

*Federal Justice in Indiana**The History of the United States District Court for the Southern District of Indiana*

By George W. Geib and Donald B. Kite Sr.

(Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Society Press, 2007. Pp. xix, 335. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$29.95.)

This book, the first official history of the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Indiana, was produced at the request of the historical society of that court. The authors are, respectively, an academic who specializes in Indiana history, and an Indianapolis attorney who earlier served as a clerk for the judges of the Southern District. Although not part of a series, the book appears at a time when numerous works on midwestern state legal and judicial history are being produced, including those comprising the Ohio University Press series on Law, Society, and Politics in the Midwest. The book is easily accessible to its intended audience of both attorneys and interested laypersons.

This volume is organized as a chronological account of the court's history, beginning in Indiana's territorial period under the guidelines spelled out in the Northwest Ordinance of 1787, then proceeding with the court's institution under the U.S. Constitution, and its development, growth, and changes during the almost two centuries of Indiana statehood. The authors focus on several specific topics in each period: administrative structure and operations, court personnel, political influences, evolution of Indiana law, and signifi-

cant and interesting topics with which the court has dealt. Their sources include court records, oral histories of various judges, and a variety of secondary materials.

The authors present a clear picture of the growth and administrative operation of the federal courts in Indiana. They provide biographical material about judges and other major staff people who have served the court, including political factors which frequently influenced their selection. They explain how the operation of the court has evolved and expanded, leading to the creation of the separate northern and southern districts and to the development of altered responsibilities in such areas as bankruptcy and the responsibilities of magistrates.

Providing adequate treatment of the many varied topics which have occupied the court's time over two hundred years was obviously a major challenge for the authors. They touch on such wide-ranging issues as land disputes, controversies raised by the Civil War, strikes and other labor controversies, desegregation during the civil rights movement, political corruption, prisoners' rights, pornography, and the posting of the Ten Commandments in public places, culminating with an account of a well-

publicized controversy over ownership of stolen international art. The list is not, nor can it be, comprehensive. The authors have selected an interesting variety of topics, without making claims that these are necessarily the most important issues with which the court dealt at any given time.

This volume fills a need for a well-organized documentation of the federal courts in Indiana. It presents in a single volume a wealth of information about the court's personnel,

operation, and evolution during its first two hundred years. One could wish, however, that the authors had done more to place the court's work in the context of the larger history of the federal court system, particularly in comparison to the evolution and work of other federal courts in the Midwest.

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Worthy of the Gospel of Christ

A History of the Catholic Diocese of Ft. Wayne-South Bend

By Joseph M. White

(Huntington, Ind.: Our Sunday Visitor Publishing, 2007. Pp. xiv, 609. Illustrations, notes, index. Paperbound, \$29.95.)

Joseph M. White undertakes the ambitious task of presenting a sweeping narrative history of the Roman Catholic diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, Indiana. In the main, albeit not exclusively, the author draws on an enormous and varied collection of secondary sources in his effort to demonstrate how a small pioneer mission effort grew into a substantive religious presence in the state. The book is divided into four parts: the early initiatives of frontier Catholics, the establishment of the Fort Wayne bishopric, the administrative and cultural expansion of the first half of the twentieth century, and the forces that propelled the diocese through the second fifty years of the century and into

the next. Subjects range from the religious feelings of Potawatomi and Miami Indians to the formation of the Catholic press; the outbursts of anti-Catholicism in the state; the impact of the powerful University of Notre Dame at South Bend; the modern challenges fueled by liturgical, financial, and societal changes; and the national upheaval resulting from the church's responses to sexual abuse by certain clergy members. With such a plethora of topics—both interwoven and unrelated—an almost overwhelming number of people, church agencies, and local parishes inhabit each chapter.

White does an outstanding job of presenting this lengthy institutional