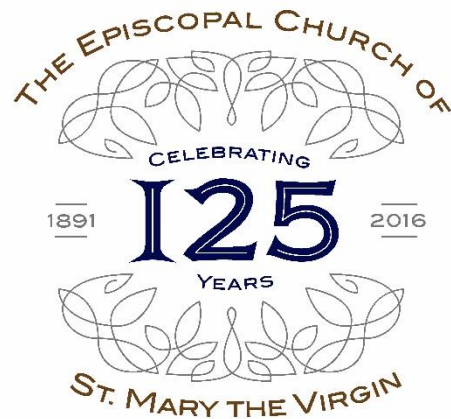


Notes from the Archives

July: Storytelling

As part of our celebration of the 125th anniversary of St. Mary's, we are featuring "Notes from the Archives" on the third Sunday of each month throughout 2016. These fascinating and delightful snippets from history have been thoughtfully prepared by Mary Morganti, our Parish Archivist.



Sadly reminiscent of current concerns, The Rev. Richard Fowler, in his regular *Cow Hollow Church News* column, "From the Rector's Desk," shared St. Mary's response to the social unrest and threats of violence in churches across the nation during the summer of 1969.

Just a few months earlier, American Civil Rights leader, James Forman, had issued a *Black Manifesto*, calling upon white churches and synagogues to pay \$500 million in reparations for injustices African Americans had suffered for centuries. The money would be used to fund projects to benefit blacks, including establishment of a southern land bank, a black university, a research skill center, a welfare rights organization, a training center in communications, publishing and printing industries, and a television station. Forman threatened to use both force and guerrilla warfare to accomplish the *Manifesto's* objectives, and on Sunday morning, May 4, 1969, succeeded in interrupting the services at New York City's Riverside Church.

The Bishop, Council and Standing Committee of the Diocese of California issued a statement on June 5th recognizing the injustice and outlining the Diocesan position. Here at St. Mary's, a special committee was appointed by Fr. Fowler to study the *Manifesto* and to recommend appropriate response and action to the Vestry. Although the committee endorsed the Diocesan statement, St. Mary's ushers were instructed NOT to call the police nor to make any attempt to stop a demonstration at a Sunday Service. Instead, the individual or group would be invited to come forward to address the congregation, and the clergy would act as spokesmen and make the decision whether to terminate the service.

While stating that it was unlikely that a 'sit-in' demonstration would occur at St. Mary's or any other church in San Francisco, Bishop Stephen Bayne recommended that we do everything possible to keep people's attention focused on the real issues of injustice and poverty, and not be lured "to put our own procedures and property ahead of the misery and heartache to which the *Manifesto* addresses itself. Any response should be ecumenical and interfaith, directed to the issues rather than the *manifesto*, mainly a dialogue with the poor, and aimed at awakening greater movement within the church toward the meeting of real needs."