

MAY 23, 2001

**STATEMENT OF U.S. REPRESENTATIVE JAN SCHAKOWSKY ON
MONSIGNOR JOHN J. EGAN, 1916-2001**

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Monsignor John J. Egan is a man who never wavered in his mission to promote justice and to better the lives of so many people. He struggled on behalf of the poor and working men and women, gave voice to the voiceless, and cared for those pushed aside by our society.

I personally called him a friend and am proud to have worked with him for many years. He was also a friend of every man, woman or child who needed a helping hand, a voice, or simply a sympathetic ear.

Monsignor Egan, a leader who has spoken so eloquently against racism and bigotry, was among the first Catholic priests to join the civil rights movements. He marched in Alabama in the 1960s for equal right for all people. He was a man who led by example.

Monsignor Egan was also instrumental in saving countless families from eviction and life on the streets. He understood that being poor should not translate to being homeless. He stood on many picket lines supporting workers struggling for their right to organize and improve their working conditions.

People throughout the nation knew Monsignor Egan. He was admired by so many from a wide cross section of our society. He has left a lasting impression on those he has met during his years. He received a religious leaders award from Rainbow/PUSH and was honored by the Chicago chapter of the American Jewish Committee, the Travelers and Immigrants Aid, Citizen Action of Illinois to name only a few. Those awards are a testament to his effective social activism.

In honor of his life, I urge that we continue to follow in his steps, learn from his example, and organize for public policies that are fair and equitable. I urge all my colleagues to read the following accounts from the Chicago Tribune, Chicago Sun-Times, and New York Times celebrating Monsignor Egan's life.