

The Catholic Lawyer

Volume 3
Number 3 *Volume 3, July 1957, Number 3*

Article 9

The Catholic Lawyers Guild of Chicago

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarship.law.stjohns.edu/tcl>



Part of the [Catholic Studies Commons](#)

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Journals at St. John's Law Scholarship Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Catholic Lawyer by an authorized editor of St. John's Law Scholarship Repository. For more information, please contact selbyc@stjohns.edu.

THE CATHOLIC LAWYERS GUILD OF CHICAGO*

IN ROME, ON MAY 19, 1935, His Holiness, Pope Pius XI, canonized a saint; in Chicago, on the same day, about one hundred lawyers inaugurated a Catholic Lawyers Guild by sponsoring a Mass in honor of a saint. The saint in both instances was St. Thomas More, the model and inspiration for lawyers trained in the common law tradition.

The sponsorship of that Mass marked the first tangible fruition of some six years of preparation and planning for the creation of a Chicago Guild. The seed was planted by an article in *The New World*, the official publication of the Archdiocese of Chicago, which discussed the Guild of Catholic Lawyers of New York.¹ Impressed by what he had read, Edward R. Tiedebohl went to New York in September 1929 to meet with the New York Guild's founder and first spiritual advisor, Reverend William E. Cashin. The meeting was primarily to outline the methods of organization for the Chicago Guild.

The period of preliminary organizational planning that followed was marked by the frequent exchange of correspondence between Mr. Tiedebohl and Very Reverend Monsignor Robert C. Maguire, acting on behalf of His Eminence, George Cardinal Mundelein. An excerpt from one of Mr. Tiedebohl's letters in this exchange, dated October 17, 1929, succinctly sets forth some of the objectives of the proposed Guild:

. . . [T]he Guild could be used to bring Catholic attorneys together once or twice or three times a year for the purpose of hearing a lecture or sermon or discussion by some theologian on some particular part of moral law or, if you please, Canon Law, which subjects would be of great interest, I am sure, to Catholic attorneys. Further, . . . if a Red Mass were celebrated under the auspices of this Guild with the Cardinal pontificating, the Mass alone could be the rallying point of interest and enthusiasm for Catholic attorneys.

The five years following the inauguration of the Catholic Lawyers Guild of Chicago marked a period of rapid growth. So much so, that

* Prepared by The St. Thomas More Institute for Legal Research with the assistance of Mr. Edward R. Tiedebohl, and Mr. Fred Speaker.

¹ For an article describing the New York Guild see 1 CATHOLIC LAWYER 101 (1955).



His Eminence Samuel Cardinal Stritch

shortly after his arrival in Chicago in 1940, His Eminence, Samuel Cardinal Stritch, presided at what has become the Guild's annual Red Mass. Since that time, Cardinal Stritch has repeatedly expressed and demonstrated his support of the Guild and

approved the corporate status which it assumed in 1943. His consistent attendance at the Red Mass and at the breakfast held immediately after it, as well as his direction that the Guild chaplain be a representative of the Ordinary of the Archdiocese



Courtesy of The New World.

The twelfth annual Red Mass of the Catholic Lawyers Guild of Chicago, at Holy Name Cathedral. Very Rev. C. J. O'Malley, C.M., president of De Paul University, preached the sermon.

of Chicago, manifest some degree of his interest in the Guild's worthy objectives.

The tradition of the Red Mass, which has been so designated because of the color of the celebrant's vestments, has been observed for years in Rome, Paris, and London.² The judicial year of the Sacred Roman Rota has, as far as can be determined, al-

² For an article describing the Red Mass see 1 CATHOLIC LAWYER 342 (1955).

ways commenced with this observance; and the custom was first introduced in the United States under the auspices of the Guild of Catholic Lawyers of New York in 1928.³ The Red Mass is considered the keystone for the entire year's activities of the Chicago Guild. In addition, it is the professed intention of the Guild to bring to lawyers the knowledge that for centuries

³ *Supra* note 1 at 102.

men of the legal profession have given public evidence of their loyalty to, and dependence upon, Almighty God. Thus the members of the Guild observe, at the opening of each new court year, a religious service dedicated to the petition for Divine aid in their daily labors.

Annually, some ten thousand persons are invited to attend the Chicago Red Mass, including the entire membership of the Chicago Bench and Bar. Two years ago the practice of having as the celebrant and preacher a lawyer-priest was inaugurated with Very Reverend William J. Kenealy, S.J., then Dean of the Boston College of Law, as celebrant.⁴

⁴This practice will be continued at the October

The colophon of the Chicago Guild, which is reproduced on this page, is adopted from a title page drawn by Johann Neudorffer the Elder, dated Nuremburg, 1549 and located in the library of the Lakeside Press Galleries in Chicago. It is approved by the Chicago Chancery Office.



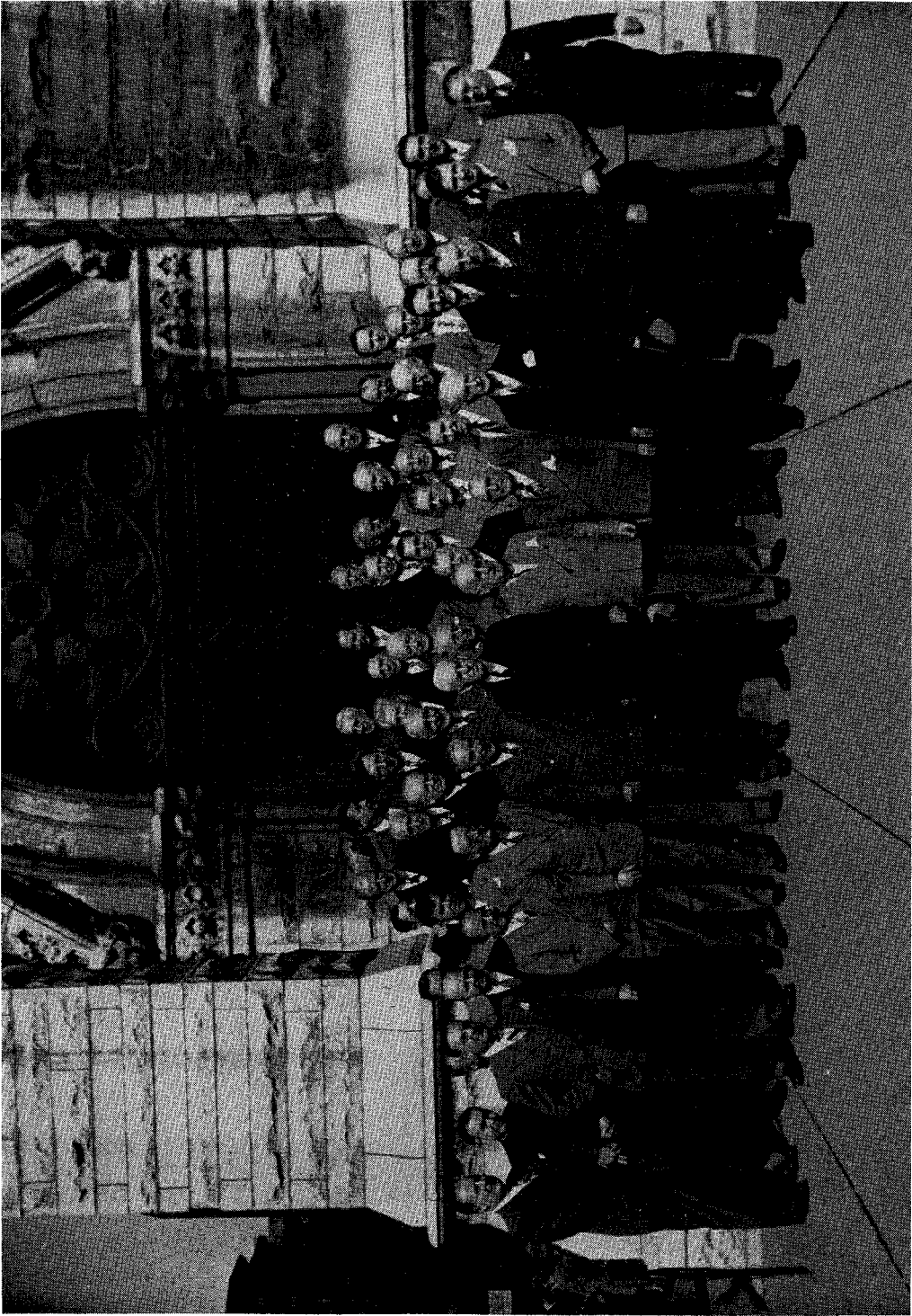
The Chicago Guild, in July 1951, began contacting near-by dioceses with a view to

1957 Red Mass, with Very Reverend Charles E. Sheedy, C.S.C., Dean of the College of Arts and Letters of the University of Notre Dame, as celebrant, and Very Reverend Joseph T. Tinnelly, C.M., Dean of the St. John's University School of Law and Editor of THE CATHOLIC LAWYER, as Preacher.



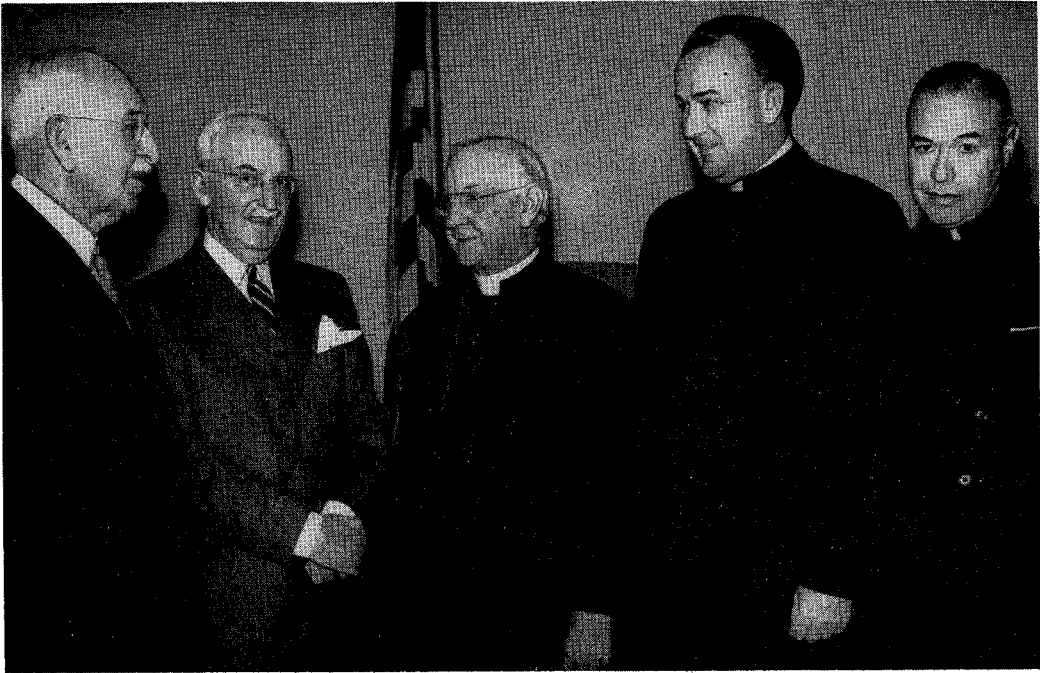
Courtesy of The New World.

His Eminence Samuel Cardinal Stritch preached the sermon at the Guild's fifteenth annual Red Mass. Shown (left to right) are: Rt. Rev. Msgr. Joseph P. Morrison; Cardinal Stritch; Very Rev. Msgr. Edward V. Dailey, chaplain; and the officers of the Guild; Edward R. Tiedebohl, William H. Sexton, and Andrew B. McGivney.



Courtesy of Universal Photo Service.

Judges and attorneys at Holy Name Cathedral following the thirteenth annual Red Mass of the Chicago Catholic Lawyers Guild. The Mass, which was said in honor of St. Thomas More and St. Ives, was attended by more than 1,000 members of the legal profession.



Courtesy of The New World.

Officers and dignitaries at initial session of Chicago Catholic Lawyers Guild's 1954 lecture series. Left to right: William H. Sexton, chairman; Edward R. Tiedebohl, president; Samuel Cardinal Stritch, principal speaker; Rt. Rev. Msgr. Edward M. Burke, Archdiocesan Chancellor; and Very Rev. Msgr. Edward V. Dailey, chaplain.

organizing local Guilds. Since then there has been a vigorous response, and several Guilds have been organized. The Chicago Guild's promotional activities are typified by its action in 1956 in distributing a booklet about the Red Mass throughout the United States. This brochure indicated the cities currently celebrating the Mass, the date and location of such celebration, and which dioceses had no Guild or Red Mass as yet. It was sent to His Holiness, Pius XII, to the Apostolic Delegate and to every member of the hierarchy in the entire United States, as well as to all Catholic Lawyers Guilds and St. Thomas More Societies.

An outstanding feature of the Chicago Guild's activities is the series of four lec-

tures presented by Cardinal Stritch and members of his staff of the Chancery Office. The first lectures, entitled "The Canonical Law on Civil Action in Marriage Problems," were presented in the Spring of 1944. The announced purpose of these lectures was to acquaint the Bench and Bar with the principles and regulations of Canon Law governing the conduct of Catholics involved in marital litigation. Particular emphasis was placed on the duties of Catholic lawyers and members of the Bar generally to conform to the applicable requirements of Ecclesiastical Law.

Commemorating the fifteenth anniversary of the founding of the Chicago Guild, another series of lectures, dealing with "The Natural Law and the Legal Profession,"

was held in 1949. Recognizing that the theory of Natural Law has suffered from widespread legal misunderstanding, the Guild sought to present its principles and regulations viewed according to Catholic thought. Reverend Walter Farrell, O.P., of the Dominican House of Studies, joined Cardinal Stritch and the members of his official staff in delivering these lectures.

A third series, entitled "A Catholic Lawyer's Defense of Man," was presented in 1954. It was felt that lawyers, as guardians of society, must be made aware of the fact that their greatest obstacle in modern times was the spurious philosophy of the omnipotent state. The program, outlining phases of the onslaught against the dignity and rights of the human person, was conducted by Very Reverend John S. Quinn, of the Chancery Office Staff, and Very Reverend Monsignor Harry C. Koenig, Librarian of St. Mary's of the Lake Seminary, Mundelein, Illinois.

In addition to these lecture series, single dinner lectures are presented once or twice each year. These lectures, directed more

specifically to a Catholic audience, have dealt with such subjects as the history of the law, and the laws of religious orders and congregations within the Catholic Church. The lectures fulfill a need which would, of necessity, never be satisfied by bar associations.

The Catholic Lawyers Guild of Chicago, although gratified by the enthusiasm with which its activities have been received, is not content to rest without improvement. Ambitious plans have been projected. The Guild hopes to have a priest, also learned in the law, assigned to the Guild, in order to consider problems peculiar to the legal profession. Suggestions have also been made that the Chicago Guild build its own headquarters and establish a Catholic law library.

Whatever the outcome of such plans, it is apparent that the Catholic Lawyers Guild of Chicago already has successfully conformed to the traditional definition of a guild — an association of men engaged in kindred pursuits formed for mutual aid and protection.
