

 **Building "True Community"** 

A Christian Education Curriculum Based in the
Life and Legacy of the Rev. Dr. Pauli Murray

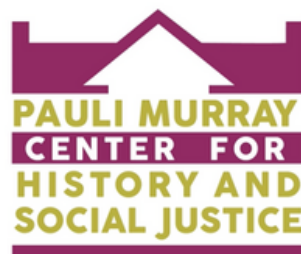
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This curriculum was developed by Callie Swaim-Fox with assistance from Anjalique Abernathy based on a previous curriculum developed in collaboration with Andrew Hudgins and Barbara Lau.

For more information about the Pauli Murray Center, visit <https://www.paulimurraycenter.com>.
For more information about Johnson Service Corps, visit <https://johnsonservicecorps.org>.

All primary source materials are courtesy of the Schlesinger Library at Harvard University.



Introduction

Thank you for your interest in this Christian education curriculum based in the Life and Legacy of the Rev. Dr. Pauli Murray. This curriculum was originally developed as a partnership with Johnson Service Corps and The Pauli Murray Center for History and Social Justice and funding for the project was generously provided by a Constable Grant from The Episcopal Church. It has since been adapted into a non-denominational offering that could be used by any Christian group.

This curriculum consists of four sequential weeks of content, each session designed to take approximately an hour. It invites participants to learn more about the Rev. Dr. Pauli Murray through listening to audio, watching video, and reading quotes from Murray, while providing space to reflect, consider, and discuss the impact of Rev. Dr. Murray on our religion and our lives today. This discussion guide was created for adult learners, but can be adapted for young adults or teens if desired.

This booklet is for facilitators. The first section lays out the content and structure for each week and includes questions for small and large group discussion. This curriculum was envisioned for in-person meetings of approximately 10-15 people, but we offer options for a virtual format and encourage adjustments to fit whatever size. The appendices at the end provide the primary source content for each section. This material can be either printed or displayed electronically for participants. Each section has optional audio/visual material and facilitators can decide what format makes the most sense in their context.

To honor the expansiveness of the Rev. Dr. Murray's gender/s, we use different pronouns to refer to Murray throughout this curriculum, including she/her and they/them pronouns. To learn more about pronouns and Pauli Murray, visit bit.ly/PauliPronouns.

We recommend that participants become familiar with the Rev. Dr. Murray's life and story before participating in this curriculum, as we don't provide a broad overview of their life and work within the four-week curriculum. In particular, we recommend the facilitator become familiar with the Rev. Dr. Murray's life so that they can answer questions that arise. We offer many ways for the participants and facilitator(s) to learn about the Rev. Dr. Murray in the "Pre-Work" document.

Please share any feedback on the form <https://forms.gle/rozGGP9FVnbSZ5aRA>. We hope you enjoy the curriculum!

Pre-Work

Since this curriculum does not go over the basics of the life of the Rev. Dr. Murray, we encourage facilitators to gain a deeper understanding of Murray's history before leading these sessions. We also recommend guiding participants to learn more about Murray either in an additional session before beginning the curriculum or taking 10-15 minutes in the beginning of the first session. A timeline of Rev. Dr. Murray's life can be found at bit.ly/murraytimeline and printed to distribute to participants. We recommend choosing one or two of the following materials to share with participants unfamiliar with Pauli Murray:

Films:

- "My Name is Pauli Murray" Directed by Betsey West and Julie Cohen, Amazon Studios, 2021.

Short Videos:

- "Pauli Murray: Breaking Barriers of Race and Gender," <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qzoeoOyl5ww>
- "Sundance Doc Honors Civil Rights Pioneer Pauli Murray," <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SqBGKr3zXul>

Articles and shorter reads:

- Rothberg, Emma. "Pauli Murray." National Women's History Museum, 2021, <https://www.womenshistory.org/education-resources/biographies/pauli-murray>
- Chandler, Dolores. "Pauli Murray: Black Revolutionary." Scalawag, 29 Jan. 2021, scalawagmagazine.org/2021/01/pauli-murray-essay/.
- Schulz, Kathryn. "The Many Lives of Pauli Murray." The New Yorker, 10 Apr. 2017, www.newyorker.com/magazine/2017/04/17/the-many-lives-of-pauli-murray.
- "Who is Pauli Murray?" <https://www.paulimurraycenter.com/who-is-pauli>

Books by Pauli Murray:

- Murray, Pauli. *Proud Shoes: The Story of an American Family*. Beacon Press, 1999.
- Murray, Pauli, and Patricia Bell-Scott. *Song in a Weary Throat: Memoir of an American Pilgrimage*. Liveright Publishing Corporation, a Division of W.W. Norton & Company, 2018.

Books about Pauli Murray:

- Bell-Scott, Patricia. *The Firebrand and the First Lady: Portrait of a Friendship: Pauli Murray, Eleanor Roosevelt, and the Struggle for Social Justice*. Alfred A. Knopf, 2016.
- Rosenberg, Rosalind. *Jane Crow: The Life of Pauli Murray*. New York, Oxford University Press, 2017.
- Stevens-Holsey, Rosita, and Terry Catasús Jennings. *Pauli Murray: The Life of a Pioneering Feminist and Civil Rights Activist*. Yellow Jacket, 2022

Podcasts:

- Armstrong, Jennifer Keishin and Zakiya Dalila Harris. "Pauli Murray." Dead Writer Drama, episode 5, American Writers Museum, 22 September 2021.
- Inge, Leoneda, host. [Pauli](#), WUNC.
- Pfeffer, Leigh. "[The Life of Pauli Murray - Confrontation by Typewriter](#) (Part 1)." History is Gay, episode 26, 2021.

Week One: Gifts of the Holy Spirit

Week one of this educational series focuses on Pauli Murray's family and upbringing and allows participants to connect their own experiences with the Holy Spirit to the Rev. Dr. Pauli Murray's words. It uses excerpts from a Sermon entitled "Gifts of the Holy Spirit to Women I Have Known" that the Rev. Dr. Murray gave in Durham, North Carolina in 1978.

Opening:

Each session will begin with a prayer, poem, or quote related to Pauli Murray. This week opens with the Prayer for Murray from the Episcopal Church.

"Liberating God, we thank you for the steadfast courage of your servant Pauli Murray, who fought long and well: Unshackle us from the chains of prejudice and fear, that we may show forth the reconciling love and true freedom which you revealed in your Son our Savior Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen." ¹

Reading Activity:

Together, read aloud from the Rev. Dr. Murray's sermon "Gifts of the Holy Spirit to Women I have Known" in [Appendix A](#) of this booklet. Pauli Murray gave this sermon at St. Phillips Church in Durham, NC on Mother's Day in 1978.

Next, break the participants into smaller groups of 3-5 people, depending on the size of your group.

Optional Icebreaker in Small Groups:

Ponder the pictures printed in [Appendix B](#). These photographs come from a scrapbook that the Rev. Dr. Murray compiled of their life in the 1950s and entitled, "The 'Life and Times' of an American called Pauli Murray." In this section, Murray put photographs that represented their "many moods and facets-my id." Go around in your small group and say which of these "moods" of Pauli Murray best fits your mood today and why.

Small Group Discussion:

Respond to the following prompts and questions in your small group.

- How do you see the Holy Spirit manifest through the life, legacy, and/or story of the Rev. Dr. Murray? How might these gifts relate to the women Dr. Murray referenced in their sermon?
- Go around your small group and give each person an equal amount of time to share about the gifts of the Holy Spirit in one person they have known in their life, the same way the Rev. Dr. Murray did in their sermon.

[1] <https://www.episcopalchurch.org/lectionary/pauli-murray/>

Return to the larger group to consider these questions:

Large Group Discussion:

- What throughlines or patterns did you notice about the gifts of the Holy Spirit in the people you and your group members mentioned?
- How does learning about Pauli Murray's personal connections affect how you understand Pauli Murray's life and legacy?

Closing Prayer:

Each session will end with a prayer, poem, or quote related to Pauli Murray. Murray shared this prayer in a 1979 sermon.

"Lord, increase our faith. Grant us to know in life the faith that removes mountains; the faith that overcomes the world; the faith that works through love; the faith that makes all things possible. Grant that relying on thee as thy children, we may trust where we cannot see, and hope when all seems doubtful, that we may go out with good courage, not knowing whither we go, but only that thy hand is leading us, and thy love supporting us, to the glory of thy name. Amen." ²



[2] Pauli Murray, Selected Sermons and Writings, p. 45.

Week Two: Historic Ordination

Week two of this series focuses on the historic ordination of the Rev. Dr. Murray in the Episcopal Church and allows participants to ponder the history of women's ordination in the Church. Participants will listen to or read the transcript of a 1977 oral history of the Rev. Dr. Murray reflecting on women's ordination in the Episcopal Church.

A summary of useful context about women's ordination in the Episcopal Church can be found in [Appendix C](#). This can be printed and distributed or read together as a group.

Opening:

Each session will begin with a prayer, poem, or quote related to Pauli Murray. This week opens with a quote from an essay from the Rev. Dr. Murray. Invite a participant to read aloud and then pause for a moment of reflection before continuing with the program.

“True community is based upon equality, mutuality, and reciprocity. It affirms the richness of individual diversity as well as the common human ties that bind us together. The marks of a community of faith are communion, participation, mutual trust, sharing, and fellowship. A community of faith is both social and sacramental”³

Listening Activity:

Either read together the two excerpted pieces of the oral history transcript in [Appendix D](#), or listen to the two audio clips linked in [Appendix D](#) (audio lasts 8 minutes 30 seconds total). This conversation between Rev. Dr. Murray and Heather Huyck was conducted March 18, 1977.

Next, break the participants into smaller groups of 3-5 people, depending on how large your group is.

Small Group Discussion:

- What do you remember about your experience with the beginning of women's ordinations in The Church? Who was the first woman priest, minister or pastor you knew?
- Do you think we take women's ordination “for granted” the way Pauli Murray feared we might? If so, how could we challenge that?

Note: participants may need to research this individually for their denomination

[3] Murray, Pauli. "The Challenge of Nurturing Christian Community in Its Diversity" Pauli Murray Selected Sermons and Writings, p. 210.

Return to the larger group. Reflect on your small group discussions and consider these questions:

Large Group Discussion:

- What large changes in The Church or your denomination have occurred since Pauli Murray gave this oral history in 1977?
- What are your hopes for the changes yet to come in The Church?

Closing Prayer:

Each session will end with with a prayer, poem, or quote related to Pauli Murray. Murray prayed this prayer after their sermon "The Second Great Commandment," in 1976.

Prayer for Common Life

"O God, you have made us in your own image and redeemed us through Jesus your Son. You have bound us together in a common life. Look with compassion on the whole human family. Take away the arrogance and hatred that infect our hearts. Break down the walls that separate us. Unite us in bonds of love. In all our struggles for justice, help us to confront one another without hatred or bitterness, and to work together with mutual forbearance and respect, to the end that all those who are oppressed may enjoy with every one of us a fair portion of the benefits of this rich land that you have given us; through Jesus Christ our Lord.
AMEN." ⁴



[4] Episcopal Book of Common Prayer, p. 815

Week Three: Eucharistic Celebration and Interconnectedness

Week three of this series focuses on the Rev. Dr. Murray's first celebration of the Eucharist at Chapel of the Cross in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, on February 13, 1977. Participants have the opportunity to learn about this historic day and consider our religion's history.

Opening:

Each session will begin with a prayer, poem, or quote related to Pauli Murray. This week opens with a quote from Rev. Dr. Murray from a sermon. Invite a participant to read aloud and then pause for a moment of reflection before continuing with the program.

“...it is my understanding as a student of theology that God is not limited by any man's notion of sex, or gender, or race, or ethnic origin, or status —God is all inclusive.”⁵

Viewing Activity:

Content Warning: This session discusses enslavement and sexual violence within enslavement

Watch [this video](https://youtu.be/N1JoJryaK98) (<https://youtu.be/N1JoJryaK98>) of Charles Kuralt covering the Rev. Dr. Murray's first celebration of the Eucharist in Chapel Hill in 1977 (10 min 31 seconds.) Trigger warning: enslavement and sexual violence, dated language. (Note: The audio on this video is very quiet and using the automated captions on Youtube will help listeners understand the content. Click the "CC" button on the bottom right of the video)

— OR —

Read aloud or explain the following context to participants:

Pauli Murray's maternal grandmother, Cornelia Smith Fitzgerald, was born enslaved in 1844 in Hillsborough, NC to Harriet, a woman enslaved by the prominent Smith family. Cornelia was conceived through sexual violence by Sidney Smith, Harriet's enslaver. Mary Ruffin Smith, Sidney's sister, raised Cornelia and her sisters in the family's house. The Smiths were members of Chapel of the Cross, an Episcopal church in Chapel Hill, NC. Cornelia and the other enslaved children of the Smith family were baptized at Chapel of the Cross, and attended church weekly, forced to sit in the balcony because of their race...

[5] Murray, Pauli "Father's Day Sermon," in Pauli Murray: Selected Sermons and Writings, ed. Anthony B. Pinn, 14.

Cornelia raised her family in the Episcopal tradition, including her grandchild Pauli Murray. Murray's Episcopal faith, therefore, is intricately related to their family history of slavery. When Pauli Murray was ordained in 1977, the rector at Chapel of the Cross, Rev. Peter James Lee (later the Bishop of Virginia), invited the Rev. Dr. Murray to celebrate their first Eucharist at Chapel of the Cross. It was the first time a person assigned female at birth had celebrated the eucharist in the Episcopal Church in North Carolina. Murray was well aware of the power of the moment. They read the gospel from their grandmother Cornelia's bible using a lectern dedicated to Mary Ruffin Smith, the aunt and enslaver of Cornelia. The ribbons in Murray's bible came from a gift from Eleanor Roosevelt, a devoted Episcopalian and long-time friend of Murray's.

Listening Activity:

Now, listen to an excerpt from the Rev. Dr. Murray's sermon at the Chapel of the Cross in 1977, when they celebrated their first Eucharist. You can find the audio at this link: <https://bit.ly/murraysermon>. To leave time for conversation, we recommend listen to an excerpt from minute **17:25 to 32:25** (15 minutes).

Break the participants into smaller groups of 3-5 people, depending on how large your group is.

Small Group Discussion:

- How do you feel about Christians from ages past? What does it mean to have a shared religion or denomination, particularly with people who have enacted harm?
- Do you feel that the Church has healed from the wounds that the Rev. Dr. Murray describes? Is there more healing to do? What might that look like?

Now, come back to the larger group and discuss the following:

Large Group Discussion:

- How do we, as Pauli Murray's advocates, acknowledge our interconnectedness with others of our religion and culture while not erasing harm?
- What do you think and feel about Murray's assertion that "The American South will lead the way toward the renewal of our moral and spiritual strength and our sense of mission." Consider how your understanding of the history of the South impacts your interpretation of this quote.

Closing:

Each session will end with a prayer, poem, or quote related to Pauli Murray. This week ends with a poem written by Rev. Dr. Murray in November 1937.

Quarrel

Two ants at bay
on the curved stem of an apple
are insufficient cause
to fell the tree.⁶



[6] Murray, Pauli. *Dark Testament and Other Poems*, New York, Liverlight, 2018, 52.

Week Four: Integrated Body, Mind, and Spirit

Week four of this series focuses on Pauli Murray's quest for spiritual integration of their body, mind, and spirit. Participants will have the opportunity to read and reflect on quotes of Pauli Murray's throughout their life relating to the theme.

Opening:

Each session will begin with a prayer, poem, or quote related to Pauli Murray. This week opens with a poem from Rev. Dr. Murray. Invite a participant to read aloud and then pause for a moment of reflection before continuing with the program.

Prelude to Spring

When I consider how this frozen field
Will hold within its harrowed breast
A seed which shall in time
Yield bread for hungering mouths,
I am at peace -
Earth has her need of rain,
And I of tears.⁷

In-Person Activity:

Post the quotes from [Appendix E](#) around the room. Have participants walk around and read each quote. When there has been sufficient time to read them all, have participants choose the quote that most resonates with them and stand by that quote. This will be their small group for the session. If there aren't enough people at each quote, simply break participants up into random small groups.

Optional In-Person Gallery Walk Activity:

Use sticky notes to allow participants to write their reflections to the following question on each quote: What stands out about this quote? What is your takeaway? After participants have read each quote and added their notes, allow them to walk around again and see the responses of others.

— OR —

Virtual Activity:

Invite participants to turn off their cameras and spend time with each quote on this slide deck: bit.ly/murrayquotes. Invite them to ponder how the quotes speak to one another and have them choose the quote that they most resonate with.

[7] Murray, Pauli. *Dark Testament and Other Poems*, New York, Liverlight, 2018, 73.

Small Group Discussion:

In small groups, reflect on the following questions together:

- Why were you drawn to the quote you chose? What do you take away from it?
- How are these quotations in conversation with each other?
- In their life, the Rev. Dr. Murray strove towards spiritual integration. In what ways have you sought, found, or struggled with seeking an “integrated body, mind, and spirit” in your life?

Large Group Discussion:

Come back to a large group to discuss small group discussions and the following questions:

- How do these quotes and Pauli Murray’s life speak to individual call or purpose? What might you be called to do or be in the coming years, showing up as your whole self?
- What do you think God is calling your congregation, denomination, or the Church to in the coming years? How might that intersect with your personal call?

Closing:

Each session will end with a prayer, poem, or quote related to Pauli Murray. This week ends with a prayer written for the end of this curriculum.

God of Love,

We thank you for the opportunity to learn together the past few weeks. We give you thanks for the life and legacy of your child, the Rev. Dr. Murray, and that we have had the opportunity to get to know their story and each other better during this time. We ask that you fill us with your love and the courage to use this learning to better care for ourselves and all those we encounter. Help us fight for the world that Pauli Murray envisioned and dream new worlds into existence.

In gratitude, reverence, and care,

AMEN.

Appendix A

Excerpts from “The Gifts of the Holy Spirit From Women I have Known.” Courtesy of the Schlesinger Library, Harvard Radcliffe Institute,
<https://mps.lib.harvard.edu/sds/audio/427009276>

“I feel moved to share with you some reflections upon women I have known who had the gift of the Holy Spirit and whose impact on my life brings me to you today in a unique homecoming.

The first was my grandmother, Cornelia Smith Fitzgerald, a citizen of Durham until her death in 1923. A devout Episcopalian, she sent three of her daughters, one of whom was my mother, to St. Augustine’s school in Raleigh, and they in turn were confirmed and attended St. Phillips. An article in the North Carolina Historical Magazine, January 1977, will tell those of you who are interested why people like my forebears began to establish missions like St. Titus around 1908 and why I was confirmed in St. Titus rather than in St. Phillip’s.

Cornelia Smith Fitzgerald was a firebrand with a gift of prophecy and a candid tongue. She feared nobody and spoke her mind, letting the chips fall where they may. Her favorite literature came from the poetic passages of the Old Testament—the psalms and especially the prophets. And she had a gift of language, coining her own words to express her thoughts. She had a fine intelligence imprisoned within a restricted education, but she absorbed much knowledge from observation and listening, and she had a wisdom that comes only from facing life courageously whatever the cost. If I have been a firebrand in my time and singed the feathers of the good brothers and sisters in the Establishment— and heaven knows we are an Establishment church— I owe it to my grandmother, with whom I had an affinity that bridged the sixty-six years she had lived in North Carolina and I had not. Her language was salty and her fuses short. But in a curious way that I am only beginning to understand as I grow older, she was more free than most people, in spite of poverty, racial segregation, and the growing alienation between the races. And this was so because she had no pretenses, no hypocrisies. And she spoke in short Anglo-Saxon words that hardly anybody around her could understand. There was no double-talk in my grandmother. She taught me by example certain approaches to life without which all my university and professional training would have been useless. My grandmother was born in slavery, but she recognized no master or mistress save the living God.

My aunt Pauline Fitzgerald Dame, who was responsible for my upbringing here in Durham, had the gift of teaching. Some of you may be old enough to have remembered the delightful short story “Good Morning, Miss Dove,” written by a woman who lived in Durham. I often wondered who the model of that story might have been, because “Miss Dove” was a dead ringer for my aunt Pauline. What am I saying here? I am saying that without the gift of the Holy Spirit, we can live in a town as small as Durham was when I was a child and never know one another; we in fact speak in alien tongues...

Appendix A (Continued)

When I think of the gift of healing, I think of my own mother, Agnes, whom I never knew and who died at the age of thirty-five with a cerebral hemorrhage when I was three. She broke the family tradition of teaching and became a nurse, and the name Agnes in our family has become associated with the healing professions. If my mother had lived until today, she would be ninety-nine years old...

Eleanor Roosevelt had many gifts of the Holy Spirit, but those which made the greatest impression upon me were her generosity of being, her compassion, her rigorous honesty about herself and those she loved, and her sense of mission that permitted her to waste no time that could be used productively. One of my unforgettable memories of her was a lively political discussion we were having one weekend at her cottage in Hyde Park. And while she talked, I watched her filling in her name and putting money into her weekly pledge envelope for her church, St. James in Hyde Park. My aunt Sally, Mrs. Sarah A. Fitzgerald Small, wife of the vicar of St. Titus for several years, had the gift of laughter, of seeing the absurdities of the human condition even in the midst of woe...

These are the women of whom it can be said, "We hear them telling us in our own tongues the mighty works of God" AMEN

Appendix B

From Harvard Schlesinger Archives. Full scrapbook available at:
[https://iif.lib.harvard.edu/manifests/view/drs:49842458\\$1i](https://iif.lib.harvard.edu/manifests/view/drs:49842458$1i)



Appendix B (continued)



Appendix C

Note on the Episcopal Denomination:

The Episcopal Church is governed by “General Convention” a collection of Episcopalians that gather every three years to make decisions to lead the larger Episcopal Church. General Convention consists of a bicameral legislature—the House of Bishops and a House of Deputies (made up of lay people and priests from each region). The houses must concur to make legislation and General Convention alone “has authority to amend the Prayer Book and the church's Constitution, to amend the canons (laws) of the church, and to determine the program and budget of the General Convention, including the missionary, educational, and social programs it authorizes.”

Ordination Timeline

1956

- Pauli Murray met Irene “Renee” Barlow in a law office in New York. They began a decade-long partnership, sharing a dog, car, their Episcopal faith, and their lives together.

1973

- Barlow died and was buried in Murray and Barlow’s shared “family plot.”
- Barlow’s death led Pauli Murray to enter General Theological Seminary (an Episcopal Seminary). At this time, women were not allowed to be ordained in the Episcopal Church.
- General Convention voted to reject women’s ordination in the Episcopal Church.

1974

- The “Philadelphia Eleven,” a group of eleven white women defying General Convention’s orders were ordained by retired or resigned bishops. Pauli Murray is present at the service. Many of those involved are censured by the Episcopal Church.

Late 1976

- General Convention Approved women’s ordination by a narrow margin.

1977

- Pauli Murray is among the first “regularly” ordained women priests and the first Black woman to be ordained in the Episcopal Church. Murray was ordained at the National Cathedral in Washington D.C.

You can find an interactive timeline about the history of women’s ordination in the Episcopal Church at bit.ly/episcopalordination.

Appendix D

Audio Clip 1

This conversation between Rev. Dr. Murray and Heather Huyck was conducted March 18, 1977.

<https://soundcloud.com/pauli-murray-center/pauli-murray-on-1973-convention>

Heather Huyck: Had you been at [General Convention in] '73?

Pauli Murray: No. I just had entered seminary and I said to myself, "Pauli you have just entered seminary. It's your business to go ahead and prepare yourself for the priesthood, not to go down to Kentucky. And you've just started this thing and you know." What I was really saying was, "Pauli, you maintain a low profile. It's your business to prepare. And then when you're prepared then you have something to say and something to fight about but right now you are not prepared." And so I stayed and I prepared for three years and I graduated with honors. Well, having graduated with honors, having taken my measure of all my male fellow seminarians over a period of three years, I knew where I stood. And I couldn't face the possibility that my church would reject me. I just simply couldn't face it. And I thought the best thing for me to do was to stay home and pray, which I did. I held my little private intercessions every day and I didn't go beyond that. I just said "Lord don't let me have to make that decision," because this is when my activism would have really boiled over [laughter] you see. Now don't forget that I was present at every one of the significant actions. I was present in July 1974. I was present at the Riverside Church first. I was present at the September 7th irregular ordination. I was present at the first annual anniversary where six of the women priests in New Jersey—I think it was Summit, New Jersey where six of them celebrated. I was there. And so I had regularly supported them in every move and I had written letters to Bishops and all that kind of thing. So that obviously it was clear what my position was.

HH: Did you expect the vote to pass?

PM: I knew from listening to people talk that it was fifty-fifty. It could go almost either way. I knew it was going to be close. From everything that I'd heard, I knew it was going to be close. And I was trying to gear myself for what I would do if it didn't pass. I didn't allow myself to think about it passing. It so shocked me that it passed that I really went into [laughter]—you know I got shivers and shakes. I practically said if the Lord wants me to be a priest, it's going to pass. And if the Lord doesn't want me to be a priest—you know, I made it really very personal. So I was preparing myself for not being a priest and kind of maybe sort of almost relieved that I wasn't going to have that responsibility. Bless Pat, when it passed, then I really got scared [laughter].

Appendix D (continued)

Audio Clip 2

<https://soundcloud.com/pauli-murray-center/pauli-murray-on-the-future-of-womens-ordination>

Pauli Murray: [Women's ordination] then gives people a choice, which they did not have before. So that the church has increased its potential resources for mission, for ministry, for proclaiming. I think that the women may very well make religion more credible and closer to people. The whole history of the male-dominated church has been to project a thunderous, jealous, wrathful, avenging God right along with talking about God is love. And women don't have that kind of tradition. If you really thought of God as a woman, you wouldn't be half as frightened and terrified as when you think of God as a man.

Heather Huyck: When you fantasize about what women priests will be in ten years, what comes to your mind?

PM: I haven't gone that far. I'm really living day to day. This is completely new ground. In the way the sky is imminent. Bearing in mind, most of us have been well-trained. Bearing in mind we must be careful in terms of our interpretation of the Christian faith. We must not become so free that we skid into so-called heresy. Keeping in mind the constitution and canons, we will probably have to be very precise, very nimble, for quite a while until we are accepted. Because to the extent that we are on trial, our weaknesses will be pointed out, magnified, et cetera until we get over this period. Now how long this period will last, I don't know. As we begin to come in in greater numbers and I hope in a way I hope that it will not be so taken for granted by future women that they will forget, as most new generations are prone to do, that they will forget how significant this is. What a tremendous thing it is for both the women involved and for the Church. And then become slack, taking many things for granted. I hope that there will be, for some time to come, a kind of evangelical real sense of awakening of the Church, of new paths, of calling the people of God back to God, of prophecy. This will begin to generate throughout the Church. I think women will be more ecumenical than men have been. I think we will be less inclined to draw sharp lines between Roman Catholic women or Jewish women. Because remember, we have underneath all of this, this basis for universal sisterhood. As long as women feel they are oppressed and are in fact, we have this basis for sisterhood that men don't have.

Appendix E

Charles Kuralt: Do you feel reconciled yourself with your own past? Here are all these cross currents of violence and pain of the South that meet in you.

Pauli Murray: Yes, I know I've lived with it for 66 years. It's like riding wild horses. I am tempestuous. I am volatile. I have a tremendous amount of nervous energy, my friends say, "You wear out six people." I have a terrible temper. I call it an Irish African temper of which there is no worse. I am sensitive, aggressive, shy; I'm all these warring personalities trying to stay in one integrated body, mind, and spirit. And there are days when I bless my ancestors and there are days when I look in the mirror and say, "What hath God wrought?"

On the Road with Charles Kuralt, 1977.

"In my earliest youth I sought to work out intolerable frustrations through poetry. As I became more deeply involved in the civil rights movement in the 1940s, I turned to the law as a means of working within the system for social change. In time, as the world crisis has deepened, I began to realize that the law by itself is inadequate to cope with the fundamental moral and ethical issues of our time, and this led me to theology. I cannot pretend I have found a synthesis, for my feminist outlook sharpens the tensions experienced in trying to come to terms with a continuous struggle for authentic selfhood, particularly in my own church affiliation. The synthesis that I strive for is one that harnesses the creative urge to a vision of a more humane society in which I can direct whatever talent I possess towards making that vision a reality.... Creative impulse expresses itself in many forms, and since poets, lawyers, and members of the clergy all use the common medium of language to express their deepest feelings and convictions, it is not uncommon to find lawyers who are also poets, and preachers whose sermons are prose poems."

"Synthesis: Theology, Feminism, and the Law— The Impact on a Creative Writer,"
1977, in *Pauli Murray Selected Sermons and Writings*, pg. 207.

"But I hold the status of several minorities. And since, as a human being, I cannot allow myself to be fragmented into Negro at one time, woman at another, or worker at another, I must find a unifying principle in all these movements to which I can adhere. This, it seems to me, is not only good politics but also may be the price of survival."

Letter to Dr. Kathryn F. Clarenback, Chairman of National Board, NOW, November 21, 1967

"It has taken me almost a lifetime to discover that true emancipation lies in the acceptance of the whole past, in deriving strength from all my roots, in facing up to the degradation as well as the dignity of my ancestors."

Pauli Murray in Proud Shoes, 1956, pg. 62.