

BOOK REVIEW

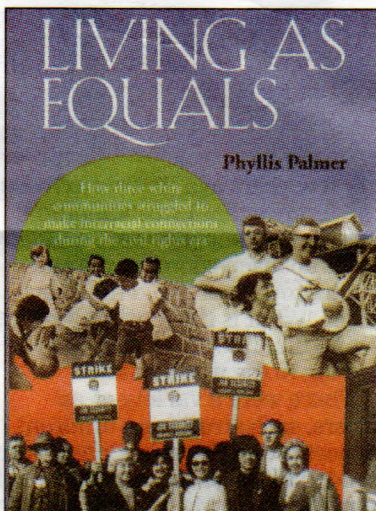
Living as Equals; by Phyllis Palmer, Vanderbilt University Press, 2008, soft cover, \$27.95.

REVIEWED BY BROTHER EDWARD LOCH, SM
FOR TODAY'S CATHOLIC

In the introduction, Phyllis Palmer relates her childhood as an Anglo Methodist in Dallas who loved people of color but at a distance. At 18 she left home for college at Oberlin, Ohio, and was thrust into a new world where her peers and friends were of other races. This was her awakening to the real world where integration was beginning to dawn. The focus of the book is upon Anglo Americans who responded to the civil rights era's promise of a freer and more equitable nation. She picked three different entities to show how each struggled to bring about racial cooperation and understanding. Each group tackled the problem differently.

The National Conference of Christians and Jews Brotherhood Camps for Teens worked on the individual. In its first phase, the goal was to learn to live together harmoniously. In the second phase, the goal became raising the consciousness of each racial group.

The second model that she examines is that of a residential neighborhood in Washington, D.C. where the residents themselves worked to end racial segregation. They institutionalized this goal in organizing themselves into an organization called Neighbors, Inc. Today this area is possibly the most stable area in Washington, D.C.



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The third example she chose was that of the integration of an entire city — San Antonio. She details the role of the Catholic Church and in particular Archbishops Lucey, Furey and Flores. Archbishop Lucey had a particular interest in fair wages and the right to form unions. Other organizations and persons featured in the book are the roles of St. Mary's University, the rise of COPS and Metro Alliance, The Southwest Voter Project of Willie Velasquez, Senator Joe Bernal, Congressman Henry B. Gonzalez, Charles Cotrell, Father Sherrill Smith and other Hispanic leaders.

She supplemented her documentary research with many individual personal interviews. The book covers the areas of race relations, civil rights and community organizing in the 1960s and 1970s.

This book is a must for anyone wanting to understand the recent multi-racial, multi-religious and multi-cultural history of San Antonio.