cathedral parish. As Bishop Egan later told Archbishop Carroll, Harold had come with "strong recommendations from Doctor Troy and the provincial of his order," followed by letters from Ireland calling him "a gentleman of good sense and excellent conduct."[1] When Egan tested his worth by having him preach at St. Mary's, he answered, "He gave general satisfaction." In fact, a group of trustees afterwards congratulated

Before the storm could break, one more actor arrived to foment the crisis. John Ryan, O.P., had been asked to accompany a priest friend, one Bernard Lonergan, on a sea voyage deemed necessary for his health. Both Lonergan and Ryan had relatives and friends in the United States. In New York the priests enjoyed the hospitality of the Jesuit Anthony Kohlmann stationed at St. Peter's. Kohlmann sent word to Baltimore of their arrival, mentioning that "Mr. Ryan is recommended to us as a most meritorious young man and excellent preacher." Though both men intended to return to Ireland after a short visit, Kohlmann clearly hoped that they both might stay in the United States.[11]

World events intervened. The embargo which accompanied the War of 1812 complicated plans for a quick return voyage. The two priests decided to visit Philadelphia, where, as Ryan put it, they would "spend some time with Doctor Egan . . . and with Mr. Harold my old fellow student and friend."[12] Lonergan then determined to return to Ireland despite the dangers of war. Because travel proved expensive, Ryan could not afford the trip. Before he sailed from New York, Lonergan tried to persuade Father Kohlmann to make a place for his friend John Ryan at St. Peter's. At first the pastor agreed and Lonergan wrote to Ryan telling him to come at once to New York. Harold traveled with Ryan. By the time they reached St. Peter's, Lonergan had left and Kohlmann had changed his mind. Lonergan had convinced him that both Ryan and his friends had expensive tastes, especially for fine wines. Regretting his invitation to Ryan, Kohlmann used the excuse that the parish trustees had said there was not enough money available to pay an additional salary.

Finding himself rejected, Ryan confronted Kohlmann and complained to Carroll, accusing the New York pastor of lying, insincerity and prejudice against Irish clergy.[13] Whether or not the accusation was correct, this representation of Kohlmann and the Archbishop weakened the good reputation once held by the two Fathers. What Dominican brethren were later to say of Harold probably applied to both men: they were indeed, zealous priests, gifted preachers, but "ready for a fight."[14]

Ryan then left to visit his sister in Baltimore, and while there he was asked by John Carroll to fill a pastoral position in that city. This he did to the complete satisfaction of the archbishop, until his friend Harold became the beleaguered pastor in a Philadelphia dispute. Ryan went up to help him and the two friends eventually decided they had enough of American clergy. Both returned to Ireland in 1813, but not before a major conflict.

The same embargo that interfered with Ryan and Lonergan's plans to sail for Europe in 1812 wreaked financial havoc in American port cities, among them Philadelphia. Money needed to pay for the extensive renovations to St. Mary's spiraled, and the stress of financial shortfall began to erode the harmony of the bishop's household. There were also personality differences that had already surfaced between Egan and the two Harolds. The bishop blamed the quarrels that erupted within the rectory on the presence of James Harold and cited him for unduly influencing his nephew to rebellion.[15]

As Egan described it, with Michael Hurley as witness, open domestic warfare broke out when the bishop informed his two associates that his physician had advised him to preach as

seldom as possible. Accordingly, he preached only occasionally and expected the Harolds to alternate at St. Mary's. This they refused to do. Would they help with the distribution of Holy

evidently without consulting Carroll, who was chagrined at losing both Ryan and the younger Harold. Writing to William shortly after the February announcement, Carroll referred to his leaving as "a great loss to the diocese and the American Church in general."[23] The archbishop had tried to convince Egan to retain William Harold, but that prelate wrote that his mind was "unalterably set never to readmit either of the Harolds to his diocese."[24]

Archbishop Carroll's good opinion of both Harold and Ryan was soon to change. When the two friars reached Europe, they painted critical pictures of conditions in the American Church. John Ryan indicted both Carroll and the Jesuits for trafficking in slaves and accused the archbishop of being "a great slaveholder." Carroll denied those charges and mentioned Philadelphia reports that Harold had insulted Bishop Egan.

The Philadelphia prelate continued to be plagued by salary disputes with his trustees as well as the ill health he had described to the Harolds during the winter of 1812. Worn down by the pressures of his position, Michael Egan died in July of 1814. Within days, one priest wrote that

French pastors who served them. Into this sad situation came another Irish Dominican missionary, one Thomas Carbry of Dublin.

Before coming to New York in 1815 at the age of sixty-five, Carbry had spent the better part of his priestly life in the service of the Dominican archbishop of Dublin, John Troy. He had been a student of Troy at the Irish Dominican college of San Clemente in Rome. Ordained in 1775, Carbry returned to Ireland and became known as

Spiritual Head to the States of Virginia and North Carolina (or the State of Virginia alone) with the title and dignity of Bishop of Norfolk.[30]

several more accusations, including the statement that Carbry had been suspended from his priestly duties in Ireland. This had no basis in fact. Yet, it was likely that Malou's accusations influenced Maréchal in his refusal to appoint Carbry as pastor in Norfolk.

Maréchal's depiction of the situation in Norfolk as one of relative harmony and satisfaction was as inaccurate as his portrayal of Carbry. In a letter to his friend Joseph Faraldi, Dominican prior of the Minerva in Rome, Carbry painted a far different picture of the s

presume to exercise pastoral jurisdiction in our diocese."[36] The archbishop warned that should Carbry fail to comply, he would be appropriately censured.

Unfortunately, Maréchal's request went unheeded. One month later he sent a second warning, threatening Carbry with solemn excommunication if he continued to function in the diocese. Again, there was no response. Carbry's intransigence and his association with those who were schismatically inclined finally led Maréchal to promulgate the Norfolk Pastoral letter on September 28, 1819. He warned Norfolk Catholics to avoid with religious fear any communication in spiritual things with that unfortunate priest . . .You cannot adhere to him as your Pastor without leaving the Church from which he has separated himself."[37] Although Maréchal had now formally condemned the Irish missionary, he stopped short of excommunicating him.

What happened next, however, seemed to suggest that Carbry's claim of a papal commission might have had substance after all. On November 11, 1820, Cardinal Fontana of Propaganda informed Maréchal of Rome's decision to erect a diocese in Virginia with Richmond as the episcopal seat. Despite Maréchal's objections, Propaganda saw the appointment of a bishop in Virginia as imperative if schismatical tendencies were to be kept in check. The bishop-elect of the new diocese was Patrick Kelly, priest of the diocese of Ossory in Ireland. He was instructed to reside in Norfolk until there were enough Catholics in Richmond to support him financially.

Kelly came to Norfolk in mid-January of 1821, after receiving a cold reception in Baltimore from the archbishop. Within a week the Norfolk pastor Lucas reported to Maréchal that the new bishop had met with Carbry who told him that he had come to Norfolk only until a bishop should be appointed for Virginia. Such a statement from Carbry seemed to imply that these were instructions given to him as part of his commission. Lucas' next communication was even more enlightening. Said the frustrated French pastor, "It is a scandal to see Mr. Carbry continue to officiate without any interruption, submission, or punishment. . . The Bishop lifted the interdict Saturday, and gave Mr. Carbry permission to say Mass at eight o'clock."[38]

The fact that Bishop Kelly appeared to inflict no censure or any other punishment on Carbry would seem to indicate that Carbry had done nothing to incur a penalty. If indeed he had been ministering in Norfolk with neither the permission of the ordinary nor some higher authorization, he would not have been allowed to function so freely by the new bishop. Therefore, the assumption was that Kelly must have been given some proof of Carbry's papal commission.

If such evidence existed in a document, it was never found.[39] Of course, it is possible that the commission was a fiction. This would help explain why Carbry never responded to Maréchal's requests for proof. However, if the missionary was in fact acting without authorization, it becomes difficult to comprehend Kelly's generous treatment of him. And why did Maréchal never excommunicate the Irish missionary, as he had threatened to do? Was it because he feared Carbry's account might be true? Whatever the answers, Thomas Carbry faded

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This threat goaded Conwell into more drastic action. On April 1, eight clergymen met at St. Augustine's Church and signed a resolution to the effect that "in consequence of the very reprehensible conduct of the Rev. Wm. Vincent Harold in regard to his Bishop for some time," the bishop would be justified in suspending his faculties.[46] Two days later the bishop withdrew the faculties of both Harold and Ryan. Harold reacted with a civil lawsuit against the eight priests, charging them with libel and demanding a public apology.

According to later commentators, Harold thus made the first of two major mistakes. To bring a civil suit against a fellow priest merited excommunication. Harold never intended to go through with the suit, his friends believed. He intended only to frighten the clergymen into a retraction and apology. This was what happened. Some of the men stated that they had never seen the charges before April 1; they were pressured into signing to support the bishop's authority. Harold achieved his purpose, but his method created doubts in high places concerning the soundness of his judgment.

When Harold protested his suspension to Archbishop Maréchal, the Baltimore prelate declined to interfere. The Holy See, he said, was the only tribunal to which Harold could appeal. Maréchal was bombarded with letters for and against the participants. [38] Excommunicated

12. John Ryan, OP, to Carroll, Philadelphia, May 21, 1812, AAB 7 L 10.
13. Ryan to Carroll, May 21, 1812.
14. ACTA, Propaganda Fide, 1821, ff. 158-159.
15. Egan to Carroll, Philadelphia, Jan. 14, 1812, AAB 3 15.