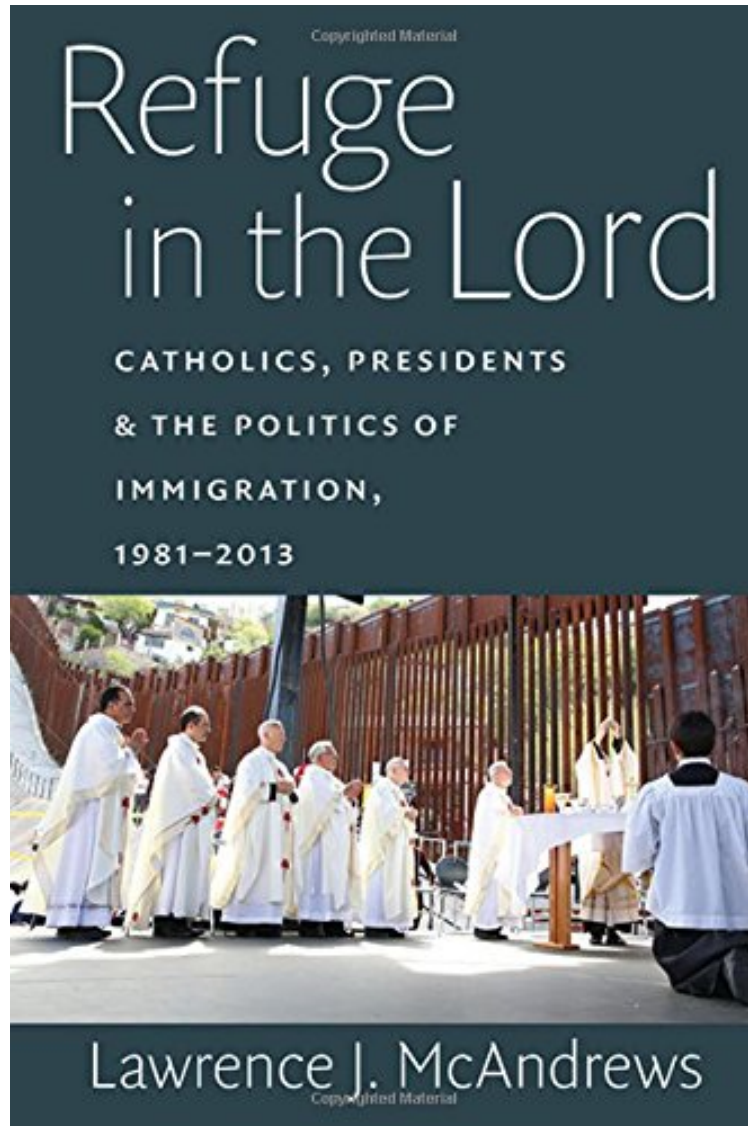


## Refuge in the Lord: Catholics, Presidents, and the Politics of Immigration, 1981-2013

*Lawrence J McAndrews, Lawrence J. McAndrews*  
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**Lawrence J McAndrews, Lawrence J. McAndrews : Refuge in the Lord: Catholics, Presidents, and the Politics of Immigration, 1981-2013** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Refuge in the Lord: Catholics, Presidents, and the Politics of Immigration, 1981-2013:

When Ronald Reagan became president in 1981, immigration and refugee policy was among the unresolved matters that he inherited from his predecessor, Jimmy Carter. Over three decades later, it remains largely unresolved, due not only to the men who would inhabit the White House, but to interest groups and members of Congress, many of them Catholic, on all sides of the issue. Carter appointed a Catholic priest, University of Notre Dame President Rev. Theodore Hesburgh, to chair the Select Commission on Immigration and Refugee Policy. The commission's report, released in the early days of the Reagan Administration, helped produce the Immigration Reform and Control Act, signed by Reagan in 1986. Since it offered amnesty to those who were in the country illegally, Catholic immigration advocates, led by the American bishops, applauded the law as consistent with the church's sacred mission and proud history of compassion toward strangers. These Catholics were also on the same side as the White House when George H. W. Bush signed the Immigration Act of 1990, which raised the ceiling for legal immigration; when George W. Bush in 2006 and Barack Obama in 2013 supported comprehensive immigration bills which passed the Senate; and when Obama granted temporary residence to the foreign-born children of undocumented immigrants in 2012. But they challenged the restrictive 1996 Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act signed by Bill Clinton; the interior enforcement efforts of George W. Bush and Barack Obama; and the border control and refugee policies undertaken by all presidents from Reagan to Obama. Rather than helping to overcome the growing political divide over immigration in the country and the church, Catholics on the outer edges of the issue contributed to it. By eschewing compromise in favor of confrontation, Catholic legislators from both parties too often helped prevent Congress from giving the presidents, and the public, most of what they wanted on immigration reform. By forsaking political reality in the name of religious purity, Catholic immigration advocates frequently antagonized the presidents whose goals they largely shared, and ultimately disappointed the immigrants they so badly wanted to help.

"A comprehensive, encyclopedic rendering of the topic that will make a great reference tool for anyone who wants to look up specific legislative efforts at immigration reform." - Timothy Matovina, University of Notre Dame  
About the Author  
Lawrence J. McAndrews is professor of history at St. Norbert College, Wisconsin and author of *What They Wished For: American Catholics and American Presidents, 1960-2004*.