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Religion Becoming: Loyola University's Sacred Heart Chapel and Mary's Hour

Casey Linsey

Professor Rosenthal

HIST 550

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Immediately following World War II, the United States of America entered a period of unprecedented economic prosperity. Because of the Great Depression and the Second World War, the previous two decades had been filled with economic hardship and instability. The return to peace and affluence enabled Americans to finally enjoy their time at home. Millions entered into marriages and quickly began having children, all the while pursuing the American Dream. More than simply enjoying their time at home, however, Americans found that domesticity was a shield. A new threat began encroaching upon Americans' hopes and dreams. Tensions between former allies, the United States and the Soviet Union, began to rise and Americans needed to find a way to secure themselves against the dangers of possible nuclear fallout. Like their leaders, most Americans agreed that family stability appeared to be the best bulwark against the dangers of this Cold War.¹ Thus, all across America, people found themselves returning to the values of the home and upholding tradition; Los Angeles was no different.

The city of Los Angeles had not always accurately depicted the trends of the rest of the United States. As a city on the West Coast, its development came years after the East. In 1848, when the area was still owned by Mexico, there were more cows than people. In the 1880s, when white Anglo American leaders began attempting to develop a city, LA was still extremely isolated from the rest of the nation. It was not until LA hosted the 1932 Olympics that it earned its status as a world-class city. Because much of the equipment for the war effort was produced

¹ Elaine T. May, *Homeward Bound* (New York: Basic Books, 1999), 18.

in LA during the 1940s, the city continued to grow. The boom persisted through the 1950s as, in their search for homes, millions of families flocked to the city.

On a beautiful bluff overlooking West Los Angeles during these years, the Catholic institution, Loyola University was also looking for a home – though a different kind of home. Having moved to its Westchester location in 1929,² the campus was in desperate need of a religious and spiritual home because a collegiate chapel was not built on the campus until 1953. However, even before construction of the chapel finally commenced, students of the university found ways to express their religious faith outside of any building. Initiating an organized and highly popular day of prayer dedicated to the Virgin Mary in May of 1947, Loyola students planned “Mary’s Hour,” held on the university’s campus. Mary’s Hour, over the next decade, became immensely popular not only for Loyola University, but also the entire Los Angeles community.³ Faith, an integral aspect to the university, was finally being exhibited in a grand manner. By the 1950s, Loyola University was evolving and maturing as a Los Angeles institution, growth made possible by the expansion of the Catholic Church in the West, the waning of anti-Catholicism, and the availability of materials and financing. The building of Sacred Heart Chapel exemplifies the university’s physical, financial, and spiritual evolution. The university gained physical presence in the landscape of the city with a stunning chapel on its grounds. It is evident that the university had gained the financial credence to be able to fund such an expensive undertaking. Furthermore, the faculty, staff, and students of Loyola University

² Loyola Marymount University, “A Brief History,” History.
<http://www.lmu.eduPage18873.aspx>.

³ Carl T. Hess. “Mary’s Hour in Los Angeles.” Edited by Michael Engh. No date.
Author has copy.

finally found a place for spiritual worship in the chapel, the home of God on campus.

Meanwhile, students of the university had already begun expressing their spiritual and political maturation in their event, Mary's Hour. Student founded and led, Mary's Hour offered the Loyola community, as well as Los Angeles, the opportunity to practice their faith in the form of group prayer. The event also offered Loyola students the chance to showcase the lessons of the classroom to the wider community. As Loyola University evolved and matured, so too did its students. The university, however, was just one example as the Catholic Church gained increased acceptance in American society during the postwar era.

In 1548, St. Ignatius of Loyola, founder of the Society of Jesus, sanctioned the foundation of his order's first school. The Society of Jesus, a Catholic religious order of men known as Jesuits, since then, has become best known for its insistence on intellectual and spiritual learning. Today, Jesuit elementary schools, middle and high schools, and universities are dedicated to educating youth across the globe. Loyola University, however, was not founded by Jesuits but by another Catholic order known as the Vincentian Fathers. In 1865, the Fathers inaugurated St. Vincent's College for boys in Los Angeles, the pioneer Catholic college and first institution of higher learning in Southern California. The school closed in 1911, but members of the Society of Jesus decided to succeed St. Vincent's College with the high school division of their newly founded Los Angeles College. Rapid growth prompted the Jesuits to seek a new campus in 1917 and incorporate as Loyola College of Los Angeles in 1918. The college

relocated in 1929 and the school achieved university status one year later.⁴ Through the 1930s and 1940s, Loyola University continued to educate the hearts and minds of its students.

The outbreak of the Second World War inaugurated profound changes for the American West and American Catholicism. Historian Gerald D. Nash argued that World War II transformed the West from an economic colony of the East to an essential component of national economic life. California emerged as a cultural pacesetter for not only the nation, but also the entire globe. The onset of the war years affected the region's religious world as well. Relatively ignored during the Depression, western clerics found themselves thrust into renewed positions of leadership after Pearl Harbor. The Second World War and postwar years witnessed the increase of church membership across the country as Americans began turning towards churches in increasing numbers. Moreover, Americans across the country were not only joining churches – they were also actively practicing their faith by attending church services. In the West, specifically, the resurgence of religion was even more acute. The heavy migration to West Coast industries and ports during the war placed severe demands on regional religious institutions.⁵ For Catholic institutions on the West, the combined effects of heavy migration to the West and the increased religious growth of the entire country led to significant changes.

Between 1945 and 1965, American Catholicism in particular experienced phenomenal growth. Attendance in Catholic Churches reached a high of 74 percent in 1958, according to

⁴ Loyola Marymount University, "A Brief History," History.
<http://www.lmu.edu/Page18873.aspx>.

⁵ Ferenc M. Szasz, *Religion in the Modern American West* (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 2000), 101.

annual data from Gallup telephone polls.⁶ As the pews continued to be filled with regular attendees, the total Catholic population increased by 90 percent, from 23.9 million to 45.6 million. American Catholics, like many other religious denominations during the postwar years, experienced a revival of piety. All the measurable indexes of religious participation had increased significantly in Catholic Churches: church attendance, contributions to religious causes, and publications of religious literature.⁷

Like many other religious traditions, American Catholicism took advantage of the expanding wealth that came with the increasing church membership and attendance to build numerous new churches, schools, and other large religious institutions, some of which had been delayed by the Depression and World War II. There were severe demands on regional religious institutions and in order to cater to the peoples' religious needs, Western churches tried their best to catch up. Every major subregion of the West experienced a postwar boom of church construction.⁸ The growth of faith life also carried over into the expansion of religious schools, especially Catholic elementary schools. Catholic educators were surprised by the growing demand for parochial education.⁹ The Diocese of California, for instance, doubled its school enrollment from 1940 to 1950. By 1960, Los Angeles had over eighty parochial schools.¹⁰ The expansion was also notable at the level of higher education. Enrollments increased in Catholic

⁶ Patrick W. Carey, *Catholics in America: A History* (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 2004), 101.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 101.

⁸ Ferenc M. Szasz, *Religion in the Modern American West* (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 2000), 101-2.

⁹ Timothy Walch, *Catholicism in America: A Social History* (Malabar, Florida: Robert E. Krieger Publishing Company, 1989), 78.

¹⁰ Szasz, *Religion in the Modern American West*, 105.

colleges and universities by a whopping 300 percent, from 92,426 to 384,526.¹¹ As with churches, Western Catholic parochial education also enjoyed a construction boom.

One Western Catholic school in particular followed the trends of its time when it built a new chapel on its grounds. Loyola University participated in the construction boom in its decision to build Sacred Heart Chapel. Changing its campus dramatically in an aesthetic and physical manner, Sacred Heart Chapel was built to be a home for students, faculty, and staff of the university to worship, to pray, and to be with God. The university received numerous accolades for its architectural beauty after its completion in 1954, the university's endeavor to create that sacred space succeeded. Architectural journal *Southwest Builder and Contractor* noted that Sacred Heart's classic and harmonious architectural design combined with features rarely found in a building of its kind had stamped the new Chapel of the Sacred Heart at Loyola University in Los Angeles. The modified Spanish Gothic chapel created a new landmark in southwest Los Angeles.¹² The interior of the chapel was also designed with unique features. Like many other Catholic churches and chapels, stained glass windows were installed. While several stained glass windows alongside the upper-half of the building illustrate Christ the King, the Blessed Virgin, St. Joseph, St. Ignatius of Loyola, St. Francis Xavier, and other saints, the glass also had names of various Jesuit universities with their seals. In addition, the stained glass windows at eye level represented intellectual non-saints to tie in the intellectual life of the

¹¹ Patrick W. Carey, *Catholics in America: A History* (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 2004), 93.

¹² *Southwest Builder and Contractor* (Vol. 124, no. 4: July 1954). Loyola Marymount University, University Archives. Record Group 10. Box MS 10F12.

university.¹³ Another extremely rare feature of the Sacred Heart Chapel was its sixteen altars, of which five were public altars visible from the Chapel floor. The marble and craftsmanship in all the altars came from Italy, and of particular beauty was the main altar centerpiece in Botticino marble flanked by deep rose marble.¹⁴ The architects decided to attach a 1250-foot tower to Sacred Heart Chapel. Like the chapel, the tower was also constructed in a modified Spanish Gothic style. Incorporating design elements that have been adapted from ancient churches and scaled to a new style, the ingenious symbol of the Trinity adorned each side of the balustrade atop the tower. The abstract design in cast stone represented three fish intertwined within a circle. They symbolized the three Divine Persons of the Trinity – the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – and express the oneness of the triune God.¹⁵ The architectural praises for the unique and stunning Sacred Heart Chapel, coupled with the existence of the building itself, marked the physical evolution of the university.

The aesthetic maturation of the university was also evident in the drastic change in the university's landscape. Aerial photographs of the campus prior to the construction of Sacred Heart Chapel showed nothing but dirt on the North end of campus where Sacred Heart Chapel is located; the space in the photograph was completely empty. With the completion of the construction of Sacred Heart, the aerial photographs plainly illustrated the physical evolution. Moreover, the addition of the chapel was equally dramatic from the outside of the university.

¹³ Charles S. Casassa. *Letter to Harold Cummings*. (February 1955). Loyola Marymount University, University Archives. Record Group 10. Box MS 10F12.

¹⁴ "Chapel Stands As Unique Among College Churches", *Loyolan*, September 21st, 1953, Loyola Marymount University, University Archives. Record Group 7. Box 6: MS ov7A1/6.

¹⁵ Inaugural Recital Notes. (1994) Loyola Marymount University, University Archives. Record Group 10. Box MS 10F12.

Because Loyola University was built on an elevated bluff, those viewing Loyola now could see the chapel as a marker of the campus, so much so that the chapel was featured in the Los Angeles Times' series, "Know Your City" three years after its completion.¹⁶ With Sacred Heart Chapel, the university gained immense presence in the landscape of the rapidly growing city of Los Angeles. Sacred Heart Chapel thus presented Loyola University with a huge, tangible, physical manifestation of its evolution.

As with all architecturally stunning buildings, the construction of Sacred Heart Chapel was a very expensive endeavor for the university. Nonetheless, Loyola University was able to attain the funds necessary to the chapel's construction, proving the university's financial situation. Simply by looking the many beautiful stained glass windows and the tower alone, one can imagine the enormous cost to the university. Thinking of the chapel as a whole and taking into consideration the fees from the construction company, the total continued to skyrocket upward. Barker and Ott provided the services for the construction of the chapel, including complete architectural and engineering drawings, specifications, structural and mechanical engineering layouts, details and full-sized drawings, the submitting of preliminary estimates, the securing of competitive bids from a selected list of bidders of Loyola's choosing, general administration of the accounts and issuing of certificates for payments to the contractor and the

¹⁶ "Know Your City", Los Angeles Times, May 23, 1956, ProQuest Historical Newspapers Los Angeles Times, p. 18.

supervision of the construction to completion, which came to 6% of the total cost of the work.¹⁷

All totaled, the cost of the chapel was \$574,220.17.¹⁸

To collect money for the chapel, a Chapel Fund was created in 1951. The President's office, in 1951, recorded that the university had donated \$116,744.33 to the chapel fund while the Loyola University Foundation had donated \$150,000.00. Two people, Mary Shields, and Desmond Yuma, were the sole donors to Loyola University Foundation's donation.¹⁹ In 1953, the Loyola Alumni Association also encouraged alumni to help the university pay off the final debt. In a letter addressed to the alumni of the university, the association gave thanks to the generosity of the Desmond sisters with their total donation of \$350,000 and Friends of the University with their pledge of \$220,000. The association pledged to provide the final necessary aid as the Alumni guaranteed to pay the final \$7,000.²⁰

Not surprisingly, most of the money for the chapel came from the generous donations of wealthy Catholic families as well as alumni of the university. However, it is surprising that Loyola University did not have a focal religious place on campus for over two decades. In the Report of the Province Revisor, the author of the document noted that both faculty and students

¹⁷ Barker & Ott. "Plans for Chapel", June 1950. Loyola Marymount University, University Archives. Record Group 10. Box MS 10F12.

¹⁸ "Chapel Renovations", 1980. Loyola Marymount University, University Archives. Record Group 10. Box MS 10F12.

¹⁹ "Chapel Fund", 1951. Loyola Marymount University, University Archives. Record Group 10. Box MS 10F12.

²⁰ Loyola Alumni Association. "Fundraising", 1953. Loyola Marymount University, University Archives. Record Group 10. Box MS 10F12.

were in great need of a chapel. The plan to build a chapel seemed sensible and practical.²¹ Surprisingly, there are no documents prior to the report to indicate Jesuit priests' worry or student worries that no chapel existed on campus prior. While Masses were said in the gym because of the lack of an adequate space large enough to fit the student population, there was no mention of an immediate movement to change the situation and build a suitable space for worship. It is noted after Sacred Heart had been constructed that the university had felt a need for an adequate Chapel for a long time, there is no actual document that indicates such desire from the time period prior to construction.²² In the planning process, however, the student-written and student-published newspaper *Loyolan* does mention a reason as to why the university had not built the chapel earlier. Due to the scarcity and allocation of steel, the program was temporarily halted during the Great Depression and World War II. It was not until 1952 that Loyola University received the signal from the United States' Office of Education to proceed with the building program.²³ While it is peculiar that Loyola University did not give construction of an adequate religious space higher priority, the lack of an adequate religious space is understandable because the Westchester campus began its preliminary development during the Great Depression and World War II. However, the availability of materials and funds after the Great Depression and World War II cannot be seen as the sole motivation for the construction of Sacred Heart Chapel in the 1950s.

²¹ Province Revisor. "Report", May 1951. Loyola Marymount University, University Archives. Record Group 10. Box MS 10F12.

²² Lair 1952 Loyola Marymount University, University Archives. Record Group 3. Series 2. Box 6: MS ov7A1/6.

²³ "Go Signal Given for New Chapel", *Loyolan*, April 29th, 1952, Loyola Marymount University, University Archives. Record Group 7. Box 6: MS ov7A1/6.

That Loyola University was able to build such a massive religious structure is in part due to the comfort that Catholics of the era now felt in asserting their faith. The anti-Catholicism of the previous decades had faded to such a degree that the educational institution felt it was acceptable to begin asserting itself as a Catholic school. The construction of Sacred Heart Chapel had been in the waiting. The conditions of society were finally right for the university to create a prominent spiritual home that would be accepted.

Even before its founding, America had been extremely religious and spiritual, as many religious denominations had flourished in the United States. Historically, the majority of religious denominations in the United States have been Protestant in origin, and even today, America continues to be influenced by its Protestant roots. Nonetheless, since the mid-nineteenth century, the Catholic Church has been the country's single largest denomination.²⁴ Well before the United States won its independence from England, anti-Catholicism was ingrained into American culture, built into the foundation of the nation's history. Anti-Catholicism has even been described as a fundamental aspect to the culture of the United States. It found its birth in the anti-Catholic propaganda of the English government in the late 1500s and early 1600s when the Church was painted as the enemy of enlightened thought and an alien presence eager to overthrow the rights of Englishmen. It was this popular anti-Catholicism that influenced the English colonies of the New World. As those colonies severed their formal ties with England in

²⁴ Timothy Walch, *Catholicism in America: A Social History* (Malabar, Florida: Robert E. Krieger Publishing Company, 1989), 1.

the American Revolution, they did not abandon an essentially English pattern of thought and culture that carried this baggage of anti-Catholicism.²⁵

Catholicism had ties to America's colonial past and therefore, Catholics believed that their faith tradition held a place in the American tradition. However, with massive Catholic immigration during the nineteenth century, those ties to the founding of America were diminished. As early as the mid-nineteenth century, Catholicism appeared to be a foreign religion.²⁶ Most Protestant Americans were deeply concerned about the distinctive foreign overtones of Catholicism in America. Some went so far as to form anti-Catholic organizations such as the American Protective Association.²⁷ The anti-Catholicism sentiments continued into the early twentieth century. Despite their active involvement in the Great War, when foreign-born and ethnic Catholics were forced to abandon their native lands and adopt their new homeland, Catholics were still not considered full-fledged Americans.²⁸ Catholics' ability to be loyal Americans continued to be questioned through the 1920s, especially with the increasingly popular bigotry led by the Ku Klux Klan.²⁹

Once alienated by the Protestant mainstream, Catholicism was clearly gaining acceptance after World War II.³⁰ The fifteen years from 1945 to 1960 witnessed a quiet revolution in the status of the American Catholic population. Catholics became more visible because there were

²⁵ Robert P. Lockwood, *Anti-Catholicism in American Culture* (Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor, 2000), 19.

²⁶ Timothy Walch, *Catholicism in America: A Social History* (Malabar, Florida: Robert E. Krieger Publishing Company, 1989), 50.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 60.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 62.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 61.

³⁰ Mark S. Massa, *Anti-Catholicism in America; The Last Acceptable Prejudice* (New York: Crossroad Publishing, 2003), 35.

more of them. Size was not the only aspect of change within the Catholic community. Young Catholic veterans were returning from war to attend college, to win well-paying jobs with American corporations, to buy homes in the suburbs, to build new parishes, and to participate in community affairs. By almost any standard, Catholics were one of the most successful segments within American society.³¹ Catholicism in the postwar era now represented safe manifestations of America's true creed. Recognized under the large umbrella of the true common faith in America, Catholicism, along with Judaism, was finally no longer considered as an outsider in American society.³² The postwar years saw an end to the barriers that had separated Catholics from other Americans. Catholics saw no reason to separate themselves from the rest of the society after the war because of their religion.³³ The Los Angeles Catholics who decided to build Sacred Heart Chapel serve as one example of American Catholics who saw no reason to hide the practice of their faith.

While Loyola University was expressing its maturation and evolution in the postwar years, its students did the same, even before the construction of the Chapel of Sacred Heart. Though without a place of worship, Loyola University students' faith was not in doubt. At the same time as Sacred Heart Chapel was being planned and constructed, the student-founded and student-organized event, Mary's Hour, saw rapid growth in attendance. Beginning as a smaller event for Loyola students on the Westchester campus, the annual event became tremendously popular and changed venues to accommodate the growth. In 1947, Loyola students organized the

³¹ Timothy Walch, *Catholicism in America: A Social History* (Malabar, Florida: Robert E. Krieger Publishing Company, 1989), 87.

³² Mark S. Massa, *Anti-Catholicism in America; The Last Acceptable Prejudice* (New York: Crossroad Publishing, 2003), 35.

³³ Walch. *Catholicism in America: A Social History*, 87.

first organized prayer event that was open to the general community. Before the first Mary's Hour was planned, Loyola students involved with the Sodality Union, a Catholic organization made up of faithful lay members, had already sponsored several living rosaries on the school's grounds to pray for world peace. When one of the Jesuit leaders urged the students to merge with the National Federation of Catholic College Students, the students were enabled to expand their small, campus-based prayer service into an annual citywide religious service. Thus, 1947 marked the first time the service was opened to the general community. With the support of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, approximately 3,500 people gathered in prayer on Loyola's Sunken Gardens, a large grassy knoll. From a gathering of 3,500 people, the event grew rapidly as the years progressed. In the following year, the event was moved to the Hollywood Bowl, a bigger venue to fit all the attendees. In the subsequent year, Mary's Hour was moved again, and yet again because the venue was too small and did not have the capacity to fit the growing crowd. This move found Mary's Hour in the Los Angeles Coliseum, where it remained for the next two decades.³⁴

Though the venue of Mary's Hour changed various times, the structure of the day of prayer remained the same, as did the involvement of Loyola University students. The programs from year to year feature the same format and the same agenda of the event. Moreover, the participants remained the same from annually, with very few and minor exceptions. Each year, the Archbishop of Los Angeles presided and representatives of Archdiocesan High Schools and Parochial Schools participated as the beads of the living rosary and aided the rosary procession.

³⁴ Carl T. Hess. "Mary's Hour in Los Angeles." Edited by Michael Engh. No date. Author has copy.

To usher the event each year, Men and Women of the Catholic Youth Federation and the Junior Catholic Daughters of America volunteered. Loyola University students' involvement in the event also remained constant from yearly. The men of Loyola University's highly regarded and respected student organization, Crimson Circle, provided field direction while the Cadets of Loyola University's Air R.O.T.C served as Color Guard, and the band of the university offered their musical talent to the event. A Loyola University student who served as co-chair of the event would welcome the attendees at every Mary's Hour. From the amount of times Loyola University appears on the program, it is clear that the students continued to actively commit and involve themselves in the planning and execution processes to make Mary's Hour the successful event that it became.³⁵

In addition to the unchanging commitment of Loyola students to Mary's Hour, the day of prayer was unchanging in its commitment to pray to the Blessed Virgin Mary for world peace. Mary's Hour was designed to be a tribute to the Mother of God by the Catholic people of Los Angeles who gather to pray the Rosary together in her honor. For Los Angeles Catholics, it was a demonstration of faith, hope and love – faith in the Providence of God, hope in His promises, love of Him and His Blessed Mother. It appealed for peace in the home, the country, and the world through prayer and was a public way to encourage friends and neighbors to pray, also – to turn to spiritual help, to bring God into their hearts minds and lives. Mary's Hour asked the blessings of God through Mary, the Queen of Angels, on the city of Los Angeles.³⁶ The

³⁵ Mary's Hour Program. 1957-1959. Loyola Marymount University, University Archives. Record Group 7. Series 2. Box: MS 7B.

³⁶ Jack Lawson. "Release", May 7, No year. Loyola Marymount University, University Archives. Record Group 7. Series 2. Box: MS 7B.

theological reasons behind Loyola students' formation of Mary's Hour were eloquently stated in an address by Bishop Alden J. Bell, later published by Loyola University's Director of the Department of Public Information, Ken Carreiro. Mary needed to be honored for her consent to become the Mother of the Savior and her willingness to accept a share in the Redemption that contact that was made with mankind. As God delivered his Son for the salvation of mankind, Mary, too, had to offer her Son. His sufferings wrung from her heart an acceptance also. She did not assist only as a broken-hearted sympathetic onlooker. She was part of the passion both in the offering and its consummation. Thus, the prayers made during Mary's Hour were believed to rise to Mary like the swell and murmur of the sea to break upon the shores of Heaven. The Blessed Mother would gather those who prayed as her own and intercede for the Christian world on its knees praying to her because of her compassion.³⁷ Thus, in this hope, the student organizers never changed the hymns of the event. Following the welcome and introduction of the theme centered upon Mary, all attendees would sing, "Hail, Queen of Heaven" and "Hail Holy Queen Enthroned Above." Later in the event, the congregation would sing the "Hymn of Our Lady of Lourdes" to seek the intercession of Mary. Each year, the service would form around the same three hymns, expressing the devotion to the Blessed Mother.³⁸ In their expression of spiritual devotion, the university's student leaders of the event committed to the basic structure throughout the twenty-year history of Mary's Hour.

³⁷ Ken Carreiro. "Fact Sheet." No date. Loyola Marymount University, University Archives. Record Group 7. Series 2. Box: MS 7B.

³⁸ Mary's Hour Programs. 1957-1958. Loyola Marymount University, University Archives. Record Group 7. Series 2. Box: MS 7B.

The young students of Loyola University who lent the organizing power and the necessary support to Mary's Hour demonstrated their religious beliefs in the very act of arranging the annual event on for the Los Angeles community. However, the event also offered students the chance to express their political beliefs, beliefs that aligned with the American majority. Each Mary's Hour showcased Catholic patriotism as the ceremonies always began with the Pledge of Allegiance and the National Anthem.³⁹ More importantly, the historical reasons that led to the founding of the event demonstrate the students' engagement with concerns of the Cold War. In 1917, the year of the Russian Revolution, the Blessed Virgin Mary had appeared to three Portuguese children in the village of Fatima. The children, amazed by her ability to cause the sun to spin visibly in the sky, listened to Mary as she told them a series of secrets. One of the secrets the Virgin told the children was that people everywhere should pray the rosary for the conversion of the Russian people to Christianity because the future of the world was in danger.⁴⁰ Exactly thirty years later, as paranoia of a possible nuclear war between Soviet Russia and the United States intensified, Loyola students conceived Mary's Hour, then under the title, "A Day of Prayer for the Conversion of Russia."⁴¹ In the 1959 Mary's Hour, the people asked for Blessed Mother's intercession as they prayed. Considering themselves defenseless and without arms against the encircling might of men, Mary's Hour attendees found

³⁹ Ken Carreiro. "Press Release", May 4, No year. Loyola Marymount University, University Archives. Record Group 7. Series 2. Box: MS 7B.

⁴⁰ Carreiro, "Press Release."

⁴¹ Carl T. Hess. "Mary's Hour in Los Angeles." Edited by Michael Engh. No date. Author has copy.

the weapons terrifying. With their vision of holy faith, they expressed fear of nuclear disaster.⁴² As with the rest of America, those who participated in Mary's Hour feared the instability of and possible annihilation that could result from the Cold War. The students of the postwar years, thus, helped prove patriotism and Americanism of the Catholic Church.

The Catholic postwar students of Loyola University found a spiritual home. Religious by nature, Sacred Heart Chapel was regarded highly as the spiritual home of God on the university's campus. In 1954, Loyola University celebrated its Silver anniversary. After twenty-five years in Westchester, the Jesuit priests of the Catholic institution were finally able to celebrate Mass in a place suited for worship. With its size, Sacred Heart was able to serve the spiritual needs of the community. Sacred Heart had sizable dimensions, 202' long from the front entrance to the extreme rear and a seating capacity that could accommodate 794 in the nave, 90 in the choir loft, and 600 in the basement, dimensions and a seating capacity that served the college community well.⁴³ Friends of the University declared that the future security of Loyola was assured because the university had finally given God a proper home on our campus, and, thus, God would provide for Loyola's further needs.⁴⁴ The Jesuits, the Catholic order of priests who educated Loyola students, proclaimed that Christ was in residence at Loyola, permanently. Loyola was built for God because it was God's university. With Sacred Heart Chapel, God was more

⁴² Mary's Hour Program. May 5, 1959. Loyola Marymount University, University Archives. Record Group 7. Series 2. Box: MS 7B.

⁴³ Ken Carreiro. "News Release", 1963. Loyola Marymount University, University Archives. Record Group 10. Box MS 10F12.

⁴⁴ Lair 1954. Loyola Marymount University, University Archives. Record Group 3. Series 2. Box 6: MS ov7A1/6.

accessible than anyone in authority on the premises.⁴⁵ In affirmation of those truths that are essential to man's well-being, whether material and spiritual in time, or wholly spiritual in eternity, this Loyola University had found the opportunity to express their beliefs in the erection of Sacred Heart, the citadel of Christ. The Chapel of Sacred Heart was considered a landmark for those approaching Loyola University, but first and foremost, a student editor argued, it must be a landmark for the individual man of Loyola. It must be a reminder that Loyola education is not solely an end in itself, but what was most important that it was a means to an ultimate end, the complete and perfect possession of God.⁴⁶ With a home for God, the members of the Loyola University community could now fully express its spirituality in a place on the campus that was fitting for their Catholic faith.

Catholicism in America became more mainstream in the 1950s. Once regarded as a religion completely different from America and even a religion filled with people who did not have the ability to be true Americans, the postwar years offered the Catholic Church acceptance. Evolving from a religion once looked down upon, Catholicism was finally gaining respect from Protestants in America. The respect received was so much so that a Catholic, John F. Kennedy, was finally elected to the highest office of the land in the 1960 Presidential Election.

Loyola University in the 1950s witnessed dramatic evolution and maturation. As a university, the construction of Sacred Heart Chapel offered physical, financial, and spiritual change. Once a campus of scattered buildings, the chapel anchored the campus with a massive

⁴⁵ "Center of the University", Loyolan, September 28th, 1953, Loyola Marymount University, University Archives. Record Group 7. Box 6: MS ov7A1/6.

⁴⁶ "Center of the University", Loyolan, September 28th, 1953, Loyola Marymount University, University Archives. Record Group 7. Box 6: MS ov7A1/6.

and striking building that increased Loyola's visibility to the city Los Angeles. In addition, the university was also able to finance the construction, proving the university's monetary power. Most importantly, the addition of Sacred Heart Chapel confirmed the faith life of the university. Meanwhile, the students of Loyola University confirmed their own faith lives with the founding and organization of the successful annual event, Mary's Hour. Students also openly expressed their political beliefs as their prayers coincided with the Cold War. As Loyola and its students evolved and matured, so to did American Catholicism in Los Angeles.

In the over half a century since Sacred Heart Chapel was built and Mary's Hour was founded, Loyola University has continued to evolve and mature. One of the major subsequent developments was the university's merger with the all-female Marymount College in 1973, however, marking the formation of Loyola Marymount University. The university diversified as professors from different faith backgrounds joined the faculty and students from different racial backgrounds increased the university's intercultural richness. More buildings were constructed on the university's campus as the institution continued to grow. Today, near the end of 2008 and on the eve of the Loyola Marymount University's centennial celebrations, the university continues to change. The University currently attracts a more national and international, though more heavily female, student body. Near to Sacred Heart Chapel, a new library is quickly being constructed and scheduled to open next year. Meanwhile, Sacred Heart Chapel itself is in the early stages of a renovation to improve the worship environment for the modern age.⁴⁷ Loyola

⁴⁷ Richard S. Vosko. "Worship Environment Planning Program", May 1, 2008. Author has copy.

Marymount is clearly continuing its evolution and maturation, asserting itself as a more prominent place in Los Angeles.

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