

2015 Report of the Archivist

The archival work accomplished in 2015 included many different projects. Researchers who visited the Diocesan Center were assisted in locating archive files pertinent to their field of study. Research assistance was also provided to those making telephone and email inquiries. Areas of research included genealogy, closed parishes, past Diocesan bishops, and general historical questions pertaining to the Diocese. During this year, a history of The School of Christian Studies (now The Stevenson School for Ministry) and a history of the Operation Understanding committee was compiled using files from the archives. Messiah college students worked in the archives for several weeks collecting data for a project titled, Race and the Church in Harrisburg. The students explored the denominational identity among African-Americans and Africans, especially those who belonged to denominations with historical roots in slavery and segregation. The parishes within our Diocese that were studied included St. Augustine's, Holy Cross, and St. Gerald's Episcopal Church.

Information gathered pertaining to the election of The Rt. Rev. Audrey Cady Scanlan was catalogued and added to the archives. These files included data from the bishop search committees and all service programs (electing convention, consecration, etc.) The diocesan archives houses material on each diocesan bishop that includes photographs, correspondence, church service programs, newspaper clippings, and many other documents. These documents are a vital part of our history and continue to expand our knowledge of each individual bishop during his/her episcopacy.

The closing of St. Benedict's in New Freedom, Pennsylvania initiated a team effort of diocesan staff. The process of collecting, organizing, and storing pertinent parish files occurred shortly after the closing. An inventory list of vestments, service books and altar vessels was created and distributed to diocesan parishes in order to distribute items to those in need. St. Benedict's files are available for reference in the Diocesan archives.

The Diocesan archives continues to thrive thanks to the support of the diocesan staff, parish rectors, and many parishioners. The mission to responsibly collect and store vital diocesan information will continue as we move into a new and exciting phase of diocesan life with our new bishop.

Debbie Robelen

Diocesan Archivist