

DIOCESAN ARCHIVES POLICY STATEMENT (approved 6/15/92)

The purpose of the Archives of the Catholic Diocese of Las Cruces is to collect, preserve, and make available for research the official documents and records of the diocese, its parishes, and other institutions, organizations, and individuals active in the work of the Church in the diocese. The Archives of the Catholic Diocese of Las Cruces is erected in accordance with Canon 482.

Official diocesan records are defined as all administrative and historical documents of the diocese and its parishes, including sacramental records.

The diocesan archives will collect documentary records on paper, video and audio tape, film, and computer disks. Artifacts, works of art, etc. will not normally be collected in the diocesan archives.

It shall be the pastoral judgment of the pastor or administrator about whether museum items or patrimony should be kept at the parish or sent to the diocese. Parishes can keep such items, or send them to the diocesan archives for safekeeping. They are not to dispose of them in other ways.

All records located in the diocesan archives are diocesan property and therefore the responsibility of the archives.

Every five years the Archives of the Catholic Diocese of Las Cruces will review its collection development policy for necessary adjustment.

Every five years each pastor is required to go through all parish files, sending to the diocesan archives all material not needed for the administration of the parish at that time.

JULY 1993

DIOCESE OF LAS CRUCES**GENERAL ACCESS POLICY TO ARCHIVAL MATERIAL**

The Archives of the Diocese of Las Cruces exists to collect, preserve, and make available the records of enduring value which pertain to the experience of the church in the region. As such, it plays an integral part in the information system of the diocese. Although its main function is to serve the administrative needs of the bishop and the diocese, it also seeks to ensure a documentary heritage and a basis for scholarly research in keeping with the moral and historical precepts of canon law and the democratic values and civil law of the United States of America. Access policies to the archives are based on the following principles:

1. As authorized by canon law, the archivist serves under the chancellor as the bishop's representative and liaison in the establishment of archival policies.

2. As supported by the National Council of Catholic Bishops' 1974 "A Document on Ecclesiastical Archives" and the "Guidelines for Access to Diocesan Archives" of the Association of Catholic Diocesan Archivists, access to the archives is open to all qualified researchers regardless of race or creed. The guiding principle is equal access for anyone with legitimate interests in the documentation.
3. Access policies are developed with sensitivity for the principles of both right to know and confidentiality. This is to ensure compliance with state and federal legislation and archival practices to guarantee the existence of materials for future researchers.
4. Few collections are permanently restricted. Some materials, however, may be sequestered from common viewing for a certain period of time. These may include, but are not limited to, medical, orphanage, sacramental, student, and other records. They will be made available in a scheduled manner in keeping with professionally appraised criteria and canonical requirements. Other obligations also arise as a result of contractual stipulations through deeds of gift, wills and sales arrangements.
5. Questions on access policies to individual collections should be directed to the archivist.
6. Broadly applied, photocopying of open material, unless they are in poor condition, is available by permission of the archivist or his/her delegate.
7. Access is granted to researchers as a contractual matter in which use of the material is subject to the rules of the archives, including the acceptance of normal policies and procedures. Researchers with problems or complaints should first speak of their concerns to the archivist. Any unresolved difficulties should be pursued along the chain of command through the chancellor, with the bishop as the ultimate source of authority.
8. Access to the archives must be by permission of the archivist, his/her delegate, the chancellor, the vicar general, or the bishop. No material can be removed from The Pastoral Center without the permission of the archivist, the chancellor, the vicar general, or the bishop.