

Archdiocese of St. Louis Archives:

A brief guide for genealogists

About Us:

The Office of Archives and Records is the official repository of the Archdiocese of St. Louis. We collect, preserve, and make available the historical records of the offices, missions, parishes, and schools of the Archdiocese. We welcome researchers and we provide access to our collections as permitted by the Code of Canon law, civil law, and conservation considerations. Find collections and guides on our Collections page at <https://www.archstl.org/archdiocesan-archives/research/collections>. Please note that this is not a comprehensive guide to all of the collections in the Archives.

Sacramental Registers

- Access: Records are open from 1930 and prior
 - Available on microfilm at the St. Louis County Library on Lindbergh <http://www.slcl.org/>
 - Available digitally at <https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog>. In the catalog, search the author field for 'Catholic Missouri' to pull up all Catholic Churches in the state of Missouri. You can search 'Catholic Missouri [name of church]' to pull up that churches records. See the how-to video at <https://youtu.be/SGaJvmY0ux0>.
 - If there are gaps that the microfilm doesn't cover, feel free to contact the Archdiocesan Archives. Only archives staff may search and retrieve information from original registers.
- *Types of sacramental registers:*
 - Baptism and Marriage:
 - Best sources of genealogical information
 - Contain name, birth date, parents, godparents/sponsors, and baptismal date
 - Can also contain birth place, residence/address, other sacramental info like marriage, confirmation, etc.
 - First Communion, Confirmation, Death/Burial:
 - Less common and less biographically complete, but can have useful information.
 - May contain age, residence/address, parentage, confirmation name, cause of death/sickness, place of burial, etc.
- Find the interactive map of all present and historical archdiocesan parishes on our Collections page: <https://www.archstl.org/archdiocesan-archives/research/collections>

Catholic Cemeteries

- Catholic Cemeteries Office owns **17 of 54** Catholic cemeteries
 - ALL their burials indexed at database at <http://archstl.org/cemeteries/>
- Individual parishes own remaining cemeteries – contact them directly

Parish Records

- *May contain:* Priest appointments, historical boundaries, photographs, news clippings, parish history booklets, correspondence with Chancery (bulk is 1945-1985), administrative and buildings records (bulk is 1945-1985), special mass programs, artifacts, bulletins, etc.
- Check with us, but don't forget to also contact the open parish for historical information

Religious Sisters

- Contact the religious order's archives. If you do not know what order the Sister was in, we *might* be able to help depending on how much information you can provide.

Archdiocese of Saint Louis Archives and Records

20 Archbishop May Drive, St. Louis MO 63119-5738

Phone: 314.792.7020 | Fax: 314.792.7029 | Email: archives@archstl.org

<http://archstl.org/archives>

Archdiocesan Priest Personnel Records

- *Access:* Complete files are restricted
- *Holdings:* Archdiocesan priests only. If clergy was affiliated with a religious order, like the Jesuits, we will not have a file on him. Contact that religious order's archives directly.
- *May contain:* Vita or Appointment Card, photographs, obituary or memorial card, newspaper clippings

Archdiocesan School Records

- Grade Books and Rosters
 - *Access:* Records open 1930 and prior. Only city schools. The Archives does not hold all schools' records, nor a complete chronological run per school.
 - *May contain:* Name, birth date or age, address, grades, and absences
- Historical records and photos: Check with us, but don't forget to also contact:
 - The open parish or school
 - The archives of the religious order that taught there
 - Alumni groups online

Orphanage Records

- *Access:* Information open to researchers December 31, 1930 and prior. All records relating to an adoption fall under **Mo. Ann. Stat. § 453.121 (2011)** and the access restrictions outlined therein. Only archives staff members may search and retrieve information from these records.
- *Holdings:*
 - St. Joseph Home for Boys
 - St. Mary's Female Orphan Asylum
 - St. Ann's Hospital and Foundling Asylum
- *May contain:* Child's name and birth date, date of admittance/separation, parent/guardian(s) releasing the child to the orphanage, family circumstances relating to admittance
- Find a *List of Historical Catholic Orphanages and Child Care Centers* on our Collections page: <https://www.archstl.org/archdiocesan-archives/research/collections>.
- *Researching Orphans and Orphanage Care in St Louis* by Viki Faygal can be purchased at the St. Louis Genealogical Society's online store at <https://stlgs.org/products-and-store>.

Bishops'/Archbishops' Papers

- Correspondence and financial ledgers may have information on ancestors
- See the finding aids and indexes to bishops' papers on the Collection page of our website

St. Louis Catholic Newspapers, 1832-present

- Digitized Newspapers available online on CRRA website at <https://www.catholicresearch.org/>
 - Shepherd of the Valley, 1832-1836 and 1850-1854
 - St. Louis Register, 1941-1956 (precursor to St. Louis Review); 1965-1995 should be available on the CRRA website by fall 2022.
- Newspapers on Microfilm
 - St. Louis Review, 1957-present
 - The Catholic News Letter, 1845-1847
 - Pastoral-Blatt, 1866-1925. Our holdings are incomplete.
 - Western Watchman, ran 1869-1933. We hold 1872-1933
 - Church Progress and the Catholic World, 1882-1933
 - The Catholic Herald, 1921-1948
 - Gaps in our news collection are mostly covered by the collections at St. Louis County Library, Missouri History Museum, Saint Louis University and Notre Dame University.

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African American Parishes and Institutions in the Archdiocese of St. Louis, 1832-1951

An interactive map of these can be found online in the genealogy section on our website at <http://archstl.org/archives/page/researching-archives>. Please note that the map and alphabetical list below are works in progress.

Parishes, Missions and Schools of Religion

Blessed Martin de Porres mission in Meachum Park (through St. Peter in Kirkwood) 1939
Helpers of Holy Souls Convent 1923 (HHS)
Holy Angels in Kinloch 1923-2002, (SJ until 1952, ArchStL in 1952)
Holy Guardian Angels Mission (through parish) 1926 (SJ)
Infant of Prague center 1941, 623 Holly Hills Ave. (SVD)
Sacred Heart Center (through Visitation) 1938, 4406 Garfield Ave. (HHS)
St. Alphonsus "Rock" 1941
St. Ann Parish 1941
St. Anne's Center circa 1945
St. Benedict Center 1938, 3950 West Belle Pl. (HHS)
St. Clement's Mission and School (through St. Alphonsus) 1941-1948 (CSsR and OSP)
St. Elizabeth of Hungary Chapel 1858-1872, part of St. Francis Xavier Church (SJ)
St. Elizabeth Parish 1872-1950 (SJ)
St. Joseph (through parish) 1923
St. Lawrence O'Toole Center (through parish) 1940 (CSJ and ArchStL)
St. Malachy Parish 1941 (SJ)
St. Martin De Porres Mission, 1940
St. Mary's Chapel 1832-1858, part of St. Louis College (SLU) (SJ)
St. Nicholas (through parish) 1923
St. Nicholas Parish 1924 (SVD)
St. Patrick (through parish) 1923
St. Patrick Parish 1924 begins Sunday Mass for Blacks
St. Peter Claver Mission in Anglum/Robertson/Kinloch 1916 (SJ)
St. Vincent Chapel (through Holy Family, Cape Girardeau) 1940

Full Curriculum Schools

St. Bernadette School (through Visitation) 1942-1946 (MM)
St. Bridget School (through parish) 1945 (SBS)
St. Elizabeth School 1972-1945 (SJ, OSP and SBS)
St. Joseph High School for Colored 1937-1951 (CSJ)
St. Malachy School 1941 (DC)
St. Nicholas grade school 1924 (SVD, SBS and CPPS)
St. Nicholas High School 1938 (SVD and CPPS)

Other Institutions

Father Dempsey's Lodging House for Colored Men 1932-1933, 1127 N. 6th St.
Father Dunne's Home for Negro Boys 1931, 3028 Washington
St. Frances Orphan Asylum, 1887 at Taylor and Page; 1897 in Normandy (OSP)
St. Mary's Infirmary 1933 (SSM/FSM)
St. Rita's Academy for Girls 1912-1950, 1912 at 3009 Pine St; 1914 at 3128 Laclede Ave. (OSP)

Abbreviation Key:

ArchStL: Archdiocese of St. Louis
CPPS: Sisters of the Most Precious Blood, O'Fallon
CSJ: Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet
CSsR: Redemptorists, (Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer)
DC: Daughters of Charity
HHS: Helpers of the Holy Souls
MM: Maryknoll Sisters
OSP: Oblate Sisters of Providence
SBS: Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament
SJ: Jesuits (Society of Jesus)
SSM/FSM: Sisters of St. Mary, now Franciscan Sisters of Mary
SVD: Society of the Divine Word

Archives with Materials on African American Catholic Parishes and Institutions

Below are religious order archives that have additional archival materials on historically Black Catholic institutions in St. Louis. This is a very brief description for your reference. Please note that you will have to visit their websites or contact them directly for more details on their holdings.

Franciscan Sisters of Mary (Formerly Sisters of St. Mary) Archives

Contact: Scott Grimwood, Scott.Grimwood@ssmhealth.com

Description: Records and photographs for St. Mary's Infirmary for African-Americans, St. Mary's Infirmary School of Nursing, African-American Novitiate. Expect some restrictions on student and patient records. Handful of photographs for St. Joseph High School for Colored. Biographical information on the Sisters.

Jesuit Archives

Phone: 314-376-2440 **Email:** jarcreference@jesuits.org **Website:** <http://jesuitarchives.org/>

Description: Records and photographs on St. Elizabeth's parish, St. Peter Claver mission in Anglum/Kinloch, Holy Angels in Kinloch, St. Malachy parish, catechetical centers. Biographical information on priests. Please note that the Jesuit Archives is CLOSED and will reopen Spring 2018.

Maryknoll Sisters Archives

Website: www.maryknollmissionarchives.org **Phone:** (914) 944-3620

Description: Six photographs of St. Bernadette's school. Biographical information on the Sisters.

Oblate Sisters of Providence Archives

Phone: 410-242-1603 **Email:** osparchives@oblatesisters.com

Website: <http://www.oblatesisters.com/Archives.html>

Description: Student records, correspondence, photographs, ephemera, etc. for St. Elizabeth church & school; St. Frances Home; St. Rita Academy; Holy Angels in Kinloch; St. Clement mission (through St. Alphonsus "Rock"). Expect some restrictions on student records. Biographical information on Sisters.

Redemptorists Archives

Phone: 215-922-2871 **Email:** phayes@redemptorists.net

Website: <https://redemptorists.net/redemptorists/archives/>

Description: Records and photographs from St. Alphonsus "Rock" church. Biographical information on priests. Also, ask St. Alphonsus "Rock" Church in St. Louis for additional historical information.

Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament Archives

Located in the **Catholic Historical Research Center of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia**

Phone: (215) 904-8149 **Email:** chrc.aop@gmail.com **Website:** <http://www.chrc-philadelphia.org/>

Description: Records and photographs for St. Elizabeth parish and school, St. Nicholas school, St. Bridget of Erin school, St. Augustine parish in East St. Louis. Biographical information on Sisters.

Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet Archives

Phone: 314-678-0320 **Email:** csjarchive@csj.org

Website: <https://www.csj.org/about-us/our-heritage/archives.php>

Description: Some photograph and some alumni information for St. Joseph High School for Colored. Biographical information on Sisters.

Saint Louis University Special Collections

Phone: 314-977-5070 **Email:** rbk@slu.edu **Website:** <http://lib.slu.edu/special-collections>

Description: St. Elizabeth Chronicle (later the Interracial Review). See <http://libguides.slu.edu/c.php?g=489110&p=3343522> for an overview of primary resources on African American History at SLU and generally in St. Louis.

Archdiocese of St. Louis Archives:

A brief guide for local history research

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This document provides examples of research topics that can be found in the archives, but is by no means exhaustive! Finding Aids for some collections can be found online at <https://www.archstl.org/archdiocesan-archives/research/collections>. Most of our collections are not yet described online. Please contact us regarding a specific research topic.

Hours: Monday through Friday, 9am to 4pm. Visitors by **appointment only**. Closed on holidays and holy days.

Catholic Communities and Parish Records

Parish records contain priest appointments, historical boundaries, photographs news clippings, parish history booklets, correspondence with Chancery (bulk is 1945-1985), administrative and buildings records (bulk is 1945-1985), special mass programs, pins and ribbons, society rosters, and bulletins. When a parish closes, its records are transferred to the Archdiocesan Archives. If the parish is currently open, check with them for archival materials as well.

St. Louis Catholic Newspapers, 1832-present

Gaps in our news collection are mostly covered by the collections at St. Louis County Library, Missouri History Museum, Saint Louis University and Notre Dame University.

- *Shepherd of the Valley*, 1832-1836 and 1850-1854, available ONLINE at <https://www.catholicresearch.org/>
- *The Catholic News Letter*, 1845-1847
- *Pastoral-Blatt*, 1866-1925. Our holdings incomplete
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Audio-Visual Materials

The audiovisual collection consists of videos, films, reel to reel tapes, TV reels (16 mm), audiocassette tapes and DVDs. The Radio and Television Office opened in 1954 and closed around 1990. The office wrote and produced its own radio and television shows, such as the TV show *Quiz-A-Catholic* where laypeople competed in a Catholic-themed 20-questions-type game. See the Archdiocese of Saint Louis YouTube channel to watch: <https://www.youtube.com/archstlmedia>

Early Missouri Statehood, and French Influence, circa 1815-1843

Bishop Joseph Rosati, C.M. Papers, 1774-1990

These represent the working papers of Rosati while in St. Louis. The collection includes diaries, writings, and correspondence. The bulk of the papers cover the years 1816 to 1843. The correspondence describes missions and general life in the states of Missouri, Kentucky, Arkansas, the territory of the Louisiana Purchase, and more. The papers also include some biographical materials about Bishop Rosati. There is an annotated item-level index to the collection.

Immigration Issues, Civil War, and Turn of the Century, 1843-1903

Unfortunately, most of the papers that would elucidate St. Louis Catholic life and perspective during this time period do not exist. Archbishop Peter R. Kenrick's successor Archbishop John Kain directed Kenrick's papers to be destroyed when Kain was appointed to the episcopacy in 1896. Kain also destroyed his own papers. The best resources for this period are in parish history booklets. See Parish Records above.

World War I Records, 1917-1918

World War I Records contain lists of Catholic men in the service. There is also some correspondence related to the war in the Archbishop John J. Glennon Papers.

World War II Records, 1942-1980

World War II Records include correspondence with the Military Ordinariate (Archdiocese for the Military Services, U.S.A.), Apostolic Delegate, and military officials. Topics covered include commissioned chaplains, U.S. military bases at Fort Leonard Wood and Jefferson Barracks, and Prisoner of War Camps at Fort Leonard Wood and Weingarten. The Archdiocese actively missioned at the POW camps. Records on displaced persons demonstrate the large role the Archdiocese had in resettling refugees in St. Louis after the war.

Other records of interest for World War II research include the *priest personnel files* of wartime chaplains, which include reports, correspondence and photographs. *Parish records* may also have information about wartime activities.

African American Catholics, Segregation, and Integration, bulk 1930s-1960s

There are scattered materials on the segregated missions for African American Catholics in St. Louis in the 1800s through early 1900s, but not much exists. The bulk of records that describe the "Negro Apostolate" from 1927-1946 are located in the *Archbishop John J. Glennon Papers*. The *Archbishop Joseph E. Cardinal Ritter Papers* contain correspondence regarding the integration of Catholic Schools in 1947, seven years before *Brown v. Board of Education*. The *Human Rights Commission Records* contain information about efforts by the Catholic Church to improve race relations in St. Louis from 1945-2008. Materials regarding these topics are also present in parish, school, and religious order records.

Second Vatican Council and Catholic Religious Trends, 1964-present

Vatican II addressed the pastoral issues being affected by social, political, and economic changes in the world. It resulted in major liturgical changes and focused theological perspectives on topics like ecumenism, native-language masses, and the role of laity in the Church. Both Cardinals Joseph E. Ritter and John J. Carberry participated in the Council in Rome. The archival records illustrate the kinds of changes that took place in the Archdiocese, and the religious trends that have continued through today.

Pope John Paul II Visit to St. Louis, 1999

A very large collection regarding the Pope's visit to St. Louis in 1999 includes planning information, publications, photographs, and artifacts from the event.

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