Prayer
Scripture: Philippians 1:15-18
Hymn: 455 "O for a Faith that Will Not Shrink"

As the news of the planting and growth of French, Spanish and English colonies in the New World spread, it was only natural that an interest in planting colonies in the West was aroused in other countries in Europe. The stories of Virginia and New England especially caught the attention of the persecuted peoples of both England and the continent. There was a growing feeling that perhaps in this new world they might find peace and security. One group that had maintained an uneasy and uncertain existence in England was the Catholic minority. In most of the original Thirteen Colonies the Catholics were distrusted, feared, and were unwelcome. The planting of Catholicism in the Colonies is an important part of early American church history.

The Reformation of Henry VIII reduced the Catholics to an unpopular minority that was further restrained under Edward VI. The attempts of Mary Tudor to restore Catholicism in England aroused great fear and distrust of Catholics. Catholic plots to overthrow Elizabeth brought more restraints and persecution. Only rich and powerful nobles were permitted to continue Catholic. On the estates of these nobles their people were allowed to continue Catholic under the noble's sponsorship and protection. The English made laws against the Catholics but did not always rigidly enforce them. The Catholics were looked on with great disfavor.

THE CALVERTS AND THE FOUNDING OF MARYLAND

A Yorkshire noble, Sir George Calvert, aspired to build his family fortune by colonization in the New World. In 1621 he attempted a settlement in Newfoundland that he named Ferryland. After two years he obtained a charter for a colony and named it "Avalon." After five years he abandoned the colony losing between thirty and forty thousand pounds.

George Calvert was converted to Roman Catholicism in 1625. He continued in the favor of King James I. The king raised him to the Irish peerage with the title, Lord Baltimore I. For many years he had been important in both business and government in England. He was a member of the Privy Council, serving as one of the principal secretaries of state. He was a member of the Virginia Company and the New England Council. As a Catholic he combined his economic interests with a strong desire to establish a sanctuary for English Roman Catholics who actually suffered more disabilities and persecution than the Puritans. He visited Virginia looking for such a sanctuary. He found that he was not welcome in Virginia which had no place for Catholics.

George Calvert had to resign from the Privy Council because
he could not take the required oath when Charles I became king. He would not renounce all allegiance to the pope and acknowledge the ecclesiastical supremacy of the king. He was able to continue in the favor of Charles I. He petitioned the king for a grant of land north of Virginia. The charter of Virginia had been annulled by James I and Virginia had been made a royal colony. Charles I carved out a colony for George Calvert out of territory claimed by Virginia. Before the charter was completed George Calvert died (1632).

Cecil Calvert (1606-1675), the oldest son of George Calvert, inherited his father's title, becoming Lord Baltimore II. He also received the charter to the new colony carved out of territory claimed by Virginia. From the beginning there was strong ill-will between the two colonies. The colonists of Virginia deeply resented the carving of the new colony out of their territory. They doubly resented it when they learned that the new colony was designed to be a haven for persecuted Catholics. The charter of the new colony said nothing of religious toleration but Cecil Calvert was a very practical business man, intent on the colony being an economic success. He was well aware that Protestant pressures could lead to the revoking of his charter. He was able to secure financial support from prominent and well-to-do Catholics but he found few who had any desire to migrate to America. They had been able to survive on their estates in England and even hoped for the day when England might return to the Catholic fold. Cecil Calvert found it necessary to welcome all loyal subjects of the king in order to secure sufficient colonists. He emphasized the conversion of the natives as a principal goal of the colony.

Cecil Calvert outfitted two ships, the "Ark" and the "Dove", that sailed from England in November 1633. The second Lord Baltimore remained behind in England; from a London office he would continue to recruit settlers for his colony from all religious groups--Anglicans, Puritans and Catholics. He would never visit America. He sent his younger brother, Leonard Calvert, to lead the colony. The first group of colonists carried by the two ships consisted of sixteen to twenty Catholic gentlemen and two to three hundred laborers and servants who were mostly Protestants. Leonard Calvert stopped at the Isle of Wight to pick up two Jesuit priests and some Catholic laymen.

Cecil Calvert, before the colonists left England, instructed his brother as governor and the provincial commissioners that he appointed, that they should exercise great care to maintain peace among the colonists and to allow no cause for offense in matters pertaining to religion. All the acts of the Catholic religion should be done as privately as possible. The Protestants were to be treated with mildness and fairness. He did not want any disturbances that could lead to the revoking of the charter.

Leonard Calvert and his colonists reached the mouth of the Potomac in March, 1634. They disembarked at St. Clement's Island where the priests celebrated mass in honor of "The
Annunciation of the Most Holy Virgin Mary." Governor Calvert purchased from the Indians a large tract of land that he named "Terra Mariae" or St. Mary's Land (Maryland). It had double meaning: it was intended to honor the Holy Virgin Mary and Henrietta Maria, the wife of King Charles I, who was also the sister of Louis XIII of France. Pious Catholics would also think of the Catholic queen of England, the daughter of Henry VIII and Catharine of Aragon, Mary.

The colonists found the upper part of the Chesapeake Bay a beautiful land with rich soil, with rivers full of fish, the shores of the bay teeming with crabs and oysters. The oriole with its black and yellow, the colors on Lord Baltimore's Coat of Arms, became the "Baltimore-Bird." There was the Mockingbird that mocked all the other birds (the Mock-Bird) and to the settlers the red cardinal sang like the Nightingale, only louder.

Leonard Calvert chose a healthy site for the first township which he also called "St. Mary's." He encouraged the colonists to plant foodstuffs so that there would be no starving time as in Virginia. The colonists were encouraged to diversify their crops. Tobacco would become their money crop but the first year they raised enough corn to send a ship load to New England where the colonists were suffering from famine.

The Governor established the English manor system in Maryland. In England Lord Baltimore offered 100 acres for every able-bodied man who would migrate to America at his own expense and 50 acres for each woman or child. Indentured servants usually had to work five years to pay the cost of their passage to America. At the end of their term of service they received 50 acres of land, a complete suit of clothes, an axe, two hoes and three barrels of corn. Anyone who could bring enough people to rate 2,000 acres of land was granted a manor. In the first fifty years some sixty-two manors were granted. Thirty more were held by the Lord Proprietor himself. A quitrent of two shillings per 100 acres was paid annually. In 1669 the rent was raised to four shillings. Socially there was a great gulf between upper and lower classes.

Leonard Calvert proved an able and wise governor. He faithfully carried out the plan of religious tolerance. Protestants and Catholics at first used the same chapel.

In 1636 Lord Baltimore prescribed the following oath that Maryland governors had to take:

I will not myself or any other, directly or indirectly, trouble, molest, or discountenance any person professing to believe in Jesus Christ, for or in respect to religion: I will make no difference of persons in conferring offices, favors, or rewards, for or in respect of religion: but merely as they shall be found faithful and well deserving, and endued with moral virtues and abilities: my aim shall be public unity, and if any person or officer shall molest
any person professing to believe in Jesus Christ, on
account of his religion, I will protect the person
molested, and punish the offender.

In 1642 a prominent Roman Catholic layman took away the keys
to the chapel so that the Protestants could not gain entrance.
He was brought before the Provincial Court and fined.

Before the English Civil War that came in 1642 the govern-
ment of Maryland was controlled by Roman Catholics and the large
estates were owned by Catholics. People of all religions were
welcomed. The spiritual well-being of the Catholics was in the
hands of the two Jesuit priests, Andrew White and John Altham.
White has been called "The Apostle to Maryland." He had been
born near London during the reign of Queen Elizabeth. He was
educated at Saint Albans College at Valladolid in Spain and at
the English college in Seville. He studied at Douai where he
was ordained in 1605. He attempted to work in England but was
banished. He joined the Jesuits. He served as a professor of
Scripture and theology in Louvain and Liège, making short journeys
into England. In 1629 Lord Baltimore had contacted him to help
plant a colony in America. Only a month after arriving in
Maryland he sent a most optimistic report to his superior about
the fruitful field he had found in America. White and John
Altham were joined by two other Jesuits, John Brock and Thomas
Copley. They faithfully ministered to the Catholic settlers.
They devoted much time to the Protestants and by 1638 could
boast that they had converted most of them. They worked with
some success among Patuxents and the Piscataways Indians. White
was probably the first Englishman to reduce an American Indian
language to writing. He prepared a grammar and a dictionary and
translated the catechism into the language of the Piscataways.
He even made plans to establish a college at St. Mary's.

Friction developed between the Proprietor and the Jesuits.
Cecil Calvert did not want the government to meddle in spiritual
matters but temporal matters he held should be under the juris-
diction of the civil government. The Jesuits ignored this policy.
The charter stated that land grants could be secured only from
the Proprietor. The Jesuits acquired land directly from the
Indians until they held extensive tracts of land. They demanded
special privileges for themselves such as exemption from
military service and exemption from taxes, the supervision of
marriages and the making of wills. They wanted the favors from
the government usually granted to their order in the Catholic
countries. Lord Baltimore charged the Jesuits with claiming
land that had been granted to him under the royal charter. In
the controversy that followed Captain Thomas Corwallis, the
military commander of the colony and many of the planters supported
the Jesuits.- Lord Baltimore's secretary, John Lewger, appealed
to Father Henry More, the Jesuit Provincial in England who
decided the matter in favor of Lord Baltimore. The Jesuits were
forced to give up all claims to land and favors and were replaced
by two secular priests. The Jesuits resolved their differences
with Lord Baltimore and were granted readmittance to Maryland.
Maryland suffered considerably from the hostility of Virginia. The hostility arose over the religious differences and also came from economic rivalry. The Virginians resented the Maryland charter granting Maryland control of the Potomac with the boundary extending to the south shore of the river. The leaders in Virginia sought to arouse the Indians to repeated attacks on the Maryland settlers. William Claiborne of Virginia tried to take the Isle of Kent in an armed attack. The Civil War in England brought to Maryland what was known as the "Plundering Time." Richard Ingle led an invasion into Maryland in 1644. The Indian mission was laid waste. White and Copley were seized and sent back to England in chains. Ingle claimed to be representing the English Parliament.

Maryland had become an asylum for dissenters from the other colonies. Puritans who were driven out of Virginia had been welcomed to Maryland. In 1643 the Governor had even invited Puritans from New England to settle in Maryland. There was already some tension growing between Catholics and the Puritans in Maryland when the English Civil War started. When Ingle invaded Maryland the supporters of Parliament staged a revolt. The governor and his chief Catholic supporters had to flee. The insurrection was put down and Calvert returned. He died in 1647.

Lord Baltimore fearing that the English Parliament might revoke his charter, in 1649 appointed William Stone, a Protestant to the governorship, with instructions not to molest for religious reasons any person who confessed faith in Jesus Christ. With strong encouragement from Lord Baltimore, the Maryland Assembly on April 21, 1649 passed the "Act Concerning Religion" that declared that it was dangerous to force the conscience in matters of religion. No person who professed faith in Jesus Christ should be troubled in any way or molested in his or her religion. The death penalty was decreed for any person who denied the deity of Jesus Christ, the Trinity, or the unity of the Godhead. The same sentence was decreed for any person who called another person "a heretic, Schismatick, Idolator, puritan, Independant, popish priest, Jesuite, Jesuited papist, Lutheran, Calvinist, Anabaptist, Brownist, Antinomian, Barrovist, Roundhead, Separatist, or any other name or terme in a reproachful manner."

A Jew, Dr. Jacob Lumbrozo, was charged with not believing in the Saviourhood of Jesus and brought to trial. Instead of being condemned he was granted full rights of citizenship.

All through England's Civil War Maryland faced troubled times. When news came that Charles I had been executed, Thomas Greene, a Roman Catholic who was acting governor in the absence of Governor Stone, unwisely declared Charles II, who was in exile, to be the lawful king. Lord Baltimore repudiated the acting governor's action, but Parliament sent a commission to force Maryland to give allegiance to Parliament. Governor Stone was removed from office when he refused to recognize the authority of Parliament in Maryland. Parliament, recognizing that Stone was very popular, restored him to office after he expressed a
willingness to compromise. The General Assembly of Maryland in 1654 under Puritan control repealed the act of toleration and denied Catholics the right to exercise their faith. Heavy penalties were provided.

When Cromwell became Protector of England in 1653 Lord Baltimore appealed to the Protector. Cromwell ruled against the Puritans and declared that Lord Baltimore's proprietorship must be respected. Religious toleration was restored in Maryland. In 1669 there were only two Catholic priests in Maryland to minister to about two thousand Catholics. In 1673 two Franciscans founded a mission in Maryland. In 1677 three more Franciscans and three Jesuits arrived to bolster the Catholic forces and to establish a school. With both Charles II and James II committed to Catholicism, during their reigns toleration continued in Maryland. Cecil Calvert died in 1675. His son, Charles maintained the Calvert ideal of freedom of conscience.

When the Glorious Revolution of 1688 brought William and Mary to the English throne, John Coode led a revolt against Lord Baltimore. The rebels petitioned the crown for the end of proprietary rule. The petition was granted by Protestant William. In 1691 Sir Lionel Copley, an Anglican was appointed the first royal governor of Maryland. In 1692 Copley led the General Assembly, now dominated by the revolutionary party, in the abolition of religious toleration for non-Trinitarians and Roman Catholics. This was in keeping with the English Toleration Act of 1689. The Assembly voted to make the Anglican Church the established church of Maryland. The act was approved in England in 1702. In 1704 the General Assembly made it illegal for a priest to say mass or to baptize any child whose parents were not Roman Catholic. Catholic parents were forbidden to send their children abroad for education. In 1718 Catholics were denied the franchise. The period from 1692 to the American Revolution to the Catholics was the "Penal Period." Most of the colonies had penal legislation against Catholics. In Maryland during this period some seventy Jesuit priests and seven Franciscans served in Maryland, with rarely more than two or three active at any one time.

The Anglican intolerance in Maryland led many Catholic families to flee to Pennsylvania where even Catholics were welcomed. When the Anglicans took over Maryland the Catholics probably made up between a tenth and a fourth of the population. It has been estimated that by 1708 there were probably no more than three thousand Catholics left in Maryland. The Catholic population in Pennsylvania was swelled by German Roman Catholics who migrated from the Palatinate. Some six thousand Acadian Catholics expelled from Nova Scotia by the English scattered throughout the colonies. In spite of the penal legislation there were a few Catholics in all the colonies. By the American Revolution there were about 25,000 Roman Catholics in all the colonies with the largest numbers in Maryland and Pennsylvania. In America many Catholics were lost to their Church because of
the pressures and because there were never enough priests to minister to their needs. A small core of the faithful—often landed and wealthy—guaranteed the survival of the Roman Catholic Church in America.