

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Bishop Joseph Howze

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Howze, Joseph Lawson, 1923-2019
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Bishop Joseph Howze,
Dates:	November 12, 2002
Bulk Dates:	2002
Physical Description:	4 Betacame SP videocassettes (1:46:35).
Abstract:	Religious leader Bishop Joseph Howze (1923 - 2019) retired from his role as a Catholic Bishop in Biloxi, Mississippi. Howze was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on November 12, 2002, in Biloxi, Mississippi. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2002_201
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Religious leader Bishop Joseph Howze, bishop emeritus of Biloxi, Mississippi, was the first black Catholic bishop appointed in the twentieth century. He was born Lawson Howze on August 30, 1923, in Daphne, Alabama. He grew up amid the Gulf Coast's shipping and fishing industries. Howze attended Heart of Mary in Mobile, Alabama, for kindergarten, but later was transferred to the segregated public schools of Mobile. He graduated from Mobile County Secondary School in 1944, and in 1946, he graduated from the Alabama State Branch Junior College in Mobile. Earning his B.A. degree from Alabama State University in 1948, Howze worked as a teacher at Mobile's Central High School. That same year, he converted to Catholicism and took the name of Joseph. In 1952, Howze was hired

to teach at his first Catholic school, St. Monica, in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

Drawn to the priesthood, Howze was admitted to Christ the King Seminary at St. Bonaventure University in New York. He received his doctor of divinity in 1959 and was ordained as a priest for the Diocese of Raleigh, North Carolina, that same year. Howze was a pastor in Asheville, North Carolina, when he was consecrated titular bishop of massita and auxiliary bishop of Natchez-Jackson, Mississippi, in 1972 by Pope Paul VI. Howze was installed as bishop of the Diocese of Biloxi on June 6, 1977, with responsibility for the southern third of Mississippi. In his twenty-three years as bishop, the diocese grew nearly 30 percent, from 50,000 to almost 66,000 parishioners. Howze has served on the National Council of Catholic Bishops (NCCB) Ad Hoc “Call to Action Committee,” the World Peace Committee of the United States Catholic Conference, and the Mississippi Health Care Commission.

Howze is presently a member of the NCCB Liaison Committee to the National Office of Black Catholics; the Biloxi Regional Health Center Board; the Board of Directors of the Gulf Pines Girl Scout Council; the Knights of Columbus; the Knights of Peter Claver; and the NCCB Interreligious and Ecumenical Affairs Committee. As the national episcopal liaison of the Apostleship of the Sea, Howze annually blessed the Gulf Coast fishing boats that ply their trade in the Gulf. Howze retired from the diocese on June 6, 2001.

Howze passed away on January 9, 2019.

Bishop Joseph Howze was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on November 12, 2002.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Bishop Joseph Howze was conducted by Larry Crowe on November 12, 2002, in Biloxi, Mississippi, and was recorded on 4 Betacame SP videocassettes. Religious leader Bishop Joseph Howze (1923 - 2019) retired from his role as a Catholic Bishop in Biloxi, Mississippi.

Restrictions

Restrictions on Access

Restrictions may be applied on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of The HistoryMakers®.

Restrictions on Use

All use of materials and use credits must be pre-approved by The HistoryMakers®. Appropriate credit must be given. Copyright is held by The HistoryMakers®.

Related Material

Information about the administrative functions involved in scheduling, researching, and producing the interview, as well as correspondence with the interview subject is stored electronically both on The HistoryMakers® server and in two databases maintained by The HistoryMakers®, though this information is not included in this finding aid.

Controlled Access Terms

This interview collection is indexed under the following controlled access subject terms.

Persons:

Howze, Joseph Lawson, 1923-2019

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Stearns, Scott (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Howze, Joseph Lawson, 1923-2019--Interviews

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Biloxi (Miss.)

Occupations:

Religious Leader

HistoryMakers® Category:

ReligionMakers

Administrative Information

Custodial History

Interview footage was recorded by The HistoryMakers®. All rights to the interview have been transferred to The HistoryMakers® by the interview subject through a signed interview release form. Signed interview release forms have been deposited with Jenner & Block, LLP, Chicago.

Preferred Citation

The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Bishop Joseph Howze, November 12, 2002. The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection, 1900 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois.

Processing Information

This interview collection was processed and encoded on 2/5/2020 by The HistoryMakers® staff. The finding aid was created adhering to the following standards: DACS, AACR2, and the Oral History Cataloging Manual (Matters 1995).

Other Finding Aid

A Microsoft Access contact database and a FileMaker Pro tracking database, both maintained by The HistoryMakers®, keep track of the administrative functions involved in scheduling, researching, and producing the interview.

Detailed Description of the Collection

Series I: Original Interview Footage

Video Oral History Interview with Bishop Joseph Howze, Section A2002_201_001_001, TRT: 0:29:45 2002/11/12

Bishop Joseph Lawson E. Howze, the first black Catholic bishop of the 20th Century, describes his family background and childhood, detailing the origins of his parents and other ancestors. Howze also describes his earliest memories and childhood personality. He names many people who influenced him while he was a child and details his upbringing in the Catholic Church.

Video Oral History Interview with Bishop Joseph Howze, Section A2002_201_001_002, TRT: 0:30:10 2002/11/12

Bishop Joseph Lawson E. Howze, the first black Catholic bishop of the 20th Century, details his turn from education to the priesthood despite the fact that Southern dioceses refused to accept blacks into the priesthood. Howze details this discrimination as it happened in the 1950s and 1960s. Howze then explains how he was appointed as the Bishop of Biloxi, Mississippi in the 1970s. Howze discusses challenges he faced in establishing his diocese as well as establishing a relationship with Xavier University of Louisiana. Howze also explains how the Catholic Church has changed ethnic neighborhoods for the better.

Video Oral History Interview with Bishop Joseph Howze, Section A2002_201_001_003, TRT: 0:30:15 2002/11/12

Bishop Joseph Lawson E. Howze, the first black Catholic bishop of the 20th Century, discusses Afrocentric organizations within the Catholic Church and talks about the impact of African Americans on the Church. Howze then comments on the sexual abuse scandals that have

recently rocked the Catholic world. He shares thoughts about his own faith and his personal interpretation of Christianity. Howze then shares his hopes for the African American community and states how he believes the Church can catalyze social change.

Video Oral History Interview with Bishop Joseph Howze, Section A2002_201_001_004, TRT: 0:16:25 2002/11/12

Bishop Joseph Lawson E. Howze, the first black Catholic bishop of the 20th Century, briefly discusses his legacy and how he would like to be remembered.