

This excerpt is from a letter of Rebecca Gratz of Philadelphia to her brother, Benjamin, in Lexington, Kentucky, July 12, 1844. It is made available through the courtesy of the American Jewish Historical Society of New York (Rosenbach Collection) which possesses the original.

REBECCA GRATZ ON RELIGIOUS BIGOTRY

*After the Catholic-Protestant Riots in Philadelphia in Which
~~Dozens~~ Dozens of Persons Were Killed or Maimed (1844)*

The present outbreak is an attack on the Catholic Church, and there is so much violent animosity between that sect and the Protestants that unless the strong arm of power is raised to sustain the provisions of the Constitution of the U. S., securing to every citizen the privilege of worshipping God according to his own conscience, America will be no longer the happy asylum of the oppressed and the secure dwelling place of religion. Intolerance has been too prevalent of late, and many of the clergy of different denominations are chargable with its growth. The whole spirit and office of religion is to make men merciful and humble and just. If such teaching was preached by the pastors to their own congregations and the charge of others left to their own clergy, God would be better served and human society governed more in accordance to *His* holy commandments.