were trying to keep some peace until let us reason together Isaiah could possibly reign but he was not in that mood and I can't speak for him but he didn't heed our plea to wait. But at any rate a little but later I met him going to see

president Kennedy. I told him at that time that he ought to have a co-pastorship one in Birmingham and one in Atlanta so they couldn't accuse him of being an outsider. He said, oh they will think of something else if I do that so he dismissed that. But I never had the privilege of knowing him too well, I met him on occasion only.

Judy Schultz- Were you a pastor in Birmingham at the time of the Birmingham?

Bishop Joseph Durick- Yes I was I was at St. Francis Xavier which is an outskirt of Birmingham, mountainbrook in the mountainbrook area.

Judy Schultz- Now you mentioned the tension in Birmingham as Dr. King was conducting a demonstration there. Did you find any similar tension here? Could you compare the tenseness in Memphis to the tenseness in Birmingham?

\_I would not be bale to. No. I was not here any sort of length of time to some idea of the climate or opinion or intenseness.

Judy Schultz- Were you in Memphis in between that first march which resulted in the mini riot as some people have called it, between that time and the time Dr. King was assassinated.

Bishop Joseph Durick- No, no I was not., I did not come over after being advised about the first march and it was the following week of course, and it being holy week it got to be a very busy time so I was not over. When I came from Philadelphia we had a memorial service immediately at St. Mary Catholic church, we were the first church which means nothing, but we actually banded together with the group of ministers and rabbis with whom I work there because of a, I suppose, a communion or denominational ties of several religious bodies there, we don't have a ministerial association in Nashville which is too bad. But things are as they are as James Ruston says, the facts let us remember that in life. So at any rate this group and myself and I gave a homily or eulogy at St. Mary there. I wrote it on the plane coming from Philadelphia coming down to Birmingham so I won't vouch for it.

Judy Schultz- Now when was that?

Bishop Joseph Durick- He was killed Thursday night and I got a plane 7:10 Friday morning and was there for the service at 1:00 in the afternoon in Nashville so I flew in from Philadelphia to Nashville.

Judy Schultz- And when did you come down to Memphis?

Bishop Joseph Durick- I came the following day and we had our memorial service the following day at immaculate conception and then Monday I spoke form the platform down here when we had the memorial march.

Judy Schultz- Can you give us at all your reaction to Dr. King's death?

Bishop Joseph Durick- Well, I expressed it so far as I was concerned I sent a telegram of condolences to Mrs. King that night from Philadelphia. I don't recall the exact

wording but I think it expressed my sentiments going right down the line as a great American and a great world citizen and one who uplifted the consciences of all who would listen so far as human dignity was concerned which was a great lesson at that. Understand that the Vatican to try to restore dignity to every man since this is the , somebody said the unimportance of the individual is one of the landmarks of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, whether that is true or not. At any rate those are some of the things that I thought so far as his passing was concerned. He twittered the conscience and more than that of many and uplifted the consciences of others who would listen. I suppose the difficulties that they encountered and the difficulties in hearing all these things, people as he once said and he put it in a much better fashion, rationalized these things to death and they couldn't see the great end to which he was tending in all that he did because of the smaller things that seemed to get in people's ways. Unaccustomed it seems as we were of that particular type.

Judy Schultz- Well having been in Birmingham when he had written you the letter, did you feel that when Dr. King became involved nit he strike here in Memphis did you have any ideas as to how it might affect municipal government here and whether or not it would help to settle the strike or hinder?

Bishop Joseph Durick- I don't know that I had any considered opinions about that, I like everyone else wondered whether this was his most shining hour because there was and everybody knew it, there was this tie sup so far as the labor dispute. It was very difficult to get it into the matter of thinking that this is purely a matter of human dignity here, and a demonstration for that. Because the other was encroaching itself indeed we must have a collective bargaining and just wages and all the rest. But the thing that became so, it seemed to me, tense with all these various complications that I was really hoping or wishing that it could have been other wise, it could have been a juster thing, a mass of people demonstrating with human dignity without all of these complications but that was not to be so of course.

Judy Schultz- Well do you have any feelings about, since you have been in Memphis since the assassination, of any changed attitudes? Or more awareness of the human dignity that some people are not?

Bishop Joseph Durick- I as Memphis said, I think Memphis cares, how much I don't know I really am not the best judge. Unfortunately I am not over here as much as I would like to be but indications are it seems to me from let's just say the luncheon that was held the other day by the interfaith group in human needs, whatever the official title is, the great number there. The very forthright talk that we received. The encouraging response at least it seemed to me of some of our negro leadership and also the night session held at southwestern which I participated. It seemed to me from the remarks made, and I remember one especially. One minster said to Monsenior Leopard I believe, I saw people here tonight and at the luncheon that we never would have seen a year ago. Now that is positive. Dean Demmick the Episcopalian director got up and maybe you all were there, he listed long list of things of a positive nature that were being done. I brought in a little dialogue that was being tried in Chattanooga, 7 white and 7 negro ministers getting together and

knowing each other and then picking 7 from the white and 7 from the negro to get into dialogue, they have no program but they just come and something starts. Does Christianity fail or what is Christianity or what must a Christian do today if he is to help this situation out.

Joan Beifuss- I am kind of interested in your reaction about the memorial march because I like you don't consider myself a marcher and I had never participated in a march, I had never really thought seriously about it, until the day before and I felt that I had to participate in that and it was certainly a moving experience to be involved in that. You were certainly looking at a different perspective looking from the platform and I was sort of down in the crowd. Could you tell us something about your reaction?

Bishop Joseph Durick- Well I like yourself it was quite moving. There was no doubt about that. Once of course this was announced and after the announcement I was determined to make my point so far as my little point was concerned. I was privy to get a call there from one of the members who were getting up the program who asked me to speak for part of the clergy which I did.

Joan Beifuss- Who was it who called you, do you remember?

Bishop Joseph Durick- I think it was reverend Jim Lawson if I recall and there may have been some doubts around he country, I got a call from several friends you know and you would do well to do that tomorrow. I said, well I thank you for calling I have already made up my mind I shall be there., But you know, every once in awhile a bishop will march or has in the past but it is not that we wouldn't it is just a suppose a question of having department heads do it instead. There is no reason why we couldn't.

Joan Beifuss- Did you join in the march at Clayborne Temple or did you...

Bishop Joseph Durick- Yes I went there and I was in the first 10 rows, 9 or 10, but they put us there so far as some of these so called dignitaries were concerned.

Judy Schultz- Who were you marching next too do you remember?

Bishop Joseph Durick- Monsenior Leopard on one side, a gentleman who I later met on the plane and I forget, I think I had his name, bishop Hinds the Episcopal bishop was behind me down from Washington. Father monsignor George Higgins, he was in the next row back he is our well known social action man out of Chicago and now in Washington. Oh a number of people like that I suppose I think of the clergy I remember them a little better, so I found it a very moving experience too. And I have gotten quite a response on that too.

Judy Schultz- Favorable?

Bishop Joseph Durick- Well mixed. I suppose as one could imagine from the conservatives if he priests and sisters want to march let them take off their collars

and their habits and march as individuals they don't represent us in this type of thing, so that was one reaction you got. Now if you did it in any other area however these same conservatives would be horrified, and of course there is more of that being done now today in certain areas and the world won't stop of course if we don't have the roman collar on but to me it is an badge of honor I happen to like it and I encourage it myself, but at any rate that was one reaction.

Tony Ossler- I know that monsignor Leopard was here and you know I can't resist asking this question. Have you felt since all of this and because you have placed yourself very much in the front any financial retaliation, significant financial retaliation?

Bishop Joseph Durick- Yes there were a number of people who wrote in right along the line from the very first, when it was first announced we gave the donation, announcing or rather asking us to cancel their pledge to the diocese development fund to the number of about 50 at the most that is a rough figure at the most.

Judy Schultz- Most of them are from Memphis.

Bishop Joseph Durick- We know that was the second highest collection that we had throughout the diocese, so that was a very encouraging, the second highest of all.

Judy Schultz- Were most of those 50 from Memphis?

Bishop Joseph Durick- Yes. Yes, and I don't mean to give the Memphis Catholics a black eye we are talking about the conservatives however you would label them and out of 45,000 Catholics 50 is not that bad.

Joan Beifuss- No 50 is not bad at all.

Judy Schultz- Could I ask you one thing what did you answer when they suggested that the nuns take off their habit sot march?

Bishop Joseph Durick- Well I found it just impossible because there was so many nuances of the particularly rounded argument about you don't speak for us, you speak as an individual and you are not my leader and I didn't realize I had ever come to this point, I would be so ashamed of the catholic church and its involvement and so forth and so on. So I just decided it would be better not to get into any further explanation because I don't believe that the tone of the latter was such that I could have gained anything from doing this. Someone has said the only way to make progress is through constructive criticism but I wasn't getting much of that I was getting the other kind. And who was I, I could have been as wrong as well as I was right but I did have to follow my conscience and I did feel like I was on the side of the church as it seems to me must be the conscience of today's society. Is it going to be a conscience or a chameleon. That is one of my terms I often use, a chameleon dies when he is put on a plaid blanket because he kills himself trying to adapt himself to his surroundings as the little story goes which would be impossible. We must interpret the times or the signs of the times as the Vatican too said in the light

of the gospels and our blessed lord did announce his coming in a very strange way and in the latter part of Mathew's gospel tells of the end and uses the same norm in each case instead of telling the disciples of John yes I am, the messiah he said go and see that the poor are being taken care of.

Judy Schultz- Do you think in the last years we have noticed more and more priests and clergy nuns participating or maybe it just seems that more participated I think about Father Groppy and several others. Do you think there is more of a trend in the catholic church to become concerned with the social problems, the necessities that some people don't have access too?

Bishop Joseph Durick- Yes, and you know many reasons you know the openness of Pope John the first began when somebody said how many people are working the Vatican and he said about half of them. You know, so that (muffled) they could see very human and the openness I think of president Kennedy. The many things, the media of course and the second world war and all these things that brought us closer together and kind of gotten us into the open looking at ourselves intently and as I started to say a moment ago, Christian anthropology has come to the center of the stage in the Vatican as well too, because that was the message I got. Try to restore to as many people as you can the dignity which God has given them which no one can take from them and I think that message has been pretty well received by a lot of people and the reaction of course is to be more concerned. The personalism of which the church has tried to get into more and more another evidence is the meeting on Fridays which were done away with, making it a personal act of love rather than a duty or an obligation on the books or something that one should do. That has its merit too I think, (Muffled). Whatever one believes in, the other which the church is trying to get into to make it as far as possible these personal acts. That is getting into concern for our fellow man too along the same lines. There is more activity in the church despite people saying confusing times, more activity in the church today so far as all of history so far as concern for our fellow man and we aren't the only ones of course so many others are doing equally well and possibly better I don't know.

Judy Schultz- Do you think that any proposals like if people here in Memphis or people within your diocese want to begin projects like the 7 priests and the negroes and the whites you were talking about earlier, that you would certainly want to encourage all of this?

Bishop Joseph Durick- Oh indeed, oh yes indeed. When I first came they said that bishop Drake only cares about the protestants and the negroes. Well that was a kind of compliment you know I worked on the missions and I worked among our non catholic brethren, or people of other communities as we more correctly call them now. For 15 years I had the catholic information center, I founded it in Birmingham to disseminate correct information about the church because it was very well aware of these things. So to answer your question the long way around yes indeed in every possible way, Organization and education it is needed for the success of any project and we I think had the enough organization and the continual education which is so

difficult, which is so difficult., Whatever this and in some people's being it is almost innate and some thing innate you cannot explain by reason, it is most unfortunate. So I think the correct thing to get instead of saying it takes time, it demands time though I for one would like to see it change over night but we don't have any instant culture and unfortunately history and all these other things which bring about change in attitudes. But it has to be a personal thing it seems to me, we are never going to get anywhere unless one takes it on as a personal responsibility. Now I maybe able to contribute very little, I may be able to do little or nothing but I must whatever I think I can do with courage and we shouldn't we need a lot of encouragement from others, but whatever the courage is, I don't know what degree that is, but I think we have to be forthright because so much of this is unconscious, unconscious discrimination. The subject most talked about today is prejudice. We are filled with it.

Judy Schultz- Then therefore you feel that the clergy has a very definite part in helping people to discover unconscious prejudice.

Bishop Joseph Durick- Oh indeed and beginning with themselves, they have it seems to me we have a fine clergy along that line and, I without the exception of two or three conservatives who I think are maybe sinning by omission rather than anything detrimental because I say that they are very positive in their attitudes.

Judy Schultz- Let me ask you this bishop. Is there any way to explain why the clergy in the state of Tennessee should be rather more open, assuming that most of your clergy are southerners and are certainly view the southern heritage. Why were there so much catholic clergy in Memphis who became involved in this tragic events of Dr. King's death. What is it that changes a man that comes out of the south?

Bishop Joseph Durick- Well, I don't have an answer to that question. But so far as Tennessee is concerned I think Tennessee by and large is an enlightened state, seems to me. A number of things, I know this is speaking in relative terms but the two party system is just a thought., The greater voting opportunities given here in Memphis, boss Crump's time on. Even though we got this very dark image here recently relatively speaking up until that time when I was in Birmingham all I would hear would be the great progress and strides that Memphis and Atlanta were making. That the businessmen and the city fathers had gotten together and they are not going to let racial difficulties get in their way and they were moving forward, and that was the story we were getting. And I think that was true from reports I have read in the past from the Tennessee council of relations and also here in Memphis and the city fathers and their informal group which they had formed and had worked hard at. So that looked good back there and worked for a while but I think possibly by default or whatever, erosion or whatever, everything suffers from old age and maybe that got old. Maybe they got overconfident that they had done their stint I don't know.

Judy Schultz- Perhaps there had to be new approaches?

Bishop Joseph Durick- Possibly they had not updated, that is another possibility. I am very thankful that the men here seem to be very much aware of the situation that exists and very anxious to help, I had not difficulty. I didn't say yay or nay, I wanted every priest to come out on his own so far as any march he wanted to make. I think you might as well stay home if you are just being sent out there to march, I don't think that accomplishes anything. So that is the way we have handled it and I know of one archbishop who says that, who was rather opposed before who now says that if anybody who wants in the church, priests or nuns, religious can march as long as they witness or march or demonstrate for something that is not against the law. Now I don't know what technicality he gets into now maybe if you don't have a permit fathers you better not march, I don't know whether he means that or what but it is a step forward though I don't know whether that can be gotten into kind of a bit of a difficulty there.

Judy Schultz- I know that you are awfully busy and we do want to thank you so much for spending this time with us.

Bishop Joseph Durick- I am very pleased to say this little bit and contribute to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. I hope that as many have said before that his death has not been in vain, that we all continue to work...

(Tape End)