

Back in the Classroom

We invite you to use these activities to build on your visit to the Chicago History Museum. Both are flexible enough to be used by individuals, pairs, or small groups. The activities are designed around universal themes about life in Chicago and use quotes from oral history interviews that illustrate those themes. The themes and quotes are listed below and available at www.chicagohistory.org/planavisit/exhibitions/catholic-chicago

Universal Dialog: Ask students to choose one quote and create a personal response to it by writing a journal entry, poem, or spoken-word lyrics. Share responses by reading them aloud. Alternatively, ask students to interview one another to elicit responses to one of the themes. Discuss the insights gained from sharing different perspectives.

Found Poetry: Have students read the quotes and underline words or phrases that they find interesting, powerful, or moving. Ask students to make a list of the underlined words and phrases, and using this list, create a poem. Students may add or remove words from the list to make the theme clearer or add more feeling but remind them to use only words from the quotes.

Place “The lake. I have a dog, and I go to the lake. It’s at the lake where I generally can find some temporary peace and stability and reflection . . . You can just walk over and sit on a bench and watch the water and clear your head . . .”

Dominic Ferri

COMMUNITY “ . . . When church was over, sometimes, we gathered at the school hall, and we had tamales and coffee, and we could talk to other people there, talked about everything, about family life, about how the priest’s homily went, things like that.”

Tony Perez

Reform “ . . . We [the Catholic Church] are truly a worldwide organization that on a daily basis feeds people, counsels people, marries people, buries people, baptizes people, attends to people’s spiritual hunger and need, 95 percent of this for no cost, and that rich sense of service and ministry is very inspiring to me.”

Father Terry Keehan

Celebration “ . . . We’d always go to our Christmas Eve service . . . There were about six different families. Each year, we would go to [one family’s] house afterwards and stay there until 4:30 or 5:00 in the morning and cook breakfast. It was a family tradition with a church tradition that were connected.”

Father Michael Pflieger

People “Probably the most influential person, to me, was my eighth-grade teacher . . . First of all, she helped me learn to write. I used to write this little column that was published in the local newspaper every week. It was called ‘Sanders Meanders.’”

Sister Sue Sanders

EDUCATION “ . . . I sort of felt like when I came to school that it was a real haven for me, sort of a sanctuary where I could really learn . . . I loved books and I loved reading so that was something I really embraced.”

Laura Washington

Work “ . . . I knew from an early age that I wanted to be a teacher. It might have been buried deep down for awhile, but I knew that that’s what I wanted to do. I wanted to help people, I wanted to work with children . . . and I think this comes from my Catholic education.”

Danielle Pierce

Chicago**History**Museum

1601 North Clark Street
Chicago, Illinois 60614-6038
312.642.4600 • www.chicagohistory.org