ARCHDIOCESE OF INDIANAPOLIS COLLECTION, CA. 1934–1966

Collection Information

Historical Sketch

Scope and Content

Series Contents

Cataloging Information

Processed by
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COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION: 39 16mm films; 6 VHS videotapes containing user copies of the films (2 copies of 3 tapes, all housed in 1 visual document case); 7 twelve-inch disc recordings

COLLECTION DATES: Ca. 1934–1966

PROVENANCE: Catholic Communications Center, Archdiocese of Indianapolis 24 October 1994

RESTRICTIONS: The collection includes original 16mm films and VHS tape user
copies of all the films. Patrons are asked to use the tapes for viewing.

COPYRIGHT: Copyright to the films in the collection is held by the Indiana Historical Society. Copyright to the recordings may be held by the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

REPRODUCTION RIGHTS: Permission to reproduce or publish material in this collection must be obtained from the Indiana Historical Society.

ALTERNATE FORMATS:

RELATED HOLDINGS:

ACCESSION NUMBER: 1995.0815X

NOTES:

HISTORICAL SKETCH

Roman Catholics trace the history of their activity in the Indiana region back to 1749, when Jesuit Father Sebastian Meurin signed the first parish records at Vincennes. The first diocese in America that included the Indiana region was created in 1808 in Bardstown, Kentucky, and included the entirety of the former Northwest Territory. In 1830 Simon Lalumier served as the first resident priest in the state of Indiana.

On 6 May 1834 Pope Gregory XVI issued an edict creating the Diocese of Vincennes. This diocese included all of Indiana and the eastern half of Illinois until 1843 when the Archdiocese of Chicago took charge of the Illinois part of the diocese. Simon William Gabriel Brute served as the first bishop of the Diocese of Vincennes.

The nineteenth century saw great growth and changes both in the state of Indiana and in the Diocese of Vincennes. This period marks tremendous church-building activity within the diocese, including the parish of St. Meinrad in 1861. After Indianapolis was chartered as a city in 1847 it gradually began to surpass Vincennes in prominence. The first parish in Indianapolis was Holy Cross, which would later become St. John the Evangelist. By 1878 Francis Silas Chatard, who became the first native-born American bishop of the Diocese of Vincennes, made his residence in Indianapolis under the orders of his superiors. What is now known as Saints Peter and Paul Cathedral began as St. Francis Xavier Cathedral in Vincennes but the parish later moved to its location at 14th and Meridian in Indianapolis in 1905. The increase of Indianapolis’ prominence within the church culminated in 1898 when the name of the diocese was changed to the Diocese of Indianapolis. St. John’s Church became the first Pro-Cathedral in the newly-named diocese while Saints Peter and Paul Cathedral underwent construction in its Indianapolis location. During the late-nineteenth century, immigrants from eastern Europe brought with them a fresh fervor for Catholicism, which contributed to the growth of the Church in Indiana and the need for increased parochial educational opportunities.

In 1933 Joseph Elmer Ritter was consecrated as an auxiliary bishop and vicar general. A year later he was ordained as the seventh bishop of the Diocese of Indianapolis. Ritter worked to stabilize the diocese’s finances, which had fallen into trouble during the Great Depression. 1934 marked the centennial anniversary of the diocese and the local faithful marked the occasion with a Mass of Thanksgiving at St. Francis Xavier Church in Vincennes. In 1937, Bishop Ritter established St. Christopher’s as the twenty-fourth Catholic church in Indianapolis. This same year, Marion College opened.

In 1944 the diocese became the Archdiocese of Indianapolis and a Metropolitan See. The Province of Indianapolis
included the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, and the dioceses of Fort Wayne, Evansville, and Lafayette. On December 19 of the same year Ritter became the first Archbishop of Indianapolis during his installation ceremony at Saints Peter and Paul Cathedral. He left two years later to become the Archbishop of St. Louis. Ritter later was named a Cardinal Priest in St. Louis in 1961. After Ritter’s departure, Paul C. Schulte, Bishop of Leavenworth, Kansas, became the eighth bishop of Indianapolis and on 10 October 1946 he became the second Archbishop of Indianapolis.

Schulte’s epoch saw ever more growth and change in the archdiocese. From 1940 to 1960, the number of Catholics living in Indianapolis jumped from 44,000 to 92,000. Some of the major figures during this period include Monsignor Henry J. Hermann, who was ordained in Evansville in 1931, and Herman Francis van Benten, the Celebrant at Saints Peter and Paul Cathedral. During this period, the church produced a television program called The Chapel Door, which included segments such as “Sister Says” that were designed to inform children about the Catholic faith. Schulte concentrated on building churches in new suburban areas of cities and expanding educational opportunities.


Sources:


SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

This collection contains thirty-nine 16mm films relating to the Archdiocese of Indianapolis and seven twelve-inch disc recordings of the installation ceremonies of the Most Reverend Joseph Elmer Ritter as Archbishop of Indianapolis. The collection is divided into four series.

The first series is comprised of silent films shot by Monsignor Henry J. Herman in the 1930s. This series includes footage of a Notre Dame football game, various clergy on a trip to Dallas, his trip to Europe and New York, footage of Joseph E. Ritter, and some groundbreaking ceremonies. Within the series, the films are grouped by general subject matter, including footage of children and young people, trips, football games, and ceremonies.

The second series contains the films that were broadcast on television during the 1960s. Films in this series include broadcast footage of interviews with Catholic officials, The Chapel Door with “Sister Says” episodes, and the Christmas Midnight Mass of 1961 at Saints Peter and Paul Cathedral. Within this series, the films are organized chronologically, with films of unknown dates at the end of the series.

The third series contains miscellaneous films. Some of the films in this series include the consecration of Paul Schulte and scenes of various ceremonies.
The films have been copied to three VHS user-copy videotapes. Researchers are asked to use the videotapes; the films are available for dubbing onto other formats as required.

The fourth series is comprised of seven twelve-inch audio recordings of the 19 December 1944 installation ceremonies of the Most Reverend Joseph Elmer Ritter as the first Archbishop of Indianapolis.

SERIES CONTENTS

Series 1: Monsignor Henry J. Hermann

CONTENTS

Centennial Celebration of the Diocese of Indianapolis at Vincennes, 1934. Black and white, silent. Shows special medals commemorating the occasion, a procession into the church, an outdoor ceremony, and the vesting of the apostolic delegates. (Film # 001) On 7-inch reel.

“Gregory Painting in Bishop’s Chapel,” July 1938. Black and white, silent. Footage of a man painting an archway, including footage of his drawings and sculptures of the saints. (Film # 002) On 3.5-inch reel in yellow box.

“Ritter Ordination Indy,” no date. Black and white, silent. What may be Joseph E. Ritter’s ordination as the 7th Bishop of Indianapolis in 1934. Shows men with tuxedos, priests and clergy going out of a church with a crowd following them. (Film # 003) On 3.5-inch reel.

“Home, Kids Playing,” no date. Black and white, silent. A family with boys, girls, a mother, and father engaging in winter activities such as sledding, snowball fights, and playing with the snow. In a warmer season they ride their bikes and kick a ball. Footage of the family dressed up and getting ready to leave their house. Footage of the family inside the house listening to various people playing the piano. Footage of a Christmas tree. (Film # 004) On 7-inch reel.

“Home, #2,” no date. Black and white, silent. Footage of the same family playing outside a church, playing with cans, riding bikes, playing board games, playing the piano and singing, making a toy log cabin. The children play in a garden. Footage of a baby as it grows older. Baby gets a teddy bear and a doll for Christmas. (Film # 005) On 7-inch reel.

Group of Young People, no date. Black and white, silent. Box reads “E.Q.” and “Develop before June 1935.” (Film # 006) 3.5-inch reel.
“Geo., Gene, Betty,” no date. Black and white, silent. (Film # 007) 2.75-inch reel

Church congregation, 1930s. Black and white, silent. Footage of a group of men, women, and children in their summer outfits in front of a clapboard church. Also footage of a procession of clergy into the church. (Film # 008) 2.75-inch reel

“Dallas Fair,” 1930s. Black and white, silent. Aerial shots of Dallas, Texas, footage of Monsignor Maurice O’Connor and Bishop Ritter in an airplane, footage of the Alamo in San Antonio. Also footage of the Texas Centennial Expo at Dallas, including the buildings and exhibits. (Film # 009) 3.5-inch reel

“Montana, etc.,” June and July 1938. Black and white, and color, silent. Footage of the mountains and rivers of Montana, and also a campground. (Film # 010) 3.5-inch reel

“Switzerland and Hungary,” no date. Black and White, and color, silent. The titles in this film include “Switzerland with the Papal Nuncio.” Footage of people looking at the gardens, the sea, boats, a village, and a train. The “Lucerne” footage shows snowy mountains. The “Budapest” footage includes scenes from the city, with a parade of people in folk costumes. (Film # 011) 7-inch reel

Outdoor Scenery, no date. Black and white, silent. This film has footage of Liberty Cap, Devil’s Thumb, Mound Terrace, Cleopatra Terrace, Blue Springs, and Jupiter Terrace. (Film # 012) 3.5-inch reel

“Trip – Liner from NYC,” 1930s. Black and white, silent. Footage of people gathered around a dock and waving to a French Line ship shows the New York City skyline, boats in the harbour, the Statue of Liberty, and Monsignor Henry Dugan on board the ship. (Film # 013) 2.75-inch reel

“Vacation with Capt.,” no date. Black and white, silent. The film is marked “A Little Fishing and Recreation at Lake Wawassee.” (Film # 014) 2.75-inch reel

Grade School Football Game, no date. Black and white, silent. Footage of young boys playing football. (Film # 015) 3.5-inch reel

Football Game at Perry Stadium, 1939 or 1940.
Black and white, silent. Footage of a football game. (Film # 016) 3.5 inch reel

**Notre Dame Football Game, 1930s.** Black and white, silent. Footage of a football game at Notre Dame, including footage of students marching into the stadium and the game itself. (Film # 017) 3.5-inch reel

**Groundbreaking, no date.** Black and white, silent. Footage of a crowd on a street, men reading scripture and then breaking ground in a field. May possibly be the 1937 groundbreaking for St. Christophers in Speedway, with Bishop Ritter and founding pastor Father Leo Lindemann. (Film # 018) 2.75-inch reel

**Bishop Joseph E. Ritter, 1930s.** Black and white, silent. Footage of Joseph Ritter playing with his dog in front of his Cold Springs Road home, as well as footage of Meridian Street. (Film # 019) 3.5-inch reel

**Children, no date.** Black and white, silent. Footage of young boys and girls in a processional. (Film # 020) 2.75-inch reel

**Construction of Façade at Saints Peter and Paul Cathedral, no date.** Black and white, silent. Footage of the construction of the limestone façade at Saints Peter and Paul Cathedral on Meridian, possibly for the centennial of the diocese in 1937. Also footage of girls frolicking by a lake as they swim, dive off the pier, and sit in lounge chairs. Also contains footage of a football game. (Film # 021) 5-inch reel

**“Self in Study – smoking,” no date.** Black and white, silent. Footage of a man, possibly Henry J. Hermann, sitting in an office and smoking a cigarette. (Film # 022) 3.5-inch reel

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**Series 2: Broadcast Films**

**CONTENTS**

**Christmas Eve Midnight Mass, 1961.** Black and white, sound. A broadcast of the 1961 Christmas Eve Midnight Mass at Saints Peter and Paul Cathedral. Homily by Archbishop Schulte, Celebrant Francis van Benton. The mass includes several songs from the choir, announcements, the confession of sins, the preaching of the Christmas story from Luke 2. Also includes the three sacrifices: the offertory, consecration, and communion. (Film # 023) 15-inch reel

**CONTAINER**

Box 1: Tape 2, #1 (copies 1 and 2) 1 hour, 3 minutes
Black and white, sound. A continuation of the 1961 Christmas Eve Midnight Mass at Saints Peter and Paul Cathedral. This part begins with communion as the priests give communion to the nuns and congregation. Includes musical pieces from the choir and orchestral favorites such as a violin solo from Renatto Puccini. (Film # 024) 12-inch reel

Black and white, sound. This program is part of The Chapel Door series. Sister Mary Evelyn teaches a class of children about the sacramental. She has the children role-play: one boy plays a good Catholic who defends the sacramental against his friends who “aren’t of the faith.” The other children ask him questions and he explains the purpose of the rosary, the sacraments, holy water, the mass, exorcism, the scapular, and the tabernacle. (Film # 025) 9.5-inch reel

Black and white, sound. This program is part of The Chapel Door series. Sister Mary Evelyn teaches a class of children about the body of Christ, using 1 Corinthians 12:12. She shows a filmstrip about building one’s house upon a rock and explains about Christ establishing the Church upon the Rock and about Christ giving his children the sacraments. She shows a picture of Pope John the XXIII. (Film # 026) 9.5-inch reel

Black and white, sound. An interview with Archbishop Paul C. Schulte on the Vatican Council II changes and his trip to Rome. He also talks about changing the mass by using English instead of Latin. (Film # 027) 3.5-inch reel

Fred Priester interview, 22 May 1964.
Black and white, sound. An interview on WLW-I TV 13 11pm news with Fred Priester, the Indiana State Deputy of Knights of Columbus about the Knights of Columbus’ 63rd annual convention. He comments about the Knights as a political force. (Film # 028) 3-inch reel in envelope

Bishop Hakeem interview, 13 July 1964.
Black and white, sound. An interview on WLW-I TV 13 6pm news broadcast with Archbishop George Hahkeem of the Melkite Rite of Galilee on what it is like to be the “lone Catholic bishop in Israel.” He talks about the challenges he faces as a Christian in a non-
Christian region, particularly about the challenge of Islam. (Film # 029) 3-inch reel in envelope


“Churches,” no date. Black and white, silent. Footage of people going into a church and a group of women standing outside the church. (Film # 031) 3.5-inch reel

“Bosler and Brotherhood,” no date. Black and white, sound. Interview with Revered Monsignor Raymond T. Bosler concerning Catholics putting their knowledge of human nature into practice by applying it to the problems of the day. (Film # 032) 3.5-inch reel

Series 3: Other Films

CONTENTS

“The Ceremony of the Consecration of the Most Reverend Paul Schulte,” 21 September 1937. Black and white, silent. Footage of the consecration of the Most Reverend Paul Schulte, Bishop of Leavenworth, in the Saint Louis Cathedral. Footage of people walking into the church, the processional, and ceremony. (Film # 033) 7-inch reel

Church, no date. Black and white, silent. Footage of the interior of a cathedral and a ceremony. Possibly shot by Henry J. Herman. (Film # 034) 7-inch reel

Processional, no date. Black and white, silent. Images are very streaky and hard to see. Very dark footage of a man and woman. Streaky footage of a processional. Possibly shot by Henry J. Hermann. (Film # 035) 3.5-inch reel in yellow box

Ceremony, no date. Black and white, silent. Footage of clergy inside a church performing some kind of ceremony. Possibly shot by Henry J. Hermann. (Film # 036) 2.75-inch reel

Clergy in a field, no date. Black and white, silent. Footage of clergy members standing in a field, giving something to a woman. Scenes of an old house, a street, and a factory. Possibly shot by Henry J. Hermann. (Film # 037) 2.75-inch reel
“The Prostration,” no date. Black and white, silent. Footage of a processional and of a choir singing. Possibly shot by Henry J. Hermann. (Film #038) 3.5-inch reel

Box 1: Tape 3, #12 (copies 1 and 2) 1 minute, 40 seconds

Woman and girl on windy day, no date. Black and white, silent. Footage of a woman and a girl standing outside on a windy day. Possibly shot by Henry J. Hermann. (Film #039) 2.75-inch reel

Box 1: Tape 3, #13 (copies 1 and 2) 10 seconds

Series 4: Audio Recordings of the Installation of Joseph Ritter as Archbishop

CONTENTS


Printed Collections:
FolioBX4705.R56C371944

“Establishment of the Ecclesiastical Province of Indianapolis and Installation Ceremonies of the Most Reverend Joseph Elmer, D.D. First Archbishop of Indianapolis: Address by His Excellency Joseph E. Ritter,” 19 December 1944. Twelve-inch disc audio recording of the installation of Joseph Elmer Ritter as the first Archbishop of Indianapolis at Saints Peter and Paul Cathedral. Disc 1, Side A.

Printed Collections:
FolioBX4705.R56C371944

“Establishment of the Ecclesiastical Province of Indianapolis and Installation Ceremonies of the Most Reverend Joseph Elmer, D.D. First Archbishop of Indianapolis: Reading of the Executorial Decree by the Notary by Right Reverend Henry F. Dugan,” 19 December 1944. Twelve-inch disc audio recording of the installation of Joseph Elmer Ritter as the first Archbishop of Indianapolis at Saints Peter and Paul Cathedral. Disc 2, Sides A and B.

Printed Collections:
FolioBX4705.R56C371944


Printed Collections:
FolioBX4705.R56C371944


“Establishment of the Ecclesiastical Province of Indianapolis and Installation Ceremonies of the Most Reverend Joseph Elmer, D.D. First Archbishop of Indianapolis: Sanctus: Missa Printed Collections:

Folio BX4705
R56 C37 1944

Folio BX4705
R56 C37 1944

Folio BX4705
R56 C37 1944

Folio BX4705
R56 C37 1944

Folio BX4705
R56
Coronata: Stehle: Agnus Dei: Missa Coronata:  
Stehle” 19 December 1944. Twelve-inch disc audio recording of the installation of Joseph Elmer Ritter as the first Archbishop of Indianapolis at Saints Peter and Paul Cathedral. Disc 6, Side B.


CATALOGING INFORMATION

For additional information on this collection, including a list of subject headings that may lead you to related materials:

1. Go to the Indiana Historical Society's online catalog:  [http://157.91.92.2/](http://157.91.92.2/)
2. Click on the "Basic Search" icon.
3. Select "Call Number" from the "Search In:" box.
4. Search for the collection by its basic call number (in this case, P 0410).
5. When you find the collection, go to the "Full Record" screen for a list of headings that can be searched for related materials.