



# **Black and Catholic in the Jim Crow South: The Stuff That Makes Community**

*Danny Duncan Collum*

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Just over 40 years ago Mississippi was burning. A series of racially motivated murders and brutal repression of the movement to register black voters had drawn the moral outrage of the nation. But in the historic city of Natchez, in the midst of that dreadful period, an African American Catholic parish and its white priest chose to stand at the center of the African American freedom movement. Based on the oral histories of Holy Family Church in Natchez, *Black And Catholic In The Jim Crow South* tells the story of black Catholics' 20th-century struggle through the voices of the people who lived through it. It tells of the origins of the Holy Family Church from its founding as a place of worship for black slaves or servants to the central role that the parish played in the civil rights movement, when it leaped the boundaries of its original mission to become a center for struggle and hope. Danny Duncan Collum provides vivid interviews with members of Holy Family parish who lived through this period of ferment, hope, and terror. He documents the courageous stand taken by both his parish and by the Catholic hierarchy against the supporters of segregation, ranging from the state government to the Klu Klux Klan.

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